

**Border Health ;SI!
Special Action Group
February 28, 2001**

Bonnie Shipatalo presented a video on school environment. The video provided great information regarding the importance of healthy eating and being physically active other information provided was concerning physical activity, providing healthy meals and knowing how to choose a variety of fruits, vegetables and grains. This can help lower risk of future chronic disease such as heart disease, strokes, diabetes and cancer.

In the school lunch program about 16 percent of students don't meet the food guide pyramid recommendations, only about 2 percent meet the recommendations. There are low percentages of students meeting the recommended servings which are fruit (15 percent), vegetables (20 percent), grains (25 percent), milk (30 percent), calcium (19 percent) and the guidelines for saturated fat (16 percent). When children do not meet the guidelines and they do not practice a healthy way of eating or not having any physical activity severe consequences can occur. In fact 300,000 deaths each year occur because of unhealthy eating (resulting in chronic disease) and no physical activity (resulting in obesity).

Some schools are trying to turn this around by involving students and parents in developing food nutrition, following USDA guidelines, allowing adequate time for lunch and in many other ways. As parents we also need to be involved in helping our children have healthy eating habits and good physical activity.

Marilynn Johnson then welcomed and thanked all members of the coalition for attending our meeting and had everyone introduce themselves. Marilynn then introduced our speaker, Bonnie Shipatalo, director of Sodhexo Marriott Food Services for Nogales Schools.

Bonnie Shipatalo explained the guidelines and programs in preparing schools breakfast and lunch menus and spoke on what school lunches consist of in order to be consistent with dietary guidelines. In 1994, congress changed the law for school lunches, before this law took effect there was no nutritional analysis, basically as long as you met the meal component that was acceptable, even if everything was fried. In Americans about 15 percent actually follow the dietary guidelines of eating plenty of fruits, vegetables and grains, using less salt and maintaining a healthy weight, choosing a low fat diet, low saturated fat diet and low cholesterol. In menu planning for schools, the USDA recommended certain alternatives in preparing foods which are:

- Food Based/Enhanced food
- Nutrient Based (Numenus)
- Assisted Nutrient
- Pyramid, Diabetic food exchange

In our schools Marriot uses Nutrikids (Nutrient Based System) to plan menus. This type of planning allows the schools to develop special recipes to cut fat and use special ingredients.

By using this method they use a weight nutritional analysis, use of recipes approved by USDA, recipes are sized to students needs and production record are given to the schools. Eventually menu planning is analyzed for the use of appropriate nutrients and about every three years they are audited.

When developing menus for children, there are other considerations besides nutrition. Solving for three (Nutrition, Participation, Cost). The biggest problem is nutrition. Creating a menu that children will eat and have their participation. A meal structure by law requires one entree, fluid milk, and one other item. In offering choices this helps a child learn to make decisions about choosing food, and there is less plate waste. Usually it takes about 15 exposures to new foods before they actually accept it and want to try it.

Equipment and facilities are also taken into consideration when menu planning. Making sure they have the capacity of ovens for cooking, refrigerators for storing, work space, enough pans and serving utensils. Staff is also a major factor. Making sure everyone has additional training, distributing workload and giving fair distribution of work. Financial consideration and cycle menus are also taken into consideration. Calculating nutrient content, central labor cost, control of food cost, and continuing improvement are also major factors in planning the school menus.

Discussion followed:

Marilynn Johnson - Why is sugar not in the analysis for school menus. **Bonnie Shipatelo** - Commented that the menus are looking more into adding carbohydrates than sugar. **Jill de Zapien** - Where does Bonnie see the problem in school lunches? **Bonnie's** - response is that fresh vegetables are not being eaten. They are put out but they prefer or go towards more meat. They would prefer to receive more chicken nuggets but if this would happen the fat content would be too high. **Ila Tittelbaugh** - Comments that improving choices at school, for example when children have a party instead of using cupcakes they should use vegetables. As well as vending machines such as Wade Carpenter, the amount of vending machines are high at this school but, they are kept there to help support the schools field trips. When trying to address this issue to the school the impression she got was that was a "Sacred Cow" that can not be touched. **Marilynn** - asks if providing information of the 5 a day program to schools would make a difference. Would this help? **Nancy Krushaur** - The 5 a day program is available its just up to them in want to use it. **JoJean Elenes** - Commented on the community nutrition program. This program will not start until later this year and is only going out to the third graders in some schools. **Nancy** - If a child would choose only one entree everyday would they meet the guideline? Why not pull pizza from the menu once a week? **Bonnie** response is - No, that's why they offer a variety of foods but, children are not forced to choose. **Nancy** - If by pulling out pizza from the menu would this force children to try something else? **Bonnie's** - response is remembering to balance participation and pizza is number one. The idea is to help students become familiar enough with the menu so that they won't choose the same foods everyday. **Cindy Lefaive** - comments on the "Sacred Cow" at there school is providing soda during there school lunch at Mt. View Elementary. The parents and teacher at the school had signed a petition to remove the soda from school lunch but, they were not successful. **Jill** - a recent study shows that soda was the single most important thing, besides watching t.v.

Bonnie - says soda is also served in her school lunches, the portion that is given to students is about 4 ounces it is a small portion but this keeps students participating in school lunch. It is better to provide a small portion of soda to keep student participation than if students would go to a vending machine and buy a 20 ounce soda. Diet soda is not served in the school lunch, because regular soda is more popular. **Jill** - the bottom line is to explore who the sacred cows are and then decide which sacred cow we would want to take on to make a change. **Bonnie** - comments that legislation at the congressional level has the possibility in considering a law to pull competitive sales (vending machines) in the schools. Some states already have such law. **Ila** - to the people in our coalition team, Can we make the school more aware of the fact of the problem? Can we make them aware that they have an issue and they will need to address the issue at some point? Let them know what they can eliminate from the schools and what they can work with. **Nancy** - How many children take their lunches. **Bonnie** - In elementary school there is about 85 percent participation. In middle schools there is a 95 percent participation. **JoJean** - comments on making this a priority, getting vending machine pulled and maybe make the school board aware of the situation. If we can't abolish the use of vending machines, maybe we can make them healthier. The fact is, we all agree that we have to raise awareness in our community and work together to make a difference.

At our next meeting Dean Fish will speak about the Urban Forestry program and we will continue with our agenda.

Group decided to meet every 4th Wednesday of each month. The next group meeting will be March 28th, 2001, from 12-2p.m. at the United Church Village.