



10 Steps for Parents

Healthy Eating at School

Do you know if your kids are eating healthy school meals? The only real way to be sure is to get involved. Show you care. Show the school that what your kids eat matters a lot. Because it does. Here's a checklist of what you can do to get results:

1 Do lunch with the kids.

Eat breakfast or lunch at school with your kids. See what the meals are like. Notice the atmosphere. If you don't like what you see, do something.

2 Talk out of school.

Make your opinions heard. Talk to other parents. Work with your PTA and school board to support healthy school meals.

3 Discuss your principles.

Go to the principal. Discuss the importance of good nutrition and physical activity. Suggest programs. Ask for cooperation. Follow through.

4 Know what's for lunch.

Get a weekly menu of school meals. Ask for the nutrition facts so you can be sure the menu meets the U.S. Government Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Keep it magnetized to your refrigerator. Discuss all the healthy choices with your kids.

5 Team up with foodservice staff.

Visit the school cafeteria. Get to know the staff. Let them know you value their services ... and appreciate good daily nutrition for your child.

6 Plant a seed.

Show your kids and their friends where healthy food comes from. Help your school start an edible landscape with a garden of goodies like fruits, vegetables and herbs.

7 Throw a tasting party.

Volunteer to organize a classroom tasting party to introduce and encourage nutritious new foods the kids may never have tried.

8 Set up a group.

Get involved. Form a parent advisory committee for school meals. Recruit enthusiastic "can-do" people to work with you.

9 Serve your kids food for thought.

Make sure kids appreciate how healthy breakfasts and lunches serve their minds as well as their bodies.

10 Listen.

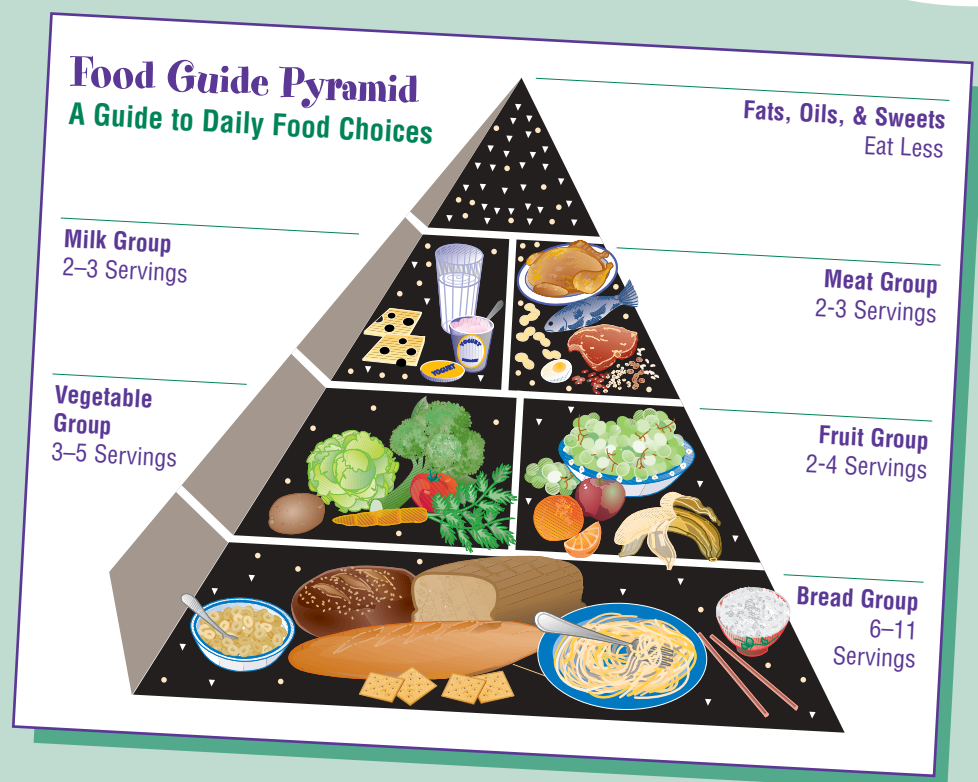
If you listen to what your kids are learning at school about good nutrition, you can help them all put their knowledge to work at home, too.

Teaching Kids How to Eat Right at Home and at School

Good nutrition begins at home. It should continue at school. The Food Guide Pyramid is based on the official U.S. Government guidelines for healthy eating. It's designed so kids and adults can learn and remember how to eat right every day.

So study it ▲ Practice it
Show it to your kids ▲ Tack it up
Talk it up ▲ Give examples
Make it fun ▲ Your kids will eat it up

And they'll grow up knowing how to choose foods that promise healthier, happier lives.





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Make Physical Activity Easy

Children can have fun and improve their health by being physically active every day. Children should aim to get at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days. Parents can help:

What is the right level of activity?

If you can talk without being breathless, you're okay. If you can sing, you're not moving enough.

- 1 Create safe places.**
Watch over children's activities.
- 2 Set a good example.**
Be active with your children.
- 3 Promote physical activity.**
Encourage children to be physically active at home, at school, and with friends.
- 4 Limit sitting-around time.**
Alternate time spent sitting with time spent moving.
- 5 Establish a routine.**
Set aside time each day as activity time.
- 6 Coach a team.**
Encourage children to participate in neighborhood sports.
- 7 Set up a home gym.**
Get children involved in creating a gym using household items. Canned foods make good weights.
- 8 Try aerobic activities.**
Check children's heart rates before, during and after activities to see how hard they are working.
- 9 Throw an activity party.**
Make your child's birthday party activity-centered.
- 10 Work with your school.**
Be sure your school offers physical activity time for all students.

