

HEALTHY FOODS IN SCHOOL

Kids spend a lot of time at school. Many children eat 2 meals, and sometimes 3, meals each day at school. This makes having healthy school meals important.

Eating healthy meals in school can help kids:

- Perform better in school.
- Boost their memory and give them energy.
- Improve attendance!¹
- Try new foods and practice healthy eating!

How can I bring Healthy Foods to my school?

There are several ways you can advocate for getting more healthy foods into your school. Here are some ideas:

Form a Wellness Committee:

A [Wellness Committee](#) is a great way to keep a school healthy. This group consists of a variety of stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, and school staff who work together to bring healthy options to schools. Healthy options can include both healthy foods and physical activity programs! [Click here](#) for simple steps to help get one started in your school.

Bring Healthy Foods to the Cafeteria:

The NYC Department of Education can bring [salad bars](#) to your school. The salad bar gives kids a chance to learn about different salad options and provides them with the opportunity to make their own salads! Approximately 1,000 NYC schools already have salad bars. If your school doesn't have a salad bar, ask for one!

Apply for the [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program \(FFVP\)](#). This federal program provides fresh fruits and vegetables to elementary schools across the U.S. If your school is a part of the [National School Lunch Program](#), this could be an option for you!

Ask for a Water Jet:

The water jet program can bring clean drinking water to NYC school cafeterias. Research on this program shows that when a water jet is in schools, students drink 3 times more water.² Water keeps kids hydrated and is a healthier drink option than chocolate milk and sugary drinks like juice and soda.

Build a School Garden:

School gardens are a great way to teach children about growing vegetables. It also provides a source for healthy foods! School gardens are also a great way to promote social-emotional

learning in schools. Visit [Grow to Learn NYC](#) for tips, tools, and lesson plans to help you start a school garden.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/nutrition/facts.htm>

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4318331/>

What you can do in the classroom?

Bring the important topic of healthy eating into your class. There are many resources and activity guides for educators to use when discussing nutrition and healthy choices with students.

- New York Road Runners (NYRR) has a [list of fun activities](#) to do with students that teaches them about nutrition for breakfast, lunch, snacks, and dinner!
- Fruits and Veggies More Matters has a website for kids called foodchamps.org. On this interactive website, kids participate in games and activities to learn more about fruits and vegetables.
- Use the [choosemyplate.gov resource for kids](http://choosemyplate.gov/resource-for-kids) to talk with your students about fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy on their plate. There is also interactive games that your students can play to learn about healthy eating!
- Nutrition.gov provides a [list of links](#) to an array of fun learning activities for children on healthy eating!