

WhyEat in Whyville

The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA) and Whyville have teamed up to create an innovative nutrition initiative inside of Whyville, dubbed WhyEat. Citizens that participate learn about health and nutrition eating breakfast, lunch and dinner – virtually – while logged onto Whyville.

The Nutrition Crisis

1 in 6 children and adolescents in the United States are overweight or obese, placing them at elevated risk for diabetes and heart disease. Worse yet, this number is on the rise. At the root of this crisis is poor nutrition due to unhealthy eating habits, which can lead to behavioral and cognitive problems that impact learning.

Prevalence of obesity in children 6-11 has tripled since the 1970s; 35% of children are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes in their lifetime.

— *Institute of Medicine of the National Academies*

40% of children go to school without breakfast

— *Dairy Council of California*

75% of adolescents fail to meet their daily requirement for calcium

— *US Department of Agriculture*

Whyville is actively recruiting sponsors (profit and nonprofit entities) for the WhyEat program, specifically those organizations focused on nutrition, fitness, and healthy lifestyle. Interested in becoming a sponsor? Email us for more information!



In consultation with nutrition experts at UTHSCSA, the creators of Whyville conceived, developed, and launched WhyEat. With a selection of about 500 foods, Whyvillians can plan their meals. Food can be purchased at the grocery market, the grill, or the Whyville Cafeteria (sponsored by the School Nutrition Association).

There are even virtual health consequences. The citizens' appearances are altered if they select a poor diet, motivating them to discover the source of their illness and correct it. To plan a healthy diet and ward away illnesses, Whyvillians read and interpret nutritional information and food labels. There is a nutrition center with resources including a virtual dietician who can help by giving diagnoses and advice.