

# MYPLATE GUIDE TO SCHOOL BREAKFAST

## for Families



### FRUITS

A full cup of fruit is available every day, providing nutrients that are important for kids' health, such as potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C, and folate (folic acid).



### MILK

Kids and teens need the calcium, protein, and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth, and muscles.



### VEGETABLES

Every breakfast does not include vegetables, but schools may offer them in place of fruits.



### GRAINS

Starting every day the whole grains way gives kids and teens B vitamins, minerals, and fiber to feel fuller longer so they stay alert to concentrate at school.



### PROTEIN FOODS

Some breakfast menus may offer items such as eggs, nuts, or meats to pair with whole-grain options.



Visit [teamnutrition.usda.gov](http://teamnutrition.usda.gov) for additional tips and activities.



# HOW DOES SCHOOL BREAKFAST HELP FAMILIES?



## Fuels learning

Kids and teens can concentrate on their schoolwork better when they're not hungry. Studies show that kids do better in school when they eat breakfast.



## Provides better nutrition

Studies show that people who eat breakfast have higher intakes of dietary fiber, B vitamins, calcium, iron, and other nutrients.



## Saves time

School breakfast can simplify mornings for families by offering kids and teens healthy options that fit into their schedule.

## HOW CAN FAMILIES HELP THEIR CHILD EAT A HEALTHY BREAKFAST?

- Read the menu with your child to make sure your student knows about all the foods that are included in their school breakfast.
- Find out how your parent organization can work with school nutrition professionals to promote breakfast options at your school, such as Breakfast in the Classroom.



Visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov/Families](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov/Families) for additional tips and activities for families.

*The School Breakfast Program (SBP) provides cash assistance to States to operate nonprofit breakfast programs in schools and residential child care institutions. The USDA Food and Nutrition Service administers the SBP at the Federal level. State agencies administer the SBP at the State level, and local school food authorities operate the Program in schools.*

Learn more at: [www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/school-breakfast-program-sbp](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/school-breakfast-program-sbp).

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# MYPLATE GUIDE TO SCHOOL LUNCH

*for Families*



## GRAINS

Whole grains give kids B vitamins, minerals, and fiber to help them feel fuller longer so they stay alert to concentrate at school.



## PROTEIN FOODS

Meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds provide many nutrients including protein and iron. Portion sizes are based upon the nutrition needs of children in various grade groups. School meals also allow cheese, tofu, and yogurt to count as the meat/meat alternate in the school lunch.

## VEGETABLES



A variety of vegetables helps kids get the nutrients and fiber they need for good health.



## MILK

Low-fat (1%) or Fat-free milk. Children and teens need the calcium, protein, and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth and muscles.



## FRUITS

Every school lunch includes fruits as well as vegetables. Only 1/2 of the fruits offered may be 100% juice, since whole and cut-up fruits have more fiber.



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# HOW DOES SCHOOL LUNCH HELP FAMILIES?



## Provides a balanced meal

It meets one-third of the nutrition needs of most children for the day.



## Helps kids learn where foods come from

Farm to school programs are in 42 percent of schools which increase kids access to locally produced foods and learning activities such as farmers' visits and school gardening.



## Saves time

If you spend 10 minutes a day packing lunch, that adds up to 30 hours (1,800 minutes) each school year.



## Supports learning at school

Research shows that kids with healthier eating patterns have better academic performance.



"We grow fruits and vegetables in our school greenhouse, which are harvested and given to the cafeteria to serve on the salad bar. It's great because the landscaping class gets involved, the leadership classes get involved, and even all the marketing plan classes get involved."



*Nebraska student*

## HOW CAN FAMILIES HELP THEIR CHILDREN ENJOY SCHOOL LUNCH?

- Try new foods at home. Kids need many opportunities to taste a new food to "get used to it."
- Talk with your child about what's on the menu. Make sure he or she knows about all the foods that are included in his or her school.
- Eat lunch at school with your child. Learn more about what's offered and meet school nutrition staff.
- Encourage your child or teen to join in taste-testing events or surveys about school lunch, when available.

Visit **[ChooseMyPlate.gov/Families](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov/Families)** for additional tips and activities for families.

*The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day.*

Learn more at: [www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp](http://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp).

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