



FACT SHEET

EAT SMART: NORTH CAROLINA'S Recommended Standards For All Foods Available In School

The Problem:

- Childhood overweight is a health crisis in North Carolina.
- Between 1995 and 2000, the prevalence of overweight in North Carolina's children increased 40 percent in 5 to 11 years olds, 25 percent in 12 to 18 year olds and 36 percent in 2 to 4 year olds.
- In 2000 overweight and obesity costs in North Carolina were \$2.14 billion, not including lost productivity and premature death.
- The leading causes of death in North Carolina are heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes. Obesity and overweight are risk factors for all these diseases and emerge from unhealthy eating patterns and inadequate physical activity that begin in childhood.

The Causes:

Genetics play a small role, but the major contributors to overweight and obesity are **lifestyles and surroundings** that foster

- eating and drinking large portions of high calorie foods and beverages, and
- lack of physical activity that does not burn those calories.

A Highly Visible Solution

Eat Smart: NC's Recommended Standards For All Foods Available In School grew out of a recommendation from the NC Healthy Weight Initiative's 100-member task force. "Set state standards for all foods and beverages available in school" was one of four policy and environmental recommendations presented in the task force report, *Moving Our Children Toward a Healthy Weight: Finding the Will and the Way*.

The *Eat Smart Recommended Standards For All Foods Available In School* is only one part of the solution. Effective action will require vigorous support by families, school and community leaders, and policy makers.

The Eat Smart Standards will help local education agencies, with the help of their School Health Advisory Councils, to generate local policy to address:

- school parties and celebrations,
- snacks and beverages in vending machines outside cafeterias,
- a la carte items in cafeterias,
- fundraising events, and
- after-school snack programs.

For a complete list of the Standards visit

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/> or email nchealthyweight@ncmail.net