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Nathan Metcalf, playing the Chuck Wagon Restaurant owner, waited for a good answer from Nicole Schrader, playing Preston Polygon the server, about the food pyramid during "The Power of the Pyramid."

## Fitness and nutrition child's play at school

● "The Power of the Pyramid" delivers message of good health habits to Minneapolis schoolchildren.

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The kindergartners were first to arrive for the play at the Shingle Creek Elementary School gym in Minneapolis on Tuesday.

"How's life in kindergarten today?" asked Nathan Metcalf, an actor with the National Theatre for Children. The kids answered with stories about a paper spider and what they had for lunch.

Metcalf is one of two cast members in "The Power of the Pyramid," a 30-minute play geared toward elementary schoolchildren about fitness and nutrition.

The play hopes to teach children about the value of good food choices and exercise.

"For years we've noticed a rather large increase in overweight kids," said Dr. Micheal Ainslie, a pediatrician and the board chairman of the Minnesota Medical Association. "I

see almost every day someone who is overweight."

The program provides teachers with workbooks, take-home activities and posters for their classrooms.

"The biggest change is where [the children] take the workbook home and work with their family," Ainslie said.

Ainslie, who is also a pediatric endocrinologist, said he is beginning to see patients with Type 2 diabetes, something that has not appeared in children before. "We're really starting to see the tip of an epidemic," he said.

David Orbuch, vice president of Allina Hospitals and Clinics, said the program most of all helps focus on important health issues by cooperating with the community. He said that programs like these have helped to produce changes.

"Social change in our community begins with our children," he said.