The Urgency around School Breakfast

1 in 8 children in the U.S. is food-insecure.

A school meal may be the only nutritious meal many American children eat on some days.

Moving school breakfast outside the cafeteria overcomes hurdles including timing, convenience, and stigma associated with participation.

“GENYOUth’s success with Grab and Go breakfast has given us valuable insights on how to optimize school, educator, and student engagement in this remarkable program.”
Ann Marie Krautheim, CEO, GENYOUth

WHY SCHOOL BREAKFAST IS IMPORTANT

Of all the steps schools can take toward creating healthier, higher-achieving students and a culture of wellness, implementing school breakfast is perhaps the simplest and most cost-effective, with very possibly the most direct impact.

Breakfast is linked with numerous health and educational benefits — including improved academic performance, student behavior, school attendance, and nutrition intake, while also addressing hunger. Additionally, because schools receive federal reimbursement for each meal served, school breakfast supports the financial bottom line. For these reasons, increasing student access to school breakfast is a particular focus of GENYOUth’s work.

WHY KIDS MISS BREAKFAST

Time constraints and the lack of appetite early in the morning are among cited reasons. But in many cases, it’s strictly economic. More than 9 million Americans under age 18 live in food-insecure households in which family funds are insufficient to buy adequate food during at least some periods. Breakfast is the first meal to be sacrificed.

ENTER THE NATIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

The National School Breakfast Program (SBP) is an important solution that provides a healthy morning meal to millions of students across the country. But many millions more students are missing out. In fact, only 59 low-income students participate in school breakfast for every 100 who participate in school lunch.

THE POWER OF ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL BREAKFAST MODELS

The Food Research & Action Center’s annual School Breakfast Scorecard recognizes breakfast after the bell that moves breakfast out of the cafeteria as the most successful strategy for increasing school breakfast participation. Grab and Go breakfasts — in which students pick up a nutritious morning meal from mobile carts strategically placed in high-traffic areas in school buildings or on-campus — are especially easy and effective, allowing students to eat on the way to class, during class, or in designated areas. Grab and Go breakfast overcomes hurdles like timing, convenience, and stigma of participation associated with traditional breakfast in the cafeteria. In fact, research has demonstrated that when breakfast is brought to students (adolescents in particular) in an unrestricted hallway, more students receiving free and reduced-priced meals choose to participate. And Grab and Go breakfast meets the government school meal requirements developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
GENYOUth’s BREAKFAST CASE STUDIES

Each breakfast cart system increases student access to about 100,000 breakfasts in one school year.

GENYOUth is helping schools nationwide close the gap in school breakfast participation with a turn-key Grab and Go Breakfast System. With support from our funding partners, GENYOUth has placed over 550* Grab and Go Breakfast Systems in high-need schools across the U.S., increasing participation by 1.2% on average, with increases up to 27%, and providing access to over 50 million school breakfast opportunities a year.

GENYOUth’s Grab and Go Breakfast System includes:

- Multipurpose Cart (approx. 1 cart per 500 students)
- Cooler Barrel (to keep milk cold)
- Remote Point of Sale System (one per cart)

“Breakfast-after-the-bell service models (Breakfast-in-the-Classroom, Grab and Go, Second Chance Breakfast) overcome timing, convenience, and stigma barriers that get in the way of children participating in school breakfast, and are even more impactful when combined with offering breakfast at no charge to all students.”  
Food Research & Action Center School Breakfast Scorecard 2017-18

SUCCESS IN FLORIDA: SUPER SCHOOL BREAKFAST LEGACY INITIATIVES WITH SUPER BOWLS LIV & LV

As the official hunger initiative partner of the Miami & Tampa Super Bowl Host Committees, GENYOUth worked with education and business leaders in a successful effort to increase access to 15.4 million meals as part of a Super School Breakfast Initiative. 100 Grab and Go Breakfast Systems in the Miami area were deployed and 55 Grab and Go Breakfast Systems in the Tampa Bay area were distributed to area school districts. Business support included Florida Blue Foundation, Florida Power & Light and others, in partnership with the Miami & Tampa Super Bowl Host Committees and in collaboration with The Dairy Council of Florida.

GENYOUth AND PEPSICO FOUNDATION: AN EMPLOYEE-ENGAGEMENT MODEL

PepsiCo Foundation’s Ready, Step, Move...Give! initiative is an employee-wellness walking program in which employee steps taken are converted to dollars donated to GENYOUth to purchase and place Grab and Go breakfast carts in high-need schools around the country. Now in its third year, Ready, Step, Move...Give! and GENYOUth will reach 110 schools and provide up to 10 million healthy Grab and Go school breakfasts — thanks to billions of steps taken by over 10,000 PepsiCo employees each year!

*Placed in 2017-2022

GENYOUth empowers students to create a healthier future for themselves and their peers. GENYOUth convenes a network of private and public partners to raise funds for youth wellness initiatives that bolster healthy, high-achieving students, schools, and communities nationwide. We believe that all students are change-agents who deserve the opportunity to identify and lead innovative solutions that positively impact nutrition, physical activity, and student success. Learn more at www.genyouthnow.org.