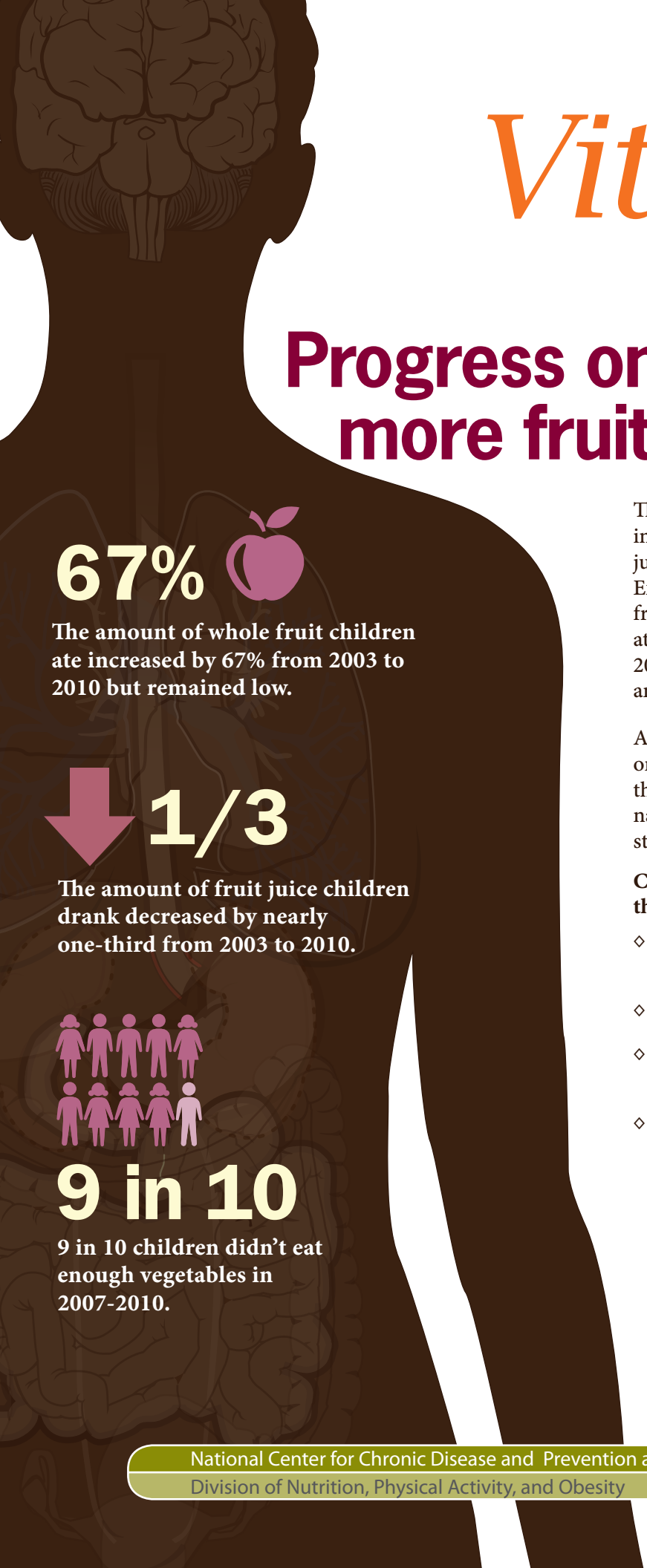
CDC Vitalsigns™
August 2014

Progress on children eating more fruit, not vegetables



67%

The amount of whole fruit children ate increased by 67% from 2003 to 2010 but remained low.

1/3

The amount of fruit juice children drank decreased by nearly one-third from 2003 to 2010.

9 in 10

9 in 10 children didn't eat enough vegetables in 2007-2010.

The amount of whole fruit* children, 2-18 years old, ate increased by 67% from 2003 to 2010 and replaced fruit juice as the main contributor of fruit to children's diets. Experts recommend that most fruit come from whole fruit, rather than juice. The amount of vegetables children ate did not change from 2003 to 2010. Moreover, in 2007-2010, children did not meet recommendations for the amount of fruit and vegetables they should eat.

About 60 million US children are enrolled in child care** or school, where their experiences with food can affect their health and lifelong food choices. Since 2010, new national efforts like Let's Move! and new school nutrition standards support healthy eating.

Child care, schools, and school districts can support these efforts by:

- ◇ Meeting or exceeding current federal nutrition standards for meals and snacks.
- ◇ Serving fruit and vegetables whenever food is offered.
- ◇ Training staff to make fruit and vegetables more appealing and accessible.
- ◇ Offering nutrition education and hands-on learning opportunities, such as growing, tasting, and preparing fruit and vegetables.

*Includes all forms of fruit (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) except juice.

**Includes child care centers, day care homes, Head Start programs, preschool, and pre-kindergarten

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National Center for Chronic Disease and Prevention and Health Promotion
Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity

Problem

Children aren't eating enough fruit or vegetables

Children are eating more fruit but not enough.

◇ 6 in 10 children didn't eat enough fruit in 2007-2010.

◇ As children get older, they eat less fruit.

Most children need to eat more vegetables.

◇ 9 in 10 children didn't eat enough vegetables in 2007-2010.

◇ Children should eat a variety of colorful vegetables prepared in healthy ways.

◇ About 1/3 of vegetables children ate in 2009-2010 were white potatoes, most (63%) of which were eaten as fried potatoes, such as French fries, or as chips.

How much fruit and vegetables do children need daily?

