



## The most important meal on a budget – Breakfast!

**Objectives:** **4-H'ers** will be able to

- \* explain the importance of breakfast
- \* list nutritious breakfast foods
- \* identify which breakfast foods are non-perishable
- \* plan a balanced breakfast with a given budget

### Part 1

#### **Overview:**

The purpose of this lesson is to make 4-H'ers aware of the importance of breakfast for themselves and others who must use the services of a food pantry.

Surveys have shown that breakfast helps students concentrate and learn better, stay awake, and have more energy. This lesson will help demonstrate to 4-H'ers why a balanced breakfast is important to their health and scholastic performance.

The activities will increase awareness of the need for nutritious breakfast foods to be available at food pantries and will demonstrate how difficult it is to plan nutritious meals on a budget.

#### **Materials/References:**

Discussion sheet  
Whiteboard or Flipchart  
Markers

#### **Procedures:**

Have a discussion with members about breakfast using the questions below. As they answer the discussion questions, write their responses on the board. If there are answers on the discussion sheet that the students don't list, add them to the board and discuss as well.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- Who ate breakfast this morning?
- Do you eat breakfast every morning?
- What makes it difficult to eat breakfast every morning?
- If you do have breakfast, what do you eat?

- *What happens when you don't eat breakfast?*
- *Why do you think it's important for children to eat breakfast?*
- *Does what you eat for breakfast change how you feel in school or during any day?*

## **Part 2: YUM! LET'S EAT!**

### **Materials/References:**

Assorted breakfast food items, including cereals, breads, pop-tarts, waffle & pancake mixes, fruit, juice - **brought by members for the activity (2) below.**

### **Procedures:**

1. Planning for the activity with the club: Give each member a budget amount and ask them to plan a breakfast for the club. Base the amount on the number of members, as if feeding a family of X people. Have each member bring what they'd like to eat for breakfast to the next meeting and ask them to look at the cost of the items as they collect their favorites.
2. Activity with the club: Compare the foods that were brought to the meeting and compare the vitamins, fats-saturated vs. unsaturated, cholesterol, etc. in each item. List the items and their cost on the whiteboard and rank them from most to least nutritious.

Look at which items are non-perishable and discuss what ones could be taken to a food bank or pantry.

Discuss whether they could make a healthy, delicious breakfast with only the non-perishables they brought to the meeting. Would they want to eat those items for breakfast on a regular basis?

3. *Optional:* The club arranges to have a special meeting to actually have breakfast together before or after doing part 2.

## Lesson 1: Discussion Questions & Answer sheet:

Many children start the day without eating breakfast; other children only eat a quick snack. What are some of the reasons why a child may not be starting the day with a balanced breakfast?

- There isn't enough time in the morning
- They are not hungry when they first wake up
- Their parents have already left for work and can't make breakfast
- They have a long bus ride to school
- Since parents don't eat breakfast at home, kids don't take the time to eat either
- They may not have food at home for breakfast

What happens when children don't eat breakfast—or eat a poor breakfast?

- It is harder for them to pay attention because they are hungry
- They may complain of stomachaches or headaches more often
- They may be irritable and act out
- They do not perform as well on tests or quizzes at school or in other activities

What can parents and children do to ensure that kids eat breakfast?

- Get up a half an hour earlier so that the whole family can eat breakfast together
- Prepare backpacks the night before to make more time in the morning to eat without being rushed
- Bring a healthy snack to eat before school or an activity
- Access the school breakfast program in their individual schools

What are the benefits of eating breakfast? Of a school breakfast program?

- Well-fed children are better prepared to learn
- Children are less likely to be absent or tardy
- A school breakfast program allows children of all socio-economic backgrounds to participate, thereby reducing the stigma for children who depend on it
- A school breakfast program assures parents their children are receiving nutrition to keep them fueled for the day's lessons and activities
- School meals in general reduce the risk of obesity in children by providing regular, balanced meals that are low in fat and sugar, and by preventing episodic hunger and subsequent snacking and overeating

based on: VT Campaign to End Childhood Hunger - Feeding Minds Hunger Curriculum