

CONCEPT PAPER

Innovations for Healthy Kids Challenge

A staggering 32 percent of U.S. children are overweight or obese, and obese children experience higher rates of diet-related chronic diseases, such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Improving the health and nutrition of kids across the country is a priority of the Obama Administration, and President Obama has called for an “All Hands on Deck” approach. Creative methods are needed to engage young people and their parents in adopting positive health behaviors, and digital games are part of that solution. So, in December, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced the *Innovations for Healthy Kids Challenge* — a call to American entrepreneurs, software developers, and students to use a recently released USDA nutrition data set to create innovative, fun, and engaging portable learning applications that motivate kids, especially “tweens” (aged 9-12), to eat more healthfully and be more physically active.

TIMELINE

- **Launch** – Late February 2010
- **Game Jams** – Throughout the contest submission period to encourage participation and collaboration. We would be eager to see other groups host game jams at strategic points during the contest.
- **Deadline** – Summer 2010
- **Judging/Voting** – Summer 2010
- **Announcement** – Back to School 2010

HOW IT WORKS

- **Eligibility**
 - Entrants **must** be a U.S. resident or resident of a U.S. territory and **cannot** be, nor have an immediate family member as, a USDA employee, contractor, or grantee.
 - We strongly encourage participation from students and the university community.
 - We strongly encourage collaboration and submissions from cross-disciplinary teams of individuals.
- **Requirements**
 - Tech Specs
 - Entrants must submit the link to a completed digital game.
 - The digital game may be designed for the web, mobile devices, desktop computers, or any software platform broadly available to the public. If the application cannot be accessed for review purposes by the public and the judges via a web link, a link to video of all application features must be submitted. Judges may request that the developer provide access to the software through some reasonable, additional means, for verification purposes.
 - Use USDA Data
 - Portable applications must use the USDA Nutrition Dataset and may use the Source Code provided at Data.gov.
 - Age Group
 - Portable applications must be appropriate for children, especially “tweens” — kids 9-12 years old.
 - Target Concepts
 - Games must incorporate at least one of the concepts listed below. These may be used independently or in combination.
 - Teaching kids to eat more whole grains

- Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption
 - Focusing on consuming more low- or non-fat milk
 - Choosing lean sources of protein (meat and beans)
 - Making food group education fun
 - Understanding calories and energy balance
 - Increasing choices of foods with high nutrition value and decreasing amounts of foods with solid (saturated) fats and added sugars (i.e., "extra" calories), and decreasing amounts of sodium
 - Identifying and consuming proper food portion sizes
 - Being more physically active
 - Balancing physical activity and food intake
- **Ownership/Intellectual Property**
 - Entrants will own the intellectual property rights to submitted portable applications but the Sponsors will maintain a royalty-free license to post or link to the portable application on the official USDA and nutrition partner websites and make it publicly available for the course of the Contest and 12 months after its conclusion if desired.

WINNER SELECTION

There will be Medal Winners and a Popular Choice award. The Medal Winners will be selected by an Expert Judging Panel of USDA nutrition experts and experts from the gaming and IT communities. The Popular Choice Winner will be selected based on public votes.

- **Criteria**
 - Only those submissions that pass through an initial screening process will be eligible for judging and voting.
 - Medal Winners: Awards will be judged on the following criteria:
 - Potential impact on target audience (40%)
 - Quality, accuracy, and content of messages (20%)
 - Creativity and originality (20%)
 - Potential for further development and use (20%)
 - Popular Choice: Will be based solely on voting of registered visitors
- **Judges**

The team of judges should cover the following categories. We welcome your suggestions and will extend invitations shortly.

 - Aneesh Chopra, CTO or other technology expert in U.S. government
 - Childhood nutrition experts from USDA, HHS, and/or Department of Education.
 - Gaming experts
 - Child education specialists
- **Prizes**
 - Cash awards will be given to the Medal Winners and the Popular Choice Winner. The top Medal Winner and the Popular Choice Winner will both receive a \$3,000 cash award. Other Medal winners will receive cash awards in incremental amounts not to exceed \$3,000. In the event that the Popular Choice Winner is a Medal Winner, that dual-winner will receive both titles but will receive a maximum of \$3,000. If a winning Entrant consists of a team, one cash award of \$3,000 will be given to the team.

February 2, 2010