Girls

Age	Fruit	Vegetables
2-3	1 cup	1 cup
4-8	1-1½ cups	1½ cups
9-13	1½ cups	2 cups
14-18	1½ cups	2½ cups

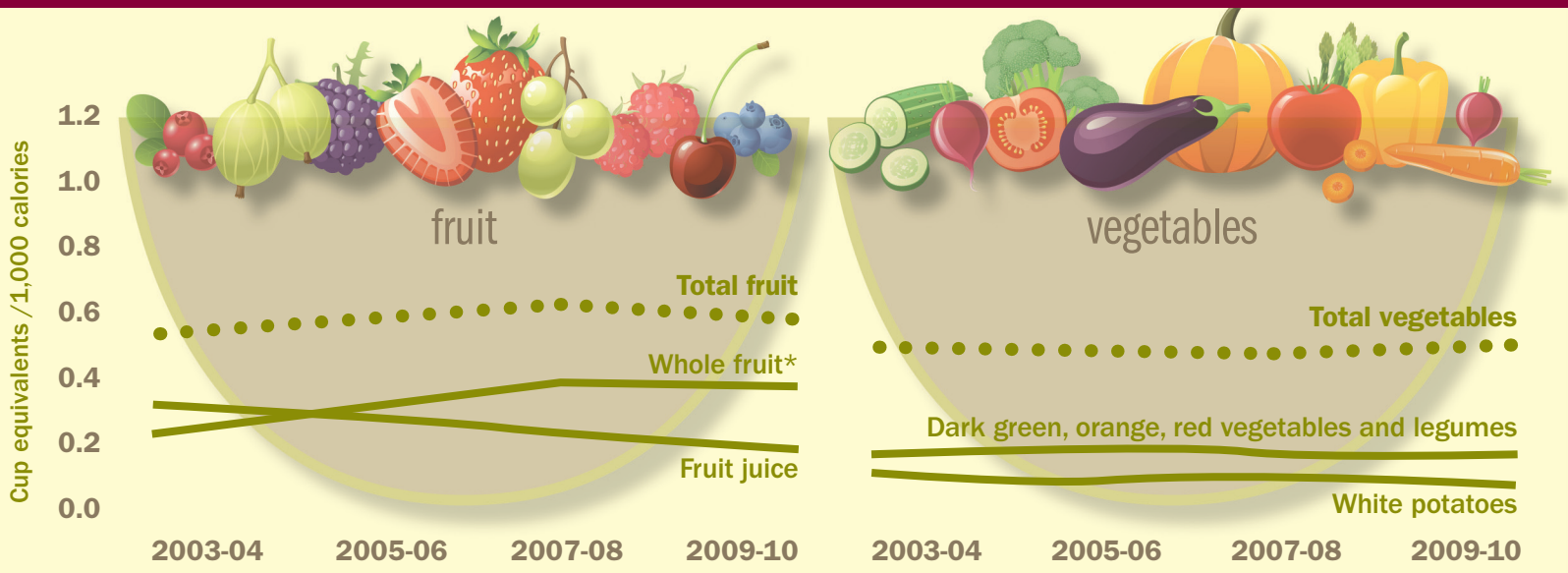
Boys

Age	Fruit	Vegetables
2-3	1 cup	1 cup
4-8	1-1½ cups	1½ cups
9-13	1½ cups	2½ cups
14-18	2 cups	3 cups

These amounts are for children who get less than 30 min/day of moderate physical activity, beyond normal daily activities. More active children may be able to consume more while staying within calorie needs.

SOURCE: USDA, www.ChooseMyPlate.gov

Children, ages 2-18, are eating more fruit but not more vegetables (2003 to 2010)



SOURCE: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2003 to 2010

*All forms of fruit excluding juices

Ways to get children to eat more fruit and vegetables at child care and schools

Maya
3 years old

Maya eats a healthy breakfast, family-style, with her teacher.

Maya's class prepares a healthy snack.

Fruit and vegetables are part of celebrations.

Teachers send home tips for fruit and vegetable snacking.

Sam
13 years old

Sam's class works in the school garden.

Sam chooses fruit and vegetables from the salad bar to complete his school lunch.

The school store sells fruit and vegetables.

Sam brings home vegetables from the garden and cooks them with his parents.

SOURCE: CDC Vital Signs August 2014

What Can Be Done

Federal government is

◇ Funding states and communities to improve healthy eating in child care and schools.

◇ Offering resources on healthy eating through programs such as ChooseMyPlate.gov, We Can!, HealthierUS School Challenge, and Let's Move!

◇ Helping low-income families get more fruit and vegetables through programs such as the WIC Cash Value Voucher, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and school meal programs such as the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

State and local officials can

◇ Include nutrition standards that meet or exceed CACFP or those found in Caring for our Children in child care licensing requirements and Quality Rating and Improvement Systems.

◇ Provide training for child care and school staff on buying, preparing, and serving fruit and vegetables.

◇ Help child care providers and schools reduce fruit and vegetable purchasing costs and develop farm-to-school and farm-to preschool initiatives.

Child care, schools, and school districts can

◇ Meet or exceed current federal nutrition standards for meals and snacks.

◇ Include fruit and vegetables whenever food is offered.

◇ Train food preparation staff to make fruit and vegetables more appealing and accessible.

◇ Offer nutrition education and hands-on learning opportunities, such as growing, tasting, and preparing fruit and vegetables.

Parents can

◇ Eat fruit and vegetables with their children.

◇ If serving frozen or canned vegetables or fruit, choose those with low or no sodium and no added sugar.

◇ Provide fruit and vegetables for snacks instead of less healthy options.

◇ Include their children when shopping for, growing, and preparing fruit and vegetables.

◇ Encourage children to eat a variety of fruit and vegetables, even if it takes many tries.

◇ Learn what counts as a cup of fruit or vegetables, for example:
- 1 small apple; 8 large strawberries.
- 12 baby carrots; 1 large ear of corn.

www www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/fruit-vegetables/

www www.cdc.gov/mmwr

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