



Frequently Asked Questions by Parents

1. What type of food will be served in my child's nutrition program?

Your child will be offered a selection of healthy food that tastes great! Based on the Student Nutrition Guidelines, developed by Toronto Public Health, your child will choose from a variety of healthy foods.

For **Morning Meal**, 3 food groups are provided:

- Vegetables or fruit
- Milk or alternatives
- Whole grain products OR protein foods

For **Snack**, 2 food groups are provided:

- Vegetables or fruit
- Whole grain products OR protein foods OR milk or alternatives

Breakfast or Lunch meals include: vegetables or fruit, protein foods (including milk) and whole grain products. Food is purchased from food safe delivery vendors or reputable local grocery stores. There are bulk buying opportunities available through the Food and Logistics Department of Toronto Foundation for Student Success.

2. What if my child has an allergy to a food?

Every effort will be made to control the school environment to minimize the exposure of identified allergens as part of a prevention plan, whenever possible, for example, all schools strive to be peanut-free. Despite these efforts to reduce the risk of exposure to zero, the Board cannot ensure an allergen-free school environment.

Schools with a nutrition program request that parents submit an allergy/food restriction form at the beginning of the school year so that accommodations can be made. For instance, if a child is allergic to milk, that child is not served milk. If it is an anaphylactic allergy, the bin with food going into that student's classroom is clearly labelled, kept separate and sanitized daily. Every classroom bin has a class list attached with student allergies identified so that teachers and volunteers are aware of children with allergies. The Nutrition Program Co-ordinator will have access to allergy and food restriction information gathered by the school. She/he develops menus based on analysis of ingredient lists on food to address allergies and ensures that the food preparation area is sanitized daily according to Toronto Public Health Food Safety standards.

3. How is the food prepared for my child's nutrition program?

The Nutrition Program Co-ordinator and/or volunteers prepare the menu and ensure that your child's food is delivered and served in a safe, clean environment that adheres to Toronto Public Health sanitary standards, including proper refrigeration and daily sanitizing of food preparation areas. A Toronto Public Health inspector visits your school's food preparation space to ensure it complies with all safety regulations. All Nutrition Program Co-ordinators receive training in safe food handling and nutrition every two years so that they are able to implement the most current food safety standards. A Toronto Public Health dietitian reviews menus and visits your school to ensure that your child is offered healthy food choices.



4. How is my child's nutrition program funded?

Provincial and municipal grants cover a small portion of the program costs. Contributions from parents are necessary to make the program successful and meet funding criteria. Your school Nutrition Advisory Committee may suggest an amount for parents to contribute based on the cost needed to run your school's program. Nutrition programs are universal and available for all students, regardless of family's ability to contribute financially. For information on other funding sources, contact one of our Nutrition Liaison Officers, listed below.

5. Why does our school need a nutrition program?

The Toronto District School Board, through its Nutrition Foundation Statement, recognizes the direct relationship between healthy nutrition and academic achievement of students. Research shows that children who eat healthy food are better able to concentrate, retain and apply information and show positive behavior in the classroom. Through nutrition programs, students are more likely to develop life-long eating habits which promote health and combat chronic diseases. Student Nutrition programs improve learning outcomes, create healthy school environments and address hunger in a non-stigmatizing way. School nutrition programs are beneficial for all students and essential for some. They are part of our school's plan to support student success and well-being.

6. How do I volunteer?

Volunteers are vital to the success of school nutrition programs. To volunteer, please speak with your school principal. To ensure the safety of all children, the Toronto District School Board requires police reference checks for all adult volunteers who have contact with students. Schools may also welcome secondary school students who wish to volunteer toward their 40 hours of community service required to graduate.

For information or questions, please contact the Student Nutrition Program Office.

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Web sites: www.tdsb.on.ca/ElementarySchool/SupportingYou/Nutrition
Toronto Public Health: www.toronto.ca/health
Student Nutrition Toronto: www.studentnutritiontoronto.ca
Canada's Food Guide: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>