

Laredo Elementary Launches the *Go, Slow, Whoa*, Healthy Eating Program for APS

Go Slow Whoa (GSW)

This spring, Laredo Elementary is excited to launch *Go, Slow, Whoa*, a program designed to help students and parents make healthier food choices. LiveWell Colorado, a nonprofit committed to reducing obesity by promoting healthy eating and active living, is funding the project and Channel 7 is a promotional partner.

The project will teach Laredo's students how to make healthier food choices by identifying foods as belonging to one of three categories: *Go* foods, *Slow* foods and *Whoa* foods. *Go Slow Whoa* is a simplified way of helping children identify foods to eat everyday.



Defining Go Slow and Whoa Foods

Go foods are good to eat almost anytime. They are nutrient dense, higher in fiber, low in saturated fat and dietary cholesterol. Examples include fruits, vegetables, lean meats, nuts and whole grains.


Slow foods should be eaten sometimes, at most several times a week. These are foods generally higher calorie,

higher in fat and added sugars. Kids are encouraged to eat these foods less frequently, so that they can leave room for healthier *Go* foods. Pancakes, bagels, dark meat chicken and turkey sausage are examples of *Slow* foods.

Whoa foods should only be eaten once in a while or as special treats. They are typically high in saturated fat and dietary cholesterol and, in some cases, high in sugar. Examples include most fried foods, fatty meats, soda and snack foods.

GSW School Menu Items Identified

April school meal menu items will be identified as *Go*, *Slow* or *Whoa*. Cafeteria signage will reinforce and will help students identify healthy choices. Registered dietitian, Susan DiMaggio, assistant director of APS Nutrition Services will categorize the *Go*, *Slow* and *Whoa* foods on the school menus, provide lists of *Go Slow Whoa* foods and distribute these to parents as well as publish on the school and district web site.

APS nutrition services GSW standards for individual menu items will be developed using information from the USDA nutrient database for foods, school product Nutrition Facts Labels and nutrient analysis of individual district recipes. District established nutrient criteria for the percent of fat and saturated fat, added sugar and fiber will be used to determine whether the menu item was a *Go Slow* or *Whoa* food. Criteria will be determined based upon meeting the USDA school meal pattern weekly nutrient requirements. The green apple symbol will identify "GO" foods on the school menu. 

Mona Martinez-Brosh, R.D., and Director of APS Nutrition Services says in addition to implementing the

GSW program, APS will be incorporating more foods from scratch cooking into the 2010-2011 school menus.

Student and Parent Nutrition Education

Laredo Elementary food service team will collaborate with the USDA classroom nutrition education program that is taught at the school to reinforce the concept of the *Go, Slow, Whoa* program in classroom nutrition lessons. The nutrition education program provides hands on food preparation as part of the classroom lessons. In addition, it offers a parent newsletter on nutrition, recipes, and nutrition themed books for second grade students. These books are sent home weekly with second grade students.

Nutrition education programs such as *Go, Slow, Whoa* have proven to spur positive behavior change in kids. In fact, a recent study showed that after three years, children who received behavioral and nutrition education ate more *Go* foods and fewer *Whoa* foods than those who did not. They also consumed slightly fewer snack and dessert foods and chose more *Go* versions of desserts.

“We are thrilled to be part of a program that has the potential to have a positive impact on the health of our students,” said Quinn O’Keefe, principal of Laredo Elementary. “We hope that Laredo parents will help our students bring this program home and incorporate more Go foods into family meals as well.”

Leann Hepburn, physical education teacher and a member of the district health team, and Maria Varela, cafeteria manager are the Laredo program coordinators.

Two events planned to inform students about the *Go Slow Whoa* program are the all school assembly and the sticker incentive days.

Three “GO” foods sticker days will take place during lunch on April 13, April 21 and May 7. Students who select and eat at least two “GO” foods with their lunch will receive a sticker.

The all school assembly on April 9 will provide an opportunity to learn more about the *Go, Slow, Whoa* program. The assembly will be in the gym and begin at 1:45 PM – 2:15 PM. Parents are invited. Please plan to attend.



Web Sites with Additional Information

For more information about the *Go, Slow, Whoa* program, please visit

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/eat-right/choosing-foods.htm>

Learn more about this Colorado USDA school nutrition education program at <http://inep.ucdenver.edu>

Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ is about making America's children healthier. It's about practical suggestions that will help you motivate children to eat healthy and be active.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/>

Laredo’s web site, www.laredo.aurorak12.org , provides links to more information about the *Go, Slow, Whoa* program and the USDA nutrition program.

Aurora Public Schools plans to expand the *Go, Slow, Whoa* program to all elementary schools in the 2010-2011 school year.

Parents are the Power!

- ***Encourage your children to eat at least two “GO” foods at lunch.***
- ***Offer “GO” foods at home with meals and snacks.***
- ***Have children help shop for “GO” foods.***