

# We all want the best for our kids, including healthy foods.

But it's DIFFICULT. Parents don't want to spend money on foods their kids won't eat.

**BASICS** for Nutrition and Physical Activity is a nutrition education program that gets kids eating smart and playing hard. Kids have incredible pester power to get adults to buy their favorite toy or food. **BASICS** tries to harness that power for good health by turning kids on to foods like fruits and vegetables and low-fat milk.

Last year alone, over **20,000** kids in classrooms throughout Iowa discovered new fruits and vegetables they had never tasted before. How did we get them to try new foods? We used the power of persuasion.



**Eat your veggies!** Ever heard a mom say, "My kid would never eat broccoli"? We say, put them in a room with 23 of their closest friends and

watch what happens. Through Pick a better snack™ & ACT, kids empower each other to try new fruits and vegetables. And, sure enough, they like them!

**Play with your food!** Kids like to play and win. That's why **BASICS** sends bingo cards home every month to encourage kids to eat fruits and veggies and be active. The card includes ideas for fun activities and healthy foods that families can enjoy together. Kids can compete with their friends and family to see who gets a bingo first!

**Milk helps  
me be who  
I wanna be**



**Drink your milk!** Most kids know milk is good for their bones. The problem is, kids drink less and less milk from third grade on, especially girls. That's why **BASICS** has launched a new education program that gets kids excited about 3 cups a day of low-fat milk or calcium-rich foods made from milk.



BASICS for Nutrition and Physical Activity is funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Iowa Food Assistance, and community partners. Iowa Food Assistance can help people with low income buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, go to [www.yesfood.iowa.gov](http://www.yesfood.iowa.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

For more information about this report contact Doris Montgomery at the Iowa Department of Public Health. 1-800-532-1579 or [dmontgom@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:dmontgom@idph.state.ia.us).

# How do we know if BASICS for Nutrition and Physical Activity makes a difference? We ask a lot of questions.

Over **110 classrooms** involved in BASICS were randomly selected to fill out pre- and post-surveys in first, third and fifth grades during the 2009-2010 school year. Parents of third-graders also completed surveys.

*\*All results reported here are statistically significant findings.*

Over 280 **first graders** told us they had made many improvements.

- They learned new information like which foods belong in the milk group.
- Students were also **more knowledgeable** about which foods were healthy snacks for them and which activities help kids be physically active.
- They liked to eat more fruits and vegetables including: avocado, kiwi, tangerines, bell pepper, broccoli and cantaloupe.

1,350 **third graders** also made important changes this year.

- They **liked to eat** fruits and veggies for snacks more often and they liked a greater variety of fruits and vegetables including: jicama, mango, cauliflower, avocado and cranberries.
- By the end of the year, students were **more positive** about trying new vegetables and doing active things.
- They also became more **confident** that they could prepare fruits for snacks at home and choose milk, cheese or yogurt for snacks.

Positive changes were reported by over 325 **fifth grade** students.

- They were **more confident** that they could prepare fruits and vegetables.
- They also liked a **greater variety** of fruits and vegetables like: green beans, radishes, avocados, peppers and artichokes.
- They influenced each other in a positive way. After BASICS education, more students said that their friends liked to eat fruit for snacks and more students ate 2 or more servings of fruit per day.
- They were more active. After BASICS, 77% reported being physically active five or more days per week.

Almost 500 **parents** of third-grade children completed pre-post survey questions.

Half of the families qualified for free- or reduced-price meals.

- Awareness of Pick a **better** snack™ & ACT messages improved from 68% to 89%.
- 80% of parents reported seeing the parent newsletter.
- There was a substantial increase in the number of parents who know that **low-fat milk is best** for most children two years and older.
- More parents report buying 1% and skim milk and milk products and modeling good choices by consuming these items.
- More parents reported that their children like to **try new fruits and vegetables** after participating in BASICS.
- More parents **provided their children with fruits and vegetables** after having participated in BASICS.

## LOCAL SUCCESS STORY

## CONTACT INFORMATION