

Case Study

Promoting Environmentally Friendly Mealtime Independence among Children and Nurturing All Five Senses through Hands-on Cooking Workshops

Tokyo Gas Co., Ltd.

In 1992, concerned about a decline in children's dietary knowledge and the onset of lifestyle-related diseases at an increasingly early age, Tokyo Gas launched its Kids in the Kitchen cooking classes for elementary school students and children accompanied by their parents. In addition, since 1995, when growing public awareness of the environment began to emerge, Tokyo Gas launched its Eco-Cooking initiative, which used dietary habits as the jumping-off point for thinking about environmentally friendly lifestyles. Elements of this program have been incorporated into Kids in the Kitchen, offering an opportunity to think about energy and environmental problems.

In the Kids in the Kitchen workshops, experienced instructors teach children about well-balanced menus using seasonal ingredients, with the objective of giving them "the ability to live" through good diet, with a particular focus on environmentally friendly mealtime independence and nurturing all five senses. The recipes for each workshop effectively incorporate Eco-Cooking ideas, such as adjusting the heat of the stove to an appropriate level and putting lids on saucepans, as well as teaching children how to demonstrate consideration for the environment throughout the process of shopping for food, cooking it, eating it, and cleaning up afterwards.



Children wear expressions of intense concentration as they work together to prepare a dish.



An example of Eco-Cooking.

- (Left) Wipe any water off the bottom of the saucepan before placing it on the heat
- (Middle) Ensure that the flame does not extend beyond the bottom of the saucepan
- (Right) Put a lid on the saucepan when placing it on the heat

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Case Study

Shokuiku by sports dietitians for Parents/Guardians and Coaches of Junior Athletes

~ Hands-on Sports Nutrition Seminars for the Top Athletes of the Future ~

The Japan Dietetic Association

The Japan Dietetic Association organized Hands-on Sports Nutrition Seminars at which accredited JASA sports dietitians, who are experts in the field of sports nutrition, joined forces to provide advice to the parents/guardians and coaches of junior athletes with the potential to compete in the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020. After kicking off in Tokyo in FY2015, the seminars began to be held at various locations around the country in FY2016, with the goal of attracting the participation of 5,000 people over the next four years.

As junior athletes are still in a period of physical growth and development, maintaining a good balance of nutrition, exercise, and rest is vital, so it is necessary to gain appropriate knowledge to achieve this and incorporate that knowledge into daily life. Accordingly, the program for these seminars has been put together with the objective of providing basic knowledge about sports nutrition to promote the healthy physical growth and development of junior athletes and improve their competitive performance, as well as offering hands-on education that enables seminar participants to leverage that knowledge and put it into practice at home or in the training environment.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 offer the ideal opportunity for children to gain first-hand experience of the joy and fun of sport, and to foster an interest in improving their competitive performance. The Japan Dietetic Association plans to continue holding these seminars, taking advantage of this opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of Shokuiku for children from the perspective of sports nutrition.



The "athlete's bento box" served for lunch



The 151 participants in the Tokyo seminar received completion certificates



Completion certificates

Chapter 3: Shokuiku Promotion in Schools, Nursery Schools, etc.

1 Improvement of Shokuiku system in schools

- In conducting Shokuiku in schools, it is vital that diet and nutrition teachers should play the central role in providing instruction, while working in partnership with all members of the teaching staff, who should share a common understanding of the topic. As such, it is necessary to promote the deployment of additional diet and nutrition teachers.
- Since FY2005, diet and nutrition teachers have been employed in public elementary schools and junior high schools, with a total of 5,356 such teachers nationwide (as of April 1, 2015).

2 Improvement of Shokuiku curriculum in schools

- Shokuiku in schools is carried out not only through school lunch programs, but also through each subject and the Period for Integrated Studies.
- Diet and nutrition teachers serve as the cornerstone of the promotion of Shokuiku in schools, achieving a highly synergistic effect from an educational perspective by ensuring that guidance concerning diet is integrated consistently with the management of school lunches.
- In March 2008, “promoting Shokuiku in schools” was clearly positioned in the Curriculum Guideline for both elementary and junior high schools.
- MEXT analyzed the impact of Shokuiku on a variety of aspects, including the improvement of academic ability and health of the children, promotion of the consumption of local produce and understanding of the dietary culture, in cooperation with universities, private companies, producers and organizations involved in Shokuiku. 35 schools were selected for the implementation of 30 “Super Shokuiku School” projects as model schools to implement pilot Shokuiku activities for the dissemination and utilization of the result of the analysis.

3 Improvement of school lunches

1 Provision for school lunches

- As of May 2014, school lunch was provided for around 9.6 million students at a total of 31,021 schools: 20,380 elementary schools (99.2 % of all elementary schools) and 9,210 junior high schools (87.9 % of all junior high schools).
- To improve measures by schools to address allergies to school lunches, MEXT prepared reference materials such as “The Guidelines on Measures against Allergy to School Lunch” and distributed them to boards of education and schools across the country in March 2015, as well as promoting initiatives targeting children with food allergies.

2 Use of local produces

- The average usage rate of local produces nationwide in FY2014 was 26.9% (by number of ingredients used). The usage rate of domestically produced ingredients was 77% (by number of ingredients used).
- MAFF sought to promote the development of a new system for the stable production of local produce and its supply for use in school lunches. Accordingly, it undertook surveys and deliberations, and supported initiatives focused on the development of new menus and processed foods and their inclusion in school lunches.

3 Spread of school lunch with rice

- The inclusion of rice in school lunches has an educational significance, as it enables children to learn desirable eating habits in relation to rice, which forms the basis of traditional dietary life in Japan, as well as inspiring a deeper interest in their native area through its local food culture.
- In FY2014, about 9.33 million students received rice for lunch, which is almost 100% of students who receive a full school lunch. Rice was provided in school lunches 3.4 times/week on average.

4 Shokuiku promotion in nursery schools

1 Shokuiku to support children's development by integrating protective care with education

- Nursery schools provide both protective care (survival and emotional stability) and education (health, human relations, environment, language, and expression) to support children's development. Shokuiku must also seek to strengthen children's minds and bodies from an early age as part of nursery care and education.

2 Support for parents through diet

- Children's diets should be determined not only at nursery schools but in cooperation with their parents. Nursery schools offer knowledge, experience and skills relating to children's diet during infancy as part of "childcare support."

3 Provision of meals to support children's growth and development

- Due to changes in the working patterns of parents and guardians in recent years, more and more children are spending longer periods of time at nursery schools, so the meals provided in nursery school play an important role in the physical and mental development of infants.
- Initiatives are being implemented that incorporate strategies for encouraging children to develop an interest in diet and in the ingredients used in meals, aiming to provide meals that ensure that children can see the faces of the people who prepare their meals and the people who produce the ingredients for those meals.



Baby food course for local parents