

HEALTHY, HUNGER--FREE KIDS ACT

12/23/2010



Giving our Kids a Healthy Start



As a mother, I know that there is nothing more important than the health and well-being of our children. That's why I was so thrilled to join my husband when he signed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act into law.

By helping provide healthier, more nutritious school meals to more children, this legislation is an important step toward ensuring that no child goes to school hungry and every child has the basic nutrition they need to learn, grow and pursue their dreams.

Yesterday Assistant White House Chef Sam Kass had a very special guest in the kitchen to talk about the importance of having high-quality and delicious school meals: www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2010/12/15/elmo-visits-white-house.

Giving our kids a good start to their day and their future is something that's very near to my heart. That's why earlier this year, I started Let's Move! a nationwide campaign to address the alarming childhood obesity rates in our nation so we can raise a healthier generation of kids.

Everyone knows that a child's health is ultimately the parents' responsibility.

Everywhere I go, I meet parents who are doing their best to keep their kids healthy by cutting down on desserts, serving more fruits and vegetables and trying to teach their kids to eat well and stay active. But kids spend much of their day at school, and for many children, school meals are their main source of nourishment. So it's critical that all the hard work parents do to keep their kids healthy isn't undone by the foods in the school cafeteria or the vending machines in the hallway.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act is a big step in the right direction. Here are just a few things this legislation will do:

- * 115,000 more students will have access to school meal programs. This bill will also cut red tape and paperwork, making it easier for parents to enroll their children in these programs.
- * Nutritional standards will help ensure that our kids have access to healthy food options.
- * Communities and schools will receive assistance in setting up local farm-to-school networks to ensure that more fresh local foods are used in school meals.

Getting the proper nutrition has a major impact not just on our children's health, but on their performance at school. Students who get the nutrition they need perform better in the classroom and miss fewer days of school. And lunchtime is a great time to teach our students important lessons about healthy eating that will last them a lifetime.

As parents who love our children and as citizens who love our country, it's our duty to give children every opportunity to fulfill their potential. Thanks to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, we're one step closer to realizing that goal.

Sincerely,

*First Lady
Michelle Obama*

President and First Lady Michelle Obama jointly delivered remarks during the signing of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 at Harriet Tubman Elementary School, Washington, D.C 12-13-10

