

# *The School Day Just Got Healthier*



## **For Parents**

**School meals matter!** The school day just got healthier thanks to new school lunch meal standards. Encourage your child to check out these new meals and find their favorites.

**The new school meals focus on more whole grains, fruits and vegetables;** low-fat or non-fat milk; and less sodium and fat.

**Teachers will tell you that well-nourished children are ready to learn and do better in class.** When we give children plenty of healthy food choices and regular physical activity at school, they learn healthier habits for life.

**Nutritious meals and snacks will help children stay healthy,** reducing their risk for obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other serious chronic diseases.

**School meals are “rightsized.”** Based on their age, students are getting the right portions and now they will be getting more of some food like fruits and vegetables.

**You have the power to encourage your children to build a healthy plate at school and home.**

Review the school menu with your children and encourage them to try new foods, especially the healthy foods offered.

**Your child picks up all of your attitudes and behaviors**—including your eating habits. Since children love to copy what their parents do, they are likely to mimic your willingness to try new foods.

**Children need to try new foods many time before they like them!** Here are some helpful tips to take an active role in school meals and encourage your children to eat healthy foods:

- ◆ **When your child gets home from school,** ask what was served and what (s)he ate for lunch.
- ◆ **Eat meals with your child(ren) whenever possible.** Let your child see you enjoying fruits, vegetables and whole grains at meals and snacks.
- ◆ **Grocery shopping can teach your children about food and nutrition.** Help your children make healthier choices.
- ◆ **Discuss where vegetables, fruits and grains,** dairy and proteins foods come from with your child.
- ◆ **Share the adventure** and serve new foods offered in the school cafeteria at home.

**The School Day Just Got Healthier!** Together we can make a difference and help our children develop healthy habits for life.

*[www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday](http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday)*

