Fast Food
Fast Food and Your Community
Grades 9-12

I. Nutrition Education Goal & Objective:
   Goal 1: Students will comprehend concepts consistent with USDA guidance related to eating and physical activity for good health.
   Objective: As a result of Pennsylvania’s SNAP-Ed plan, student will know, understand, analyze and apply concepts, as developmentally appropriate, that are consistent with USDA guidance about the benefits of:
   1. Limiting foods high in fat, sodium and added sugar.
   Goal 2: Students will apply skills consistent with USDA guidance related to eating and physical activity for good health.
   Objective: As a result of Pennsylvania’s SNAP-Ed plan, students will be able to:
   1. Plan strategies for performing health-enhancing practices.

II. Pennsylvania Educational Standards:
   A. 1.4 Types of Writing
   B. 1.6 Speaking and Listening
   C. 1.8 Research
   D. 2.2 Computation and Estimation
   E. 2.6 Statistics and Data Analysis
   F. 10.1 Concepts of Health
   G. 10.2 Healthful Living
   H. 11.3 Food Science and Nutrition

III. Outcomes:
   A. Students will describe the impact of fast food on the American diet.
   B. Students will analyze their community to identify fast food restaurants and grocery stores.
   C. Students will identify three ways to make healthier food choices using the fast food restaurants and grocery stores in their community.

IV. Materials:
   A. Handout: Fast Food in Your Community

V. Procedure:
   A. Introductory:
      1. Discuss fast food in the United States.
         a. Studies examining the relationship between the food environment and body mass index (or “BMI,” which is considered a reasonably reliable indicator of total body fat, which is related to the risk of
disease and death) have found that communities with a larger number of fast food or quick-service restaurants tend to have higher BMIs.

b. Since the 1970s, the number of fast food restaurants has more than doubled.

c. The proportion of daily calorie intake from foods eaten away from home has increased

d. Evidence shows that children, adolescents, and adults who eat out, particularly at fast food restaurants, are at increased risk of weight gain, overweight, and obesity.

e. The strongest association between fast food consumption and obesity is when one or more fast food meals are consumed per week.

f. As a result of the changing food environment, individuals need to deliberately make food choices, both at home and away from home, that are nutrient dense, low in calories, and appropriate in portion size.

B. Developmental: Classroom discussion

1. **Ask student to name factors that entice people to eat fast food. If they need help answering, use some of the following factors:**
   a. Availability
   b. Cost
   c. Quick
   d. Can remain in car
   e. Toys come in children’s meals
   f. Play areas for children

2. **Ask students to describe the “cons” of eating too much fast food.**
   a. Fast food often contains large amounts of fat, calories, and sodium (salt), but not enough fruits, vegetables, or whole grains and the nutrients that they contain. Fast food can also contain a lot of added sugar (e.g., soda and other beverages, dessert items).
   b. Eating on the run can interfere with family eating time.
   c. Fast food can be more expensive than preparing food oneself.

3. **Activity**
   a. **Distribute the worksheet, “Fast Food in Your Community.”**
      Students gather data using the internet, a phone book, or the collective knowledge of the class for this activity. This assignment can be done in class or used as homework.
   b. **Engage students in talking about fast food restaurants in their local community.**
      1. Which fast food restaurants are located in the community?
         Fast food can include drive-ups, doughnut/bagel shops, corner stores, street vendors, take-out, pizza, etc.
      2. How many fast food restaurants are in the community?
      3. Is this a high or low number compared to other places?
      4. Where in this community do fast food restaurants tend to be located? (possible responses: along the highway, clustered in shopping malls, on main streets, neighborhoods)
5. What factors could affect the location of fast food restaurants? (possible responses: number of people, market competition—supply and demand, commercial real estate, proximity to food suppliers)

6. Where are the local grocery stores in relation to the fast food restaurants?

4. Discussion/debate
   a. Split the group up into two teams: pro-Fast Food, con-Fast Food. Give both teams approximately 7 minutes to discuss their arguments for the debate. The two sides will debate about whether or not the fast food restaurants should be in the neighborhood, what good they bring to the neighborhood, and how they affect their health.
   b. Begin the debate and help facilitate.

C. Concluding:
   1. Review the key points discussed in this lesson. Encourage students to discuss what they have learned during the session.
Fast Food in Your Community

1. How many fast food restaurants are in your local community? ______

2. Do you think this number is high or low compared to what you might find in other communities? Why?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. How are the fast food restaurants dispersed throughout the community? Are they spread evenly or do they cluster in specific areas? Why might they be located where they are?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

4. How many grocery stores are in the community? ______

5. Identify 3 ways to make healthier food choices when eating at the fast food restaurants and grocery stores in your community:
   A. _____________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   B. _____________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   C. _____________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________