

At the Launch Your Day event, students and their families enjoy a space-themed school breakfast together.

Objective

Increase awareness of the importance of a healthy breakfast for learning and well-being.

The Event

On a school day, invite families to join students for a fun space-themed breakfast in the school's cafeteria. The school can set up MyPlate-themed "space stations," where families can select foods from each food group to "help their day take off" – for example, low-fat milk at the dairy station, whole-wheat pancakes at the grains station, or blueberries at the fruit station. School nutrition staff and student volunteers can explain the stations' connection to MyPlate.

To emphasize the theme, students can dress in astronaut costumes or prepare a brief skit or presentation about how a healthy breakfast helps them "fuel up" like a rocket ship. Students and their families can decorate stars with drawings of their favorite breakfast fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, lean protein foods, and whole grains, creating a starry sky of healthy food choices. Launch Your Day star stickers can be given to students who attend the event. Visit the Team Nutrition Graphics Library for free artwork to include on your stickers (see appendix, page 99).

Planning

Gather a Launch Your Day team. The school nutrition staff will be critical to the success of this event, and can help plan the menu. Teachers and administrators will also need to work together to determine the logistics of the event, such as when to hold the event (for example, during National School Breakfast Week in March) and how to fit students and guests in the cafeteria.

Get students involved. They can:

- Invent names for menu items that tie into the space theme;
- Plan and prepare for the skit;
- Help create costumes; and
- Create invitations and custom-decorated breakfast menus to send home as reminders to families.

Set up the cafeteria in advance and determine staffing. Teachers, school nutrition staff, and parent volunteers will be needed to serve breakfast to a large group of people. If having enough space for guests and children to eat breakfast together poses a problem, sell Launch Your Day "grab and go" breakfast bags that contain nutritional information and are decorated with the theme.

Get the word out. Consider having a breakfast poster competition among students, hanging the posters around the school to build excitement about the event. Send emails and invitations home to families and place alerts in the school newsletter (see page 3 for promotion tips). Parent organizations (e.g., PTA or PTO) can promote the event to families. On the day of the event, make sure the cafeteria is decorated.

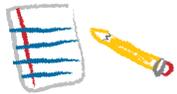
Team Up Success



School

- All students should be encouraged to participate, even if they do not have guests. Students can take different roles in planning and presenting the skit. To get more students involved, the school may want to host different grades on different days.

Classroom



- Teachers can work with students to plan the nutrition skit, drawing on knowledge the kids have learned through Team Nutrition's *Serving Up MyPlate: A Yummy Curriculum* lessons (see appendix, page 94). Fifth and sixth graders can play the *MyPlate Blast Off* game (see appendix, page 98).
- Explore options for enjoying fruit at breakfast through *The Great Garden Detective's* Lesson 10 for third and fourth grade students and *Dig In!'s* Lesson 10 for fifth and sixth grade students. These materials include activities linked to English and language arts, math, science, and health classes (see appendix, page 95).
- For kindergarten teachers, Lesson 5 of *Discover MyPlate* (see appendix, page 94) provides numerous activities related to breakfast. The parent information at the end of *MyPlate for Kindergarten Emergent Readers* discusses the importance of breakfast (see appendix, page 97).

Cafeteria



- School nutrition staff will have an active role in planning and serving the meal. You may also want to have a member of the school nutrition staff introduce the skit, explaining how the school nutrition team plans and serves healthy meals to the students every day (with a particular emphasis on the School Breakfast Program. See <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/school-breakfast-program-sbp> for more details).
- Display the *Launch Your Day With Breakfast* poster and the *It's Launch Time* fruit and vegetable poster (see appendix, page 96) in the cafeteria.
- Promote the event on the school breakfast menu.

Community



- Ask local grocery stores if they can offer coupons or discounts on the foods featured at the breakfast.
- Invite a chef to assist classes with the food preparation activities in the lessons from *The Great Garden Detective Adventure* (Strawberry Smoothie), *Dig In!* (Breakfast Sundae), and *Discover MyPlate* (Fruit-a-licious Breakfast Cup) (see appendix, pages 94-95).
- Invite local officials to have breakfast with the students.

Team Up for Success (cont'd)



Media

- Submit favorite recipes and pictures of the event to the food reporters for the local paper, and encourage them to write a story about the importance of school breakfast.



Home

- Provide families with information about the School Breakfast Program (see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/school-breakfast-program-sbp>).

Schools **IN** Action

Each year, all of the schools in the **El Monte City School District** in **El Monte, CA**, host a *Bring Your Parents to Breakfast* event called “Superheroes Eat Breakfast Too!” During the event, students and families dress as their favorite superheroes, and nutrition educators promote the importance of eating a healthy, well-balanced breakfast. Families and children enjoy breakfast together in the school cafeteria, play nutritional games, participate in fun physical activities, earn prizes, and receive recipe books featuring healthy food choices.

The nutrition education team, also dressed as superheroes, talks to students about the importance of eating a “super” breakfast daily. The cafeteria team members talk about student breakfasts that are served throughout the course of a month. Menu items are also renamed for the promotion – for example, super-galactic cereal, interstellar juice, and Iron Man milk.



[Photo] Nutrition superheroes at *El Monte City School District* take on breakfast.