

Together We Can Build Food-Safe Schools!

Strategy Sheet

Strategies for Students

Do you know what a food-safe school is and why it's important? Sometimes, the food you eat can make you very sick if it isn't safely prepared and handled. The good news is that there are things you, your parents, your teachers, and others can do to keep your food safe!

A food-safe school includes everyone in your community to create a culture of food safety. What's a culture of food safety? A culture of food safety means that everyone, every day, plays their part to keep the food that you eat at school safe!

Students Are Essential to Creating a Culture of Food Safety

- You can make healthy behavior choices to keep your food safe.
- You have a voice at your school. Let your principal, teachers, and school nutrition (cafeteria) team know that food safety is important to you.

Thinking About Food Safety

- Do you wash your hands before eating meals and snacks?
- Do you know what your principal, teachers, school nutrition (cafeteria) team, and parents are doing to keep your food safe?
- What simple things can you do to keep your food safe?

Take Action!

- **CLEAN!** Wash your hands before eating snacks and meals.
Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, including the back of your hands and

under fingernails, and dry them with a paper towel, before eating snacks and meals. Don't be afraid to ask your teacher for permission to wash your hands before eating!

- **SEPARATE!** Think carefully about what you do with food.
Always keep raw meat, chicken, and fish separate from each other and other types of food, such as fresh fruits and vegetables so harmful bacteria don't move from food that will be cooked to food that won't be cooked. Some people may have food allergies – that means that eating a certain food can make them very, very sick. Food allergies are very serious, so think twice about swapping lunches with your friends!
- **COOK!** Eat your hot food right away.
You may not have to worry about cooking food at school, but you do need to follow some basic rules when eating it. When you are served hot food, in the cafeteria, classroom, or anywhere else, eat it before it gets cold. It will taste better and food that sits out and is not kept hot may grow germs!
- **CHILL!** Keep your cold food cold.
If you bring your lunch from home, ask your parents to include ice or ice packs in your lunchbox, or ask your teacher if you can keep your lunch in a refrigerator. Try not to keep leftover food from snacks or meals served at school. Food may grow germs if it's not kept cold! ■