



## Concepts for Healthy Snack Choices

The T.R.A.I.L. program is about making healthy decisions within the context of local food traditions, availability, and nutritional value. Within this program, NCAI is committed to a holistic vision of health for Native youth. As such, it encourages youth to build the skills to help them maintain a lifestyle of healthy eating within the complexities of their available food options. NCAI stands by a core set of principles that T.R.A.I.L. staff should consider when making food purchases for youth in their program.

### In relation to food purchases under the T.R.A.I.L. grant, NCAI believes in...

- Adherence to established principles of Federal Funding. This means that clear examples of unhealthy options (fried snacks/foods, candy, pizza, etc.) are not reimbursable, and more importantly, are not in line with the mission of T.R.A.I.L. (See the *Healthy Snack Guidance* document for further recommended food options).
- Understanding that varying food availability is a reality across Indian Country and that by working towards minimizing the harmful effects of unhealthy food with this reality in mind, we will have a stronger impact.
- Understanding that food and healthy eating are both cultural as well as nutritional, and that both must be balanced for overall wellness.
- A dedication to providing education and resources to T.R.A.I.L. program recipients and staff in order to assist them in maximizing the health benefits of their local food options.
- Empowering youth to advise others (including each other) in healthy living strategies that meet their needs.



The goal of the T.R.A.I.L. program is to improve community-wide health by teaching young people about healthy lifestyle choices. To ensure that the central lessons explained in the curriculum are absorbed by the participants, it is key that the decisions and actions of Club staff fall in line with accessible food options and the fundamental lessons of the curriculum.

In reality, this may mean choosing the best or healthiest option of granola, trail mix, etc. even if all options in a local area are not as nutritious as options in a grocery store 50 miles away. While making healthy snack choices can be complicated, know that you have the full support of our team behind you. **Please reach out to the FirstPic, Inc. staff if you ever have any questions about healthy snack options for your program at 443-302-2080.**