

For Parents

- **School meals matter!** The school day just got healthier thanks to new school breakfast and lunch meal standards. Encourage your child to check out these new meals and find their favorites.
- **The new school meals focus on more whole grains, fruits, and vegetables;** low-fat or non-fat milk; and less sodium and fat.
- **Teachers will tell you that well-nourished kids are ready to learn and do better in class.** When we give kids plenty of healthy food choices and regular physical activity at school, they learn healthier habits for life.
- **Nutritious meals and snacks will help kids stay healthy,** reducing their risk for obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other serious chronic diseases.
- **School meals are “rightsized.”** Based on their age, students are getting the right portions and now they will be getting more of some foods like fruits and vegetables.
- **You have the power to encourage your children to build a healthy plate at school and home.** Review the school menu with your kids and encourage them to try new foods, especially the healthy foods offered.
- **Your child picks up all of your attitudes and behaviors** – including your eating habits. Since kids love to copy what their parents do, they are likely to mimic your willingness to try new foods.
- **Kids need to try new foods many times before they like them!** Here are some helpful tips to take an active role in school meals and encourage your children to eat healthy foods:
 - **Make time** to join your child(ren) for lunch in the school cafeteria.
 - **When your child gets home from school,** ask what was served and what (s)he ate for lunch.
 - **Eat meals with your child(ren) whenever possible.** Let your child see you enjoying fruits, vegetables, and whole grains at meals and snacks.
 - **Grocery shopping can teach your children about food and nutrition.** Help your children make healthy choices.
 - **Discuss where vegetables, fruits and grains,** dairy and protein foods come from with your child.
 - **Share the adventure** and serve new foods offered in the school cafeteria at home.
- **The School Day Just Got Healthier!** Together we can make a difference and help our kids develop healthy habits for life.

www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday