



1 get educated

Know the basic nutritional guidelines.

- In your household, you might be the decision-maker about your family's nutrition goals. In a community, it helps to have a shared understanding of nutrition principles based on science. The federal government's *MyPlate* serve as the most influential and authoritative recommendations for what should be served in the schools.

Developed jointly by the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of Health and Human Services and updated every five years (most recently in 2010), the *MyPlate* provide advice on good dietary habits for health promotion and reducing risks for major chronic diseases.

School officials and food program managers follow the regulations and align their food offerings to the *MyPlate*. It is important for stakeholders to understand this and bring forward proposals that take this into account.

Learn how school food service is financed.

- School food service revenues come from two primary sources: the federal National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP); and student payments for the food they buy. In the main, there is no funding through the school district budget. Rather, they operate as a stand-alone business. Learn about the federal National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP), which provide varying levels of reimbursement for meals that meet federal nutrition standards.
- School nutrition directors typically need to manage all of the expenses associated with food service, from food procurement to labor to waste disposal, while running their budgets at a breakeven level. Management issues may vary from district to district. Find out exactly how the food service is financed in your district.



Start small.

Think big.

For additional resources on healthy school food, visit www.harvardpilgrim.org/foundation.



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3 take action

Talk with the school nutrition director about your concerns.

- Ask the director about his/her challenges regarding nutritional planning. Ask if you can visit the school cafeteria and have a school meal one day.

Join with other organizations in your community that may be concerned or involved with school nutrition.

Get involved politically.

- Join or form a coalition or organization focused on making healthy changes in school food. Attend school board meetings and voice your concerns.

from
soup to nuts

Tip on Moving
Toward Healthier
School Meals



