Race Overview
Introduction to the
NJ Race to Good Nutrition

America is a car culture country. Our lifestyles are built around the mobility that our cars provide. We own more cars per capita than any other nation in the world. We love the freedom of the road and the romance and adventure of travel.

Since the invention of the car, people have been racing them. Automobile manufacturers spend millions of dollars annually to design better cars that will go faster, perform better and out sell competitors. Auto racing is the number one spectator sport in the world today and is second only to football in popularity in the U.S.

When we set out to design a statewide effort to improve child nutrition, we looked for a fun theme that everyone could enjoy. Auto racing seemed like a natural.

Like auto engines, our bodies require high-grade fuel to function at peak performance. Top racing teams continuously test and refine their engines in order to fine tune them. They check water levels to insure adequate cooling of engines. They take tire pressures to insure good grip on curves. No detail is too small.

Our K-6 program is designed to teach children the basics of "fueling" their bodies with foods that will nourish their performance, growth and development. Each lesson also fulfills specific requirements of the *New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education.*

They will learn overall concepts of the basics of good nutrition. In tandem with the classroom lessons is a competition for each child to each engage in his/her own personal race to good nutrition. Specific rules follow.

Race Rules

NJ Race to Good Nutrition is a six weeks long campaign. It includes a classroom component with lesson plans and activities for each week. These are described in the teacher's overview, "Building Lean, Mean Racing Machines."

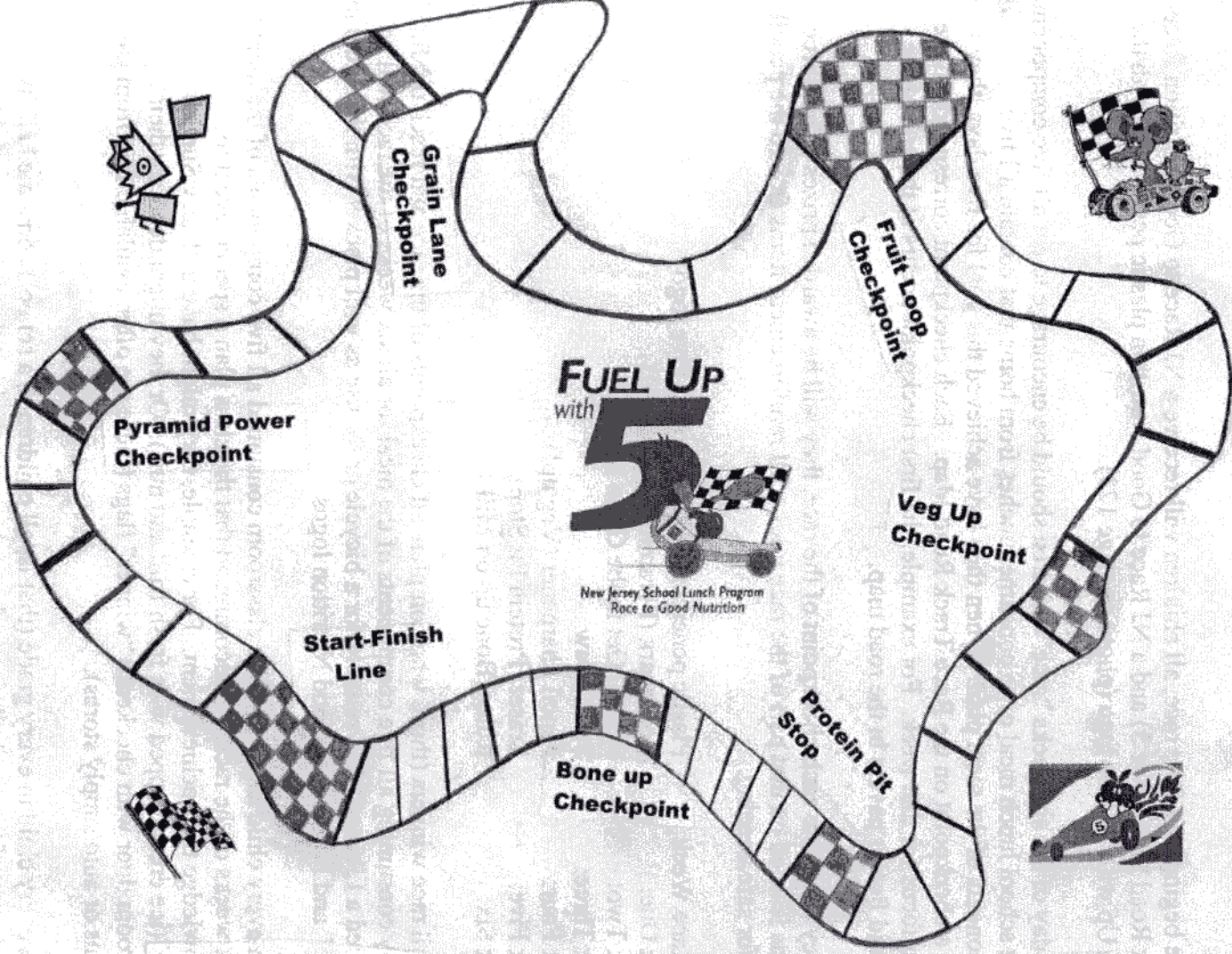
Most important is each child's individual "race" to good nutrition. This component of the program encourages children to eat the five components of the school lunch meal or to carry from home and eat a homemade lunch that includes the same five components. The five components of the school lunch meal are:

1 serving of bread, cereal or grain
1 serving of fruit
1 serving of vegetable
1 serving of protein
1 serving of fluid milk

To keep track of whether or not each child is consuming these five components, each child will receive a "record" in the form of a NJ Race to Good Nutrition Race Track Road map. (see Track Map on following page) A child advances forward on the race track by consuming the five components of the school lunch meal or consuming a lunch prepared at home that contains the five components. The child fills in the road pavers for each day that they consume the 5 components indicating that they are moving forward toward to "win" the race.

There are 6 checkpoints on the map, each representing completion of one week of the race. A child who fills in all five pavers to reach a checkpoint, receives a prize. Prizes are designed to reinforce the classroom lesson of the week.

Some children will not consume all five components on all five days of the week. They will be "behind" in the race. Encourage them to continue, they can still reach the checkpoint. When they succeed in eating the five components on five days and pass a checkpoint, they should receive the prize connected to that checkpoint.



RACE TRACK ROAD MAP for _____