

What is an SNP?

Serving breakfast to school children improves their mental abilities helping them stay alert, pay attention in class and increase their Reading, Math and other standardized test scores.

What is a Student Nutrition Program?

An SNP is a program that offers healthy breakfasts, morning meals, snacks and/or lunches to students each school day.

Why do students participate in Student Nutrition Programs?

There are as many reasons why students participate as there are students participating! These include:

- Not having access to healthy food options outside of school
- Wanting to form social bonds with other students as they have a meal or snack in a communal family-like setting
- Being responsible for making their own breakfasts after their parents have left early for work
- Being late for school and not having time to eat at home
- Not feeling hungry early in the morning
- Having a long commute to school and eating breakfast very early in the morning so that when they finally arrive, they are hungry

How many Student Nutrition Programs are there in Toronto?

There are 812 programs operating across the city every day.

Who has access to Student Nutrition Programs?

Children from 4 to 18 years of age.

What are the key characteristics of the Programs?

- Serve nutritious food that meets the *Student Nutrition Program Nutrition Standard*;
- Are non-stigmatizing to participants;
- Are open to all students regardless of their ability to pay;
- Are locally based, unique reflections of the communities they serve;

- Are supported by grants, parental contributions, and local fundraising.

Programs would not operate effectively without the extensive support from an array of community volunteers including parents, school staff and student volunteers. These individuals bring their knowledge, experience and care as they build programs that enrich the entire community.

Why are SNPs important?

Research shows that Student Nutrition Programs positively influence overall student health and improve academic performance and behaviour. In fact, students who eat breakfast most days earn higher marks in reading, math and science. Also, over three quarters of high school students who eat a nutritious morning meal on most days are on track to graduate, which, in turn, impacts their future career opportunities and stability. Students also develop healthier eating habits, which can lower rates of childhood obesity and reduce chances of chronic diseases later in life.^[1]

School administrators notice that after the implementation of nutrition programs, overall student attitude and behaviour improve and more students arrive at school on time

[1] Toronto District School Board, "[Feeding Our Future: The First and Second Year Evaluation](#)," Toronto District School Board Research and Information Services, (March, 2012): 6, 8, 11, 28.

Do Student Nutrition Programs provide other benefits to the community?

Yes! Outside of the direct benefits students receive from SNPs, there are many spin-off benefits that impact the community as a whole. The program offers a place where new Canadian parents and community members can become connected to their school community by participating in the program as volunteers. They have the opportunity to develop connections with teachers and other parents, learn new skills, and build social connections. It also has the added benefit of breaking down cultural and social barriers as community members work side by side to nourish children.