Teaching nutrition education to students throughout their educational experience is key to developing healthy habits to last a lifetime. Over the past 15 years, a collaborative effort between Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) and Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County’s Nutrition Education Program (NEP) has worked on building these healthy habits among students and their families.

In 2000, NEP staff developed school enrichment nutrition kits to provide age-appropriate nutrition education for 1st, 4th and 5th grade classrooms. The kits were designed to meet LPS nutrition curriculum objectives. Teachers use the kits to enhance their existing health textbooks.

Kits include supplemental lessons using hands-on materials such as science experiments, posters, wall charts, interactive games, food models, activity sheets, books, videos, puppets and more! Each grade level kit incorporates reading, math and science.

The kits have increased nutrition education in participating classrooms from an average of 2 hours per year to as high as 12 hours per year. In 2004, kits were developed for kindergarten, 2nd and 3rd grades. By 2010, nutrition kits were developed for middle school health and family & consumer science classes.

This program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, targeting limited-income families. To be eligible for the kits, schools need to have at least 50 percent free and reduced-price lunch participation. Currently, 25 elementary and middle schools are eligible for hands-on educational experiences.

Nutrition kits contain all the materials needed for hands-on educational experiences.

### Teachers Say...

“A child’s educational world has become so driven by testing. Using the nutrition kit provides a refreshing way to teach and learn. The students (and their teacher) love the curriculum’s hands-on activities, games, experiments and brain breaks. I look forward to teaching this unit next year! Thanks for providing such an organized and motivational set of materials.”

—Susan Horne, Holmes Elementary

“We have been using the UNL nutrition kits for quite a few years. It is entertaining to see the kids initial reaction when they are told we are going to learn about nutrition and health (insert the groans and moans here). However, they quickly come to learn that the nutrition kits are more than just another lesson out of the text books. We have a blast using the hands-on materials to explore germs, nutrition and many other important components that contribute to living a healthy lifestyle. At the end of every session, I can truly say that both my students and I have a better understanding of what it takes to live healthy and ways to make that happen!”

—Molly Trumble, Hartley Elementary

“Always look forward to when we receive the nutrition kits. Having used them for a number of years in 2nd grade. I knew that when I moved to 3rd grade that they would be great, and I was right. The kit was packed with hands-on activities that were not only very motivating for the students, but also reflect the topics on nutrition that are relevant to an 8 or 9 year old. For a teacher, the kit was so complete and well organized, it was easy to know the objective and to make plans for health class.”

—Karen Hofer, Hartley Elementary

“Teachers Say...”

“The video helped me eat more healthy food on my breakfast plate. Something I learned from the video is eating breakfast helps you think smart and it helps you stay active.”

—Riley Elementary 4th grader

“You inspired me to always wash my hands and make yummy, healthy snacks to stay healthy. The veggie roll-up you helped us make was so delicious that my parents and I am planning to buy the yogurt, ranch seasoning, tortilla and the carrots. My whole family wants to try it!”

—Lakeview Elementary 4th grader

“Students Say...”

“Teachers Say...”

“Students Say...”

Teacher evaluations are seen nutrition kits on page 3