

OPI School Nutrition Programs

Christine Emerson is Director of School Nutrition Programs in the Health Enhancement and Safety Division of the Montana Office of Public Instruction. The School Nutrition Programs unit has a mission “To ensure schools provide nutritious meals and promote healthy lifestyles [throughout Montana] through collaborative education and training, and administration of the USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture] School Nutrition Programs.”

Activities Relevant to State Plan to Prevent Obesity: Ensure that quality, healthy, safe meals are provided to children every school day.

Services/Recipients: School Nutrition Programs include the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Afterschool Snack Program, Special Milk Program, Summer Food Service Program, Food Distribution Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and Cooperative Food Purchase Program. School Nutrition Programs contract with Montana State University to manage the School Nutrition Assistance Program and Montana Team Nutrition Program.

State Plan Settings: Schools.

CDC Behaviors:

- Increasing fruit & vegetable consumption;
- Decreasing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption;
- Decreasing consumption of junk food.

Gaps and Concerns: Align the MT NAPA State Plan with priorities/recommendations for Congressional action on the Child Nutrition Reauthorization issued by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Food Research and Action Center. Also, potential for USDA control of all foods in school - currently decisions are made by school organizations or school boards.