

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 24, 2016

MEDIA CONTACT:
Dominga Pardo
(310) 508-5578
dpardo_rfkinst@yahoo.com

New Campaign Promotes “Healthy Eating Out” for LA Families

Choose Health LA Restaurants campaign encourages parents to choose health for their kids when eating out

LOS ANGELES – California has the highest rate of obesity among children between the ages of 2 and 4. In Los Angeles County alone, 19% of 3 and 4 year olds enrolled in the WIC program are overweight. These children are at greater risk of health complications such as diabetes and heart disease later in life. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Robert F. Kennedy Institute of Community and Family Medicine (RFKI), and local restaurants are coming together to help parents and reverse this trend.

Angelenos order from a restaurant up to 4 times a week. This includes picking up food, ordering delivery, or going out for weekend treats. The newest campaign by Choose Health LA Restaurants is a reminder for parents to think about their families’ health when they are dining out.

Through *Choose Health LA Restaurants*, both restaurants and parents can make small changes to improve the health of their families while enjoying meals outside the home. The campaign promotes several easy tips including: choose water or milk with every meal, choose fruit or veggies as a side, and choose foods that are baked or grilled instead of deep-fried.

“Working with restaurants and encouraging parents to start small with a few ordering swaps will make a big difference,” said Director Dominga Pardo from RFKI. “Parents are busy so simple reminders can be very helpful. Now that the restaurants are also changing, it will be even easier for parents to stop for food without having to worry about whether it is healthy.”

Choose Health LA Restaurants started two years ago and has now reached over 700 restaurant locations in LA County. These restaurants offer their same popular dishes in multiple serving sizes to give their customers the choice of healthier, smaller portions. Restaurants with kids’ meals’ now automatically come with a side of fruit or vegetables, have removed sugary beverages, and have reduced the number of deep-fried foods.

RFKI has been working in the community to encourage restaurants to change their menus and join the *Choose Health LA Restaurants* program. “It was important for us to start working with restaurants, to increase access to healthier foods in our communities of Harbor South Bay,” said Dominga Pardo. “We already work to educate residents about the benefits of healthy eating and provide them with nutritional education and recipes, so this program supports our collective greater childhood obesity prevention efforts and helps build healthy communities.”

Families can easily find Choose Health LA Restaurants at www.ChooseHealthLA.com/eat/restaurants.