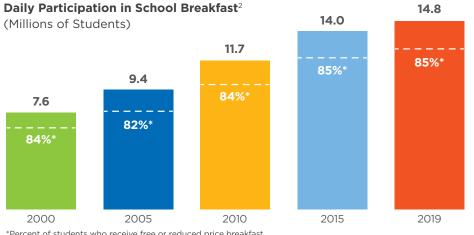
# **School Breakfast Matters**

### **Reach of School Breakfast**

School breakfast participation has doubled in just 20 years. By 2019, nearly 15 million children participated in school breakfast every day and 85% of them qualified for free or reduced price meals. One in seven children in the U.S. is food insecure<sup>1</sup> with much higher rates projected due to COVID-19. School breakfast reaches children who are most at-risk for food insecurity,<sup>2</sup> providing them vital nutrition to support mood, attention, and cognition.<sup>3</sup>



\*Percent of students who receive free or reduced price breakfast

### Looking at the Science

Breakfast is linked with numerous health and educational benefits - including improved academic performance, increased school attendance, more focused classroom behavior, and better dietary intake.4-7

#### A systematic review of 45 breakfast studies<sup>8</sup> showed that:

Students who eat breakfast have positive outcomes, such as

- Improved math & memory
- Better satiety, and
- Increased attention in class.

Nutritionally vulnerable children demonstrated the most substantial outcomes on their

- Verbal skills,
- Memorization, and
- Matching tests.





## **Breakfast & Brain Activation**

Significantly higher brain activation is observed in the pre-frontal cortex when a nutritionally balanced breakfast is consumed. This area of the brain is involved in the control of emotion, mood, expectations, behavior, reward, decisionmaking, and cognition.9-10 Thus, a child who is fed a nutritious breakfast is likely to be more calm, focused, organized, thoughtful and ready to learn.

Call to Action: Help create awareness of the numerous health and educational benefits of school breakfast and encourage children to participate in the school breakfast program.





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