

# Growing Partnerships: A school utilizing Nutrition Education in more ways than one!



Photo: Geiger Family Night

**Geiger Elementary School** partners with Healthy Androscoggin to bring nutrition education to their students in every grade level. Eat Well Play Hard, Pick a Better Snack, and Cooking Matters for Kids are all programs that reach approximately **400 students** each year at Geiger alone.

In Maine, about **1 in 10 people** live with low access to affordable, nutritious food. **1 in 4 children** are at risk of hunger. Of those, 37% do not qualify for public assistance. Many school-aged children do not understand what a nutritious snack or meal is, or how to make one. Additionally, there is a misconception that nutritious foods are expensive and don't taste good. All Maine schools offer universal free meals, which gives all students the opportunity to access nutritious foods at no cost to them, but they need guidance to help them make nutritious choices in and out of school.



Photo: PABS Bingo Sheet

"The Pick a Better Snack Program (PABS) by Healthy Androscoggin has been a wonderful experience for my students. I have seen an increase in healthier snacks at school and families are getting involved at home with the Bingo card activities. My students are always excited for Miss Emily to come each month!" - Geiger Teacher

By offering three different nutrition curriculums, as well as participating in family nights and staff meetings, Maine SNAP-Ed is helping students, parents and teachers **gain confidence to try new foods**, understand how their food choices **affect their wellbeing**, and learn **basic cooking skills** to make low-cost meals at home. Offering multiple curriculums to students and educating teachers and parents about these programs helps bring them full circle in the cafeteria, classrooms, and at home. In addition, a **Story Book Trail** is being permanently installed on an outdoor trail to **promote physical activity** for students, teachers, and families to enjoy. This trail will allow teachers to incorporate even more physical activity into their lesson plans with interchangeable stories to match curriculum.

**"I learn something new every time Miss Emily comes in!" - Geiger Teacher**

Contact Healthy Androscoggin for more information at [info@healthyandroscoggin.org](mailto:info@healthyandroscoggin.org)  
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## References

1. Maine SNAP-Ed 2022 Infographic