

HEALTH AND FOOD OF THE SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Childhood and adolescence are a critical period for health as physiological needs for nutrients are increased and the consumption of a high-quality diet takes special importance. Eating habits, lifestyles and behavior patterns are created precisely during this period, and they can be preserved even in adulthood

Eating patterns have a significant impact on health and well-being. A healthy diet during childhood and adolescence as well as physical activity reduces the risk of frequent health problems in children, such as obesity, tooth decay. In addition, young people who develop early eating habits are more likely to preserve them, thus preventing the risk of age-related chronic illnesses such as heart disease, cancer, type-2 diabetes and osteoporosis.



WHY TO IMPLEMENT "SCHOOL FOOD NUTRITION PROGRAMME"?

Children attending school need knowledge and skills to help them choose the right foods and develop eating habits so that they can be healthy throughout their lives.

"School Food Nutrition Programme" aims at providing meals from school, while children are attending studies. The implementation of this program in Albania aims at:

- ❑ Improve the nutrition situation of children in Albania.
- ❑ Improve wellbeing and learning abilities, leading to a better performance at school.
- ❑ Improve nutrition habits and increase the socialization of children.
- ❑ Promote healthy nutrition and personal hygiene practices.
- ❑ To promote local farmers' products by improving economic development and community involvement in food delivery in school.

The school also offers a very good opportunity to prevent nutrition-related illnesses as it provides the most effective way to reach a large number of people, including children, school staff, families, and community members.

SCHOOL FOOD NUTRITION PROGRAMME



Prepared in the framework of:

NATIONAL INTEGRATED MULTI-SECTORAL PROGRAM OF FOOD AND NUTRITION IN SCHOOL

WHICH ARE THE MAIN ACTORS THAT PARTICIPATE IN "SCHOOL FOOD NUTRITION PROGRAMME" ?

The implementation of the "School Food Nutrition Programme" requires a multi-sectorial approach and a very good cooperation among all actors:

- School pedagogical staff
- Students and their parents
- Healthcare staff in schools
- School curriculum developers
- Farmers who offer their products
- Food service personnel
- Food Safety Inspectorate
- Dietologists (Nutritionists)
- Representatives of local government and community
- Young volunteers



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

THE BENEFITS OF "SCHOOL FOOD NUTRITION PROGRAMME" ?

1. Schools are a very good environment to provide education on healthy nutrition at an early age.

Most of the eating habits that form during childhood can last throughout life. It is therefore important for children to learn about the benefits of good nutrition and to develop healthy eating habits.

2. Reduces the degree of food insecurity

Providing free or low-priced food supplements in schools reduces the number of families who find it difficult to provide food for their children.

3. Improve the healthy nutrition of children

Including children in the "School Food Program" improves their healthy nutrition by increasing the use of fruits and vegetables. The daily menu offered to children is based on dietary guidelines by age, thus guaranteeing a balanced diet of the diet.

4. Affirms positively in improving health and reducing the level of obesity in children

Obesity during childhood is much related to inappropriate nutrition. Getting a meal at school on a scheduled time and according to a balanced diet, reduces uncontrolled feeding of children and, consequently, the consequences that result from it.

5. Provides a Better Learning Environment

Consuming a meal in society with each other not only improves social relationships between children, but also contributes to the creation of a better learning environment and higher academic achievement.



"School Food Nutrition Programme" has as a component the provision of a more environment friendly for children when consuming food.

Healthy meals offered at school, consumed in a suitable environment from the point of view of food safety, hygiene and friendly atmosphere, can give children:

- The fact that at least a balanced meal is taken during the day, especially for children belonging to the disadvantaged sections of the society;
- An opportunity to learn how to eat and how to enjoy food;
- An opportunity to practice healthy eating habits and experiment with new foods;
- The ability to practice social skills.

