Nutritional Policies and Standards for Snacks Served in Afterschool Programs: A Review

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What’s an Afterschool Program

- **Pre-existing** community-based programs

- **Immediately after the regular school day**
  (typically 3-6pm)

- **Located in:**
  - A *school* setting
  - *Community* organization outside school
    (e.g., YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, faith organization)

- **Daily** academic year
  (Monday through Friday)

- **Combination of scheduled:**
  - Snack
  - Homework assistance/tutoring
  - Enrichment activities (e.g., arts and crafts, music)
  - Opportunities for children to be physically active
Why Afterschool Programs?

- **8.4 million** youth
- **Average of 8.1 hours** per week
  - 70% elementary age
    - (2nd through 5th or 6th grade, ≤12 years old)
  - 40% from low-income schools
- **Almost all offer snacks** (some hot meals)
  - Important time for nutrient intake
    - (between lunch at school and before dinner at home)
- **Lex./Rich. Counties ASPs**
  - ∼265 ASPs, >17,500 kids
Nutritional Quality of Snacks Served in ASPs

• Afterschool program snacks:
  • Contain higher calories than the recommended total calories for snacks

• Low-nutrient density
  • > 3/4ths of the snacks served:
    • Contain added sugars (e.g., cookies, cereal bars, granola bars)
    • Categorized as salty snacks (e.g., chips, pretzels, snack mixes)

• Fruits and vegetables (FV) served infrequently
  • F less than 1 serving per day
  • V almost entirely absent from snack menus

(Cassady, et al., 2006, Coleman, et al., 2008, Mozaffarian, et al., 2009)
Nutrition Policies for ASPs

- **No widely** recognized/adopted policies/standards

- Little is known about the scope of existing policies/standards

- **22 Lex.Col. ASPs HAAND:** HAPI-N
  (Healthy Afterschool Activity and Nutrition Documentation: Healthy Afterschool Program Index – Nutrition)
  
  - 9 No policies
  - 11 Non-specific: “snacks that promote healthy lifestyle”
  - 2 Specific: Serving size, USDA CACFP
Systematic Review

- **Policy**: as a formal statement that defines priorities for action, goals, and/or strategies, as well as accountabilities of involved actors

- Written policies outline nutritional quality of snacks served:
  - *Should be* (mandatory participation is expected – Child and Adult Care Food Program)
  - *Suggested to be* (voluntary adoption is preferred)
Systematic Review

- **Stage 1 – Org. Identification**
  - All state-level afterschool organizations from existing registries
  - Reviews of national ASP organizations’ websites and the United States Department of Agriculture website

- **Stage 2 – Document retrieval**
  - Keyword searches on all state and national organizations’ websites

- **Stage 3 – Extraction**
  - Nutritional standards was extracted into standardized forms
Findings

- **18 state and/or national** organizations info for ASP snacks
  - 14 endorsed the USDA CACFP guidelines

- **5 unique policies** (4 orgs. and USDA)
  - Institute of Medicine (IOM) Nutrition Standards for Foods in School Tier 1 (8 items)
  - California Department of Education Standards for Snacks in Afterschool Programs (7 items)
  - Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center: Youth Nutrition and Physical Activity Guidelines for Out-of-School Time Programs (6 items)
  - Alliance for a Healthier Generation (6 items)
  - USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) (6 items)

- **13 categories** of foods/beverages
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Category</th>
<th>Frequency in Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruit/Vegetable/Juice</td>
<td>5/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk (Dairy products)</td>
<td>5/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread/Grains</td>
<td>4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Sugar, Fat, Salt Foods</td>
<td>4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Sweetened Beverages</td>
<td>1/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caffeine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried fruit w/no +sugar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frying</td>
<td>1/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policies:** Guide selection of foods/bevs NOT frequency of servings

**Removal** – sugar sweetened bevs. (Harvard)

**Daily** – F&V served (Harvard)

**Everything caffeine-free** (IOM)

**No fried foods** (CA)
Proposed General Nutritional Guidelines

- **Fruit/ Vegetable/ Juice**
  - Serve Fruits and Vegetables a minimum of 2 servings/wk (½ to 1 cup) each (total of 4 servings)

- **Milk (Dairy products)**
  - Serve Low-fat and nonfat milk a minimum of 2 servings/wk (½ cup)

- **Bread/ Grains**
  - Serve whole grains a minimum of 2 servings wk (½ to 2 oz equivalent)

- **Water**
  - Offer water as one of the primary beverage choices

- **High Sugar, High Fat & High Salt Foods**
  - No more than 35% of total calories from fat
  - No more than 175 kcal per individual food item (for elementary students)
  - No more than 250 kcal per individual food item (for middle, junior high or high school students)

- **Sugar Sweetened Beverages**
  - Do not serve sugar-sweetened beverages
  - Encourage parents to limit sugar-sweetened beverages
Conclusions

- **Wide range** of policies
  - Inclusion of specific items
  - Wording of recommendation

- **No info on** uptake/adherence
  - 2008 USDA CACFP served snacks to 1.6 million kids
  - 8.4 million kids attend ASPs

- **General Nutrition Guidelines for ASPs**
  - **Clarity** of the original guideline
  - Ability to easily operationalize for compliance
  - Quasi-Consensus existing policies
Thank you