



SCHOOL FOOD

School meals have often been criticized for many years. Too many days with fast, convenience foods like chicken nuggets, hot dogs, hamburgers, corn dogs, pizza, french fries, tater tots, chips, cookies, and cake on the school lunch menu. And too many days with high sugar cereals, chewy breakfast bars, pop tarts, canned fruit in heavy syrup, and fruit drinks on the school breakfast menu.

While many of today's food manufacturers make some convenience foods that have been modified to be lower in fat, salt, and sugar for the school market, the words on the menus remain the same. With "pizza", "chicken nuggets", and "hot dogs" still listed on the menu, it's difficult to be confident that these foods are better for our children.

NUTRITION EDUCATION CHALLENGE

It also creates a challenge when teaching young students which foods are "healthy" and which are "less healthy". It becomes confusing to explain that hot dog A is modified to be lower in fat and salt, so it's "healthy" --- but hot dog B is not. Bottom line, it's still a hot dog to most children, as well as to most adults. So, hot dogs continue to be a commonly desired and eaten food. While at the same time, hope is held out that the hot dogs chosen are the "healthy" kind.

HEALTHY DIETS

Although many of today's schools do serve some of these modified foods, another problem still remains. Even though these foods can be lower in fat, salt, and sugar --- they are still highly processed, heat-and-serve, convenience foods. A healthy diet needs to include much more fresh, wholesome, scratch-cooked, nutrient-rich food --- and much less convenience food.

However, most people believe that some fast, convenience food once in a while is fine. Indeed, many families have busy, fast-paced lives that include eating some fast food at night, on the weekends, and during the summer when school is out. The rest of the time, students are in school where the meals they eat most often come from the school food available to them.

OUR CHILDREN

During a typical school year of about 172 days (out of 365 days), students are in school almost half their daily lives. A typical school serves two meals, ie, breakfast and lunch, each day. So, if a student eats both meals at school, the majority of the student's meals and nutrient intake for almost half a year comes from school food. Likewise, if averaged out over an entire year, about one-third of the student's nutrient intake comes from school food.

That's a lot of meals. It's clear that schools meals are a critical part of the diet of today's children. So as much as possible, meals at school need to consist of healthy food, as well as teach a healthy message. For these reasons --- Done Right Food is committed to making sure that it is "DONE RIGHT".

For more information, contact us:

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