



Chapter 1 Welcome to Power Panther Pals!

You will be participating in an innovative eight-week health education program for 4th, 5th and 6th graders that is designed to increase both their:

- Fruit and vegetable consumption, and
- Physical activity.

Power Panther Pals has been updated this year to include a number of new and exciting additions! You will find that each week's lesson plan now includes "6th Grader Extras." You may find that these "extra" activities are more developmentally appropriate for your 6th grade students than the regular Power Panther Pals activities. They may be found in the **EAT SMART** and/or **PLAY HARD** sections of a lesson.

Aspects of another successful program, Kids a Cookin', have been incorporated into Power Panther Pals. These hands-on activities replace the tasting activities that have been included in Power Panther Pals in the past. You'll also find more information about MyPyramid for Kids (the new and updated food pyramid from the USDA) and even some fruit and veggie jokes! Kansas Team Nutrition is very excited about the changes that have been made to Power Panther Pals and hope that you continue to find this program to be an innovative and useful tool as you teach your students about nutrition and physical activity. Thank you for your hard work and commitment to making your students healthier!

How the Program Works

Everything needed for implementation of Power Panther Pals (PPP) program activities is included in the box of materials sent to you with the exception of the food needed for the Kids a Cookin' activities. These supplies need to be purchased each week by the teacher or program facilitator. Funds for the purchase of fruits and vegetables will be transferred directly to the school district (or private school) for deposit into the food service fund (page 10).

At the onset of the program:

- The program facilitator will divide students into teams of no more than six students.
- Each student will receive a PPP Membership Card (provided).
- Students will be introduced to the PPP program.

During week 2 of the program:

- Students will participate in the goal-setting activity.
- Each student will determine personal goals for the upcoming seven weeks.

During each week of the program:

- The facilitator will implement the activities outlined in Chapter 3 of this manual. Each week there is an **EAT SMART** activity and a **PLAY HARD** activity. The **EAT SMART** activity will always have a tasting/cooking component.
- Student activity sheets (provided) will be completed by students to reinforce the **EAT SMART** and **PLAY HARD** messages taught in the lessons.
- Students will be required to record fruits and vegetables consumed and the amount of daily activity. Log forms are provided in the Student Activity Book.
- Take-home newsletters for parents (provided) will be sent home six of the eight weeks.

At the conclusion of the program:

- Every student who participated in PPP will receive a Certificate of Participation (provided).
- Every student who met his/her personal goals for at least five of the seven weeks will receive a carabineer clip (provided).
- The team with the highest number of “Power Points” will receive a water bottle for each team member (provided).



Background

Power Panther is...

the official spokescharacter of the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) **EAT SMART. PLAY HARD.** campaign. **EAT SMART. PLAY HARD.** is a national nutrition education and promotion campaign designed to convey science-based, behavior-focused and motivational messages about healthy eating and physical activity. Essentially, **EAT SMART. PLAY HARD.** is about making our nation's children healthier!



The purpose of Power Panther Pals is...

to make students aware of the importance of enjoying healthful foods with particular emphasis on fruit and vegetable consumption. Throughout the program, students will also participate in enjoyable, daily physical activities.

Kids a Cookin' is...

a K-State Research & Extension program designed to share the fun and skills of cooking with children and those who guide them. Preparing quality food together can also provide quality time with kids. The recipe for cooking success is simple... Just you and your kids!

Body Walk is...

a unique Kansas educational program designed to involve kindergarten through fifth grade students in learning the skills and choices for a healthy lifestyle. Body Walk is an enclosed walk-through exhibit that travels to Kansas schools. Power Panther is the mascot for Body Walk. Power Panther Pals was designed as a "stand-alone" program, but also as a companion activity to Body Walk.

Team Nutrition is...

a USDA school-based program that encourages children to make healthful food choices. This nationwide, integrated initiative designed to encourage children to eat a variety of foods; to eat more fruits, vegetables and grains; to eat lower fat foods more often; and to be physically active. A Team Nutrition grant awarded to the Kansas State Department of Education provided funds to develop and implement Power Panther Pals.

Lack of Physical Activity

In recent years, many Kansas schools have reduced the amount of time devoted to physical education. During this period, children have also become less active during their after-school hours. They are more likely to spend their free time watching television or using a computer than they are to engage in physical activity.

Studies have found a link between physical activity, nutrition and improvements in test scores for students: "... research evidence has concluded that physical activity and nutrition significantly affect student achievement" (2). Power Panther Pals provides an opportunity for educators to address both improved nutrition and physical activity habits to ensure that Kansas students have every opportunity to achieve optimal health and academic success.

References:

1. School Wellness Policy and Practice: Meeting the Needs of Low-Income Students. (Feb. 2006).
2. An Epidemic of Childhood Obesity and Implications for Children and Society at Large (2005). In Koplan, J.P., Liverman, C.T., & Kraak, V.I. (Eds.) *Preventing Childhood Obesity Health in the Balance* (pp. 21-24). Washington D.C.: National Academic Press.
3. Hanson, T.L., Austin, G., & Lee-Bayha, J. (2004). Ensuring that no child is left behind. WestEd: San Francisco.



Teacher's Notes