

# "nutrition policy in schools" argumentative essays examples

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The problem of obesity in children in USA has taken the form of an epidemic. The rising obesity figures in children show consistency and are directly proportional to meals offered in the schools; these meals are being testified now (Menschik, Ahmad and Alexander 33). A lot of research and existing practice evaluations have been carried and practiced by the United States Department of Agriculture; to meet the nutrition standards and enforce compliance with dietary guidelines for children (Joshi, Misako and Feenstra 41). In 2013, USDA adopted a reformatory policy of serving healthier meals (rich in nutrition and low in fats, using vegetables, fruits, etc.) with updated nutrition standards. Adding to the success of this program, around 86% of total schools were certified as complying with the regulated healthy food serving norms (School Foods and Beverages, The State of Obesity, 2014). Later Smart Snacks were also proposed to be introduced in schools across USA by 2015.

But it still needs to be ratified whether this policy by USDA has resulted in curbing obesity problems in children. Despite the efforts the obesity figures are on a rise in school children; as per statistics about 17% of the children in US are obese. Thesis: " The policies of the USDA over the years have been slow in achieving their mission. The mission of UDSA is ensuring healthy and nutritious food in schools. The stakeholders in this situation are the school children; children of all age groups in schools all over USA. Another stake holder is the health department followed by the school officials and parents. Despite the efforts the underground market of junk food is booming as students rejected the school lunches. The actions and policies of the USDA have proved to be a damper recently; with little attention being paid to the

lifestyle of the children. The lack of rest and sports has led to the underperformance of the USDA." Stakeholders of the problem are the children; they go to school every day and need to have a good nutrition and a healthy lifestyle. Parents: The parents are the primary guiding force for the children. If healthy eating habits are developed at home they can be followed with ease at school too. Keeping a check on children regarding their eating habits will help the authorities. " A Team Nutrition has been created to develop partnership of parents and teachers." (Team Nutrition, USDA, 2014). Public schools: Represented by Principals and Teachers. They deal with the nutrition problem of the children every day. Frequent communication between the teachers and parents will help in developing healthy eating habits. Officials: The government official establishes the policies in the school and provides incentives to the school canteen to ensure healthy and accessible food to children and family.

The USDA is the Agricultural Department of USA. It works closely with the health department, began this policy for multiple reasons. In spite of the nationwide implementation on behalf of the health department, students are still reacting negatively to the current policy; the proof is the rising obesity cases in America. The prime cause for this is still prevalent access to competitive food in schools. The competitive food refers to the ready to eat segment of fast foods, high in calories/fats and often served via vending machines. The following issues are loopholes in USDA policy, which have mitigated its effectiveness: The healthy food is available only during lunch hours and after that the post school and other activities are open to access for buying the competitive food. Thus, children eat the mandated food during

lunch but also keep eating competitive foods during other scheduled (Finkelstein, Hill & Whitaker 252).

The policy changes have been stringently imposed over primary level schools and slightly relaxed over the mid level and high schools. The rising obesity pattern is severed in high school cases, as children with better decision making are more inclined to junk food (Wagner, Senaur and Runge 677). The Health Department gets crucial revenue generation by the sale of packaged foods, and they are thus not evaded off the school premises (Menschik, Ahmad and Alexander 30). Again, the automated vending machines have no match to manual check on regulating repetitive or abundant consumption by students.

Hence, the above flaws above in USDA's policy need to be revamped into stern measures to curtail the impending threat of obesity and other fatty food consumption issues in American Children.

The USDA has several policies related to the food and nutrition of students in schools. The USDA has the following programs that apply for all the academic year: The School Breakfast Policy: The acronym of the policy is SBP; it is about the availability of a healthy breakfast inside the school before 9 am. The breakfast is the most important food of the day and the children need to consume all the food groups as they have all the required proteins, carbohydrates and glucose to contribute to the good performance of the student in school (Iphi Online 1). Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Policy: The FFVP is about the supply and consumption of vegetables and fresh fruit by the students when they are in school. The availability of competitive junk food with attractive advertisements lures the kids to give up fresh fruits and

vegetables. Several companies that produce sodas, snacks and gum compete to attract the school children with exciting offers. The average content of children in breakfast and lunch must include fresh fruits and vegetable as they are best sources of nutrients, calcium, carbohydrates and other minerals (Oklahoma State Department of Education 1).

**Special Milk Policy:** The SMP is about the milk supplied to students high in calcium. The milk especially the low fat variety must be available in school, especially in the first years of scholarship of the student in school. The provision of lactose, calcium, protein, sweet and water that the milk provides to the children compliments the balanced food that the children need in school. A minimum of one glass of milk a day contributes to the good performance in the school and day activities of the children. **Summer Food Service Policy:** The provision of healthy food for the children does not end when the schools year ends. It is necessary to guarantee that the children take healthy food when they are on vacations.

The children must not take the summer vacation as an opportunity to consume unhealthy foods that affect their health, weight and measures. From July to September more than 200 million free meals are served in the fifty states of United States of America to benefit children of low income preventing the increase of fat and weight that contribute to the increase in height and strength in the children. **Child and Adult Care Food Policy:** The goal of this policy is to benefit 120, 000 adults and 3. 3 million children in a different institution for children, adults and day care homes. This policy complements the work of the USDA in the schools with other institutions that do not provide the regular education program. The child care institutions are

for children that will enter school two or three years later and the adult care institution are for retired people with low-income that are more than 70 years old.

The National School Lunch Policy: The program was launched by Harry Truman in 1946 to cover public and non-profit private schools to give to the students and children healthy lunch after the breakfast or in the afternoon. The idea is to ensure that the student receives at the end of the day the breakfast and lunch with healthy parameters helping them to improve their performance in school and daily life (United States Department of Agriculture 1).

### **There are certain fruitful recommendations for the application of USDA policies in schools.**

As the nutrition is an essential and initial part of a healthy life for the children but is necessary to compliment the good nutrition with a daily physical activity and rest. The physical activity may be any athletic activity that helps to increase the body metabolism of the children to absorb better the nutrients from the food. The popular sports like Baseball, Football and swimming coordination with the local and national popular athletes may improve this strategy.

Adequate rest is another in ensuring a healthy life for children. The children must sleep at least eight hours a day or compliment the time with naps in the morning or afternoon in the school. The government is trying to come up with schemes like Chefs Move to School Program; wherein chefs will design a healthy and tasty food menu for the kids. The new standards will cost the government over \$3. 2 billion; but these efforts will not be successful till

these initiatives are integrated with interesting sports facilities and provision of adequate rest in the form of rest breaks even at school.

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