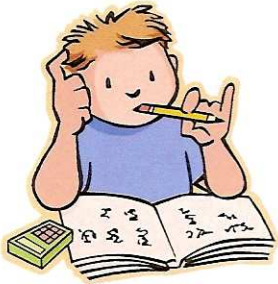




Students Succeed with School Meals

Families Walking the Walk

As parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and even older sisters and brothers, you can have a big impact on the elementary-school children in your lives. Healthy eating habits that are learned early will last a lifetime. Here are some things you can do to guide their food and beverage choices in a positive direction.



- ◆ Let your children see you eat nutritious foods at home – things like fruits, vegetables, whole-grains and low-fat or fat-free dairy products. Limit fast food and sugary drinks.
- ◆ Have healthy food (like nuts, fruit, whole-grain crackers or string cheese) on hand for grab-and-go snacks.
- ◆ Measure out child-size portions of snacks and keep them in plastic bags.
- ◆ Limit less-healthy foods in your home.
- ◆ Do not talk about dieting in front of children.



- ◆ Try not to impose your food likes and dislikes onto your children. Negative or positive emotions associated with food can have long-lasting effects of your child's food preferences. Saying things like "if you eat this, then you can have dessert," will teach children that treats are more pleasing and tastier than healthier foods.
- ◆ Encourage your children to try new foods, even if it is only one bit.
- ◆ Use non-food items for rewards.
- ◆ Send healthy foods for snacks, school parties and after-school events.



- ◆ Encourage your children to eat breakfast and lunch. If your child does not have time to eat breakfast at home, encourage him or her to eat a school breakfast.
- ◆ If your child buys lunch at school, encourage him or her to select the school lunch rather than the à la carte items. It is a balanced meal and costs less.
- ◆ Review the lunch menu with your children and discuss healthy options.
- ◆ If you have questions about the choices for school meals, talk with the cafeteria manager at your child's school or the Child Nutrition Director with the school system.



- ◆ Eat school breakfast or lunch with your child.
- ◆ Help your child set personal goals for healthy eating.
- ◆ Get involved with your school's health council.

Source: <https://fns.state.mn.us/FNSProg/NSLP/NSLPResource.htm>



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