

Can Eating **Breakfast** make a Difference with **Students**?

Yes! It makes a difference in behavior and academic performance. Eating breakfast stops transient hunger. This is the hunger that everyone feels when they have not eaten for awhile.

Adults can pay attention and keep working on tasks when they are hungry. Scientific evidence shows that children and teens usually have not learned to do this.

Symptoms of transient hunger such as headache, fatigue, sleepiness and restlessness affect students' behavior and learning.

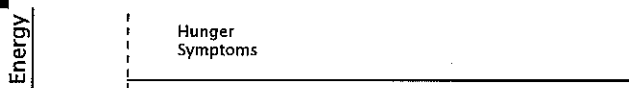
This is true for every student who is hungry, even those who usually eat well balanced meals. What matters is that they are hungry now.

Transient hunger symptoms can be avoided by keeping energy levels up. Any breakfast provides some nutrition, but when high sugar foods are chosen, energy levels may drop before lunchtime. A well balanced school breakfast contains several food groups for energy throughout the morning.

The following charts show how a school breakfast keeps energy levels up longer.

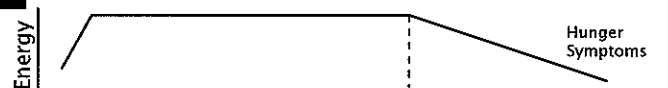
Compare the Energy available for Learning from Four Different **Breakfasts**

1 Fruit, Fruit Juice, Candy, Soft Drink or Sweetened Fruit Drink



Energy drops about an hour after eating a sugary meal.

2 Orange Juice and Toast or Dry Cereal



3 Orange Juice, Toast or Cereal with Skim Milk



4 Orange Juice, Toast or Cereal with 2% or Whole Milk



Classroom activities require close attention in the morning hours. Students who have not eaten are not prepared for learning.

Breakfast is more likely to improve learning if it is served close to classroom work time. Students are more likely to eat breakfast at school when it is served during a morning lass or between class periods.

How much Difference does **Breakfast** make?

A Lot!

- Students who eat breakfast have better test scores. They need to eat well every day, not just on test day.
- Students who eat breakfast feel better and concentrate longer. They are less likely to leave the classroom to visit the nurse's office.
- Students who eat breakfast are more alert and less restless. They are less likely to cause disciplinary problems.
- Students who eat breakfast can perform better physically.
- Where school breakfast is served, there is less tardiness and there are fewer absences.
- School breakfast builds rapport in the community. It is a service that families of every socioeconomic group can use.
- School breakfast creates a positive learning environment that gets every child ready to learn.