



1 Sunset Avenue, Hatfield, MA 01038 • 1-800-FOODPLAY • 413-247-5400 • info@foodplay.com • www.foodplay.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Media Contact: Patti Dougherty • 1-800-FOODPLAY (1-800-366-3752) • info@foodplay.com

Wonder how to turn kids on to healthy eating and exercise habits? Emmy Award-winning FOODPLAY is coming to a school near you!

FOODPLAY, an Emmy Award-winning nutrition theater show, is touring the nation's schools and special events using the power of live theater to turn kids on to healthy habits.

Featuring fantastic feats of juggling, motivating messages, music, magic, and audience participation, FOODPLAY's colorful characters entertain as they teach kids how to take charge of growing up healthy and fit.



While FOODPLAY makes good eating great fun, its messages are very serious.

Childhood obesity has become the nation's number one health epidemic, with rates doubling among elementary school children and tripling among adolescents in the last 25 years. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, if current eating and exercise habits don't improve, one out of two African American and Latino children, and one out of three Caucasian children will develop diabetes.

FOODPLAY comes to the rescue, helping empower kids with the skills they need to make their choices healthy ones. During the fun-filled performance, children follow the antics of Johnny (or Janey) Junkfood, whose dream is to become a juggling star, but keeps dropping the balls. The problem – his diet stinks! With the help of the "Coach" of the National Junior Juggling Team and the children in the audience, Johnny learns how to juggle the foods he eats to wind up with a balanced diet.

FoodPlay Productions was founded in 1982 by Barbara Storper, MS, RD, a national leader in children's nutrition. According to Storper, today's kids face a very difficult and confusing food environment, with the average child seeing over 10,000 food commercials on TV each year, with the majority promoting junk food products.

"We have to fight fire with fire," says Storper. "For our messages to be effective, we need to use similar techniques that advertisers use in order to make healthy foods and healthy practices fun and cool for kids. And there's nothing like the power and magic of live theater to get kids excited and motivated to treat their bodies right!"

Today, the average American child drinks over 600 cans of soda and consumes more than 150 pounds of sugar a year! Less than one per cent of the nation's youth are meeting their daily nutritional requirements, with intakes of fruits and vegetables far lower than what's recommended.

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As the FOODPLAY story unfolds, children learn how to see through TV commercials, decipher food labels, and make sense of today's confusing fast food marketplace. Kids witness the ten teaspoons of sugar found in a can of cola, and the effects of soda on a dinosaur's tooth in the old "soak in the Coke routine." For some fun beverage alternatives, and even cooler juggling tricks, Coach and Johnny trade passes with an array of milk, soy milk, water, and fruit juice juggling clubs.

Kids cheer Johnny on as the more he learns, the better juggler he becomes, successfully demonstrating how easy it is to take five — eat at least five fruits and vegetable a day, that is. Together with the audience, Johnny learns how to eat healthfully at home, school, and on the run, and discovers that you can choose foods that are good for your health and good for the planet too.

Kids also learn the importance of fueling up with breakfast and being active every day. And, in the game show segment, "Pyramid Power," contestants are invited on stage to show their nutrition smarts by building a balanced diet. Body image is also covered, as kids learn that every body is different, and different is a great thing.

Keepin' the Messages Alive

To keep the learning alive all year long, schools receive FOODPLAY's comprehensive resource kits, which provide follow-up materials to everyone involved — teachers, parents, school food service, health staff, and students.

And, to bring the experience home, Storper has published a new children's book, *Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure!* — designed to help kids get off the junk food track and make good eating great fun. The book (as well as a host of fun food and nutrition activities and snack recipes) is available at www.foodplay.com and in bookstores nationwide.



Proven Results – It Works!

FOODPLAY receives rave reviews, top awards, and outstanding evaluations showing dramatic improvements in children's eating and exercise habits. According to the USDA, after FOODPLAY, over 75% of children reported increasing their fruit and vegetable intake, cutting down on soda and other sweets, reading food labels more often, eating breakfast regularly, and enjoying more physical activity! And, schools report that FOODPLAY triggers community-wide excitement for healthy habits, helping get everyone from teachers to parents on board working together to create healthy schools.

FoodPlay Productions

FoodPlay Productions' programs have reached over three million school children from New York to Alaska! The company now tours the nation with several different health shows and creates award-winning TV specials, media campaigns, video kits, and other resources to make nutrition come alive.

For food and nutrition tips, free downloads, and fun-filled resources, visit www.foodplay.com.

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Reporters:

To cover a FOODPLAY show,
interview nutritionist, Barbara Storper, MS, RD,
or for a review copy of Storper's new children's book,
Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure! (ISBN 978-09642858-5-9)

Please contact Patti Dougherty at:
1-800-FOODPLAY (800-366-3752) or info@foodplay.com

Photographers Invited!
FOODPLAY makes for great photo opps!

High-resolution images are downloadable at:
www.foodplay.com/news/press.html

"The kids were laughing so hard, they didn't realize how much they were learning!"
-New York City Board of Education

