

Together We Can Build Food-Safe Schools

Strategy Sheet

Strategies for School Nutrition Managers

As a school nutrition manager, you are one of the most important players on your school's foodservice team. Every day, you lead your school's food safety efforts by ensuring that your students are fed safe, nutritious meals. You are the food safety expert for your school. Take a *lead* in making your school a food-safe school! Share your expertise and passion for food safety with your school community.

Food-safe schools adopt a school-wide approach to food safety and, with the help of partners in the school community, can create a culture of food safety. They address a broad range of food safety topics beyond the scope of what may be required by legislation. This starts with building and supporting strong food safety policies and procedures and continues with education and training. Partners can help achieve the ultimate goal of making food safety second nature to everyone in the school community, thus creating a culture of food safety.

School Nutrition Managers Are Essential to Creating a Culture of Food Safety

- You are the front line in assuring the safety of the food provided to students through school meal and snack programs.
- You are the expert in food safety within your school.

Thinking About Food Safety

- Does your school nutrition team apply its food safety training, and the school's policies and procedures, *every* time food is handled, prepared, and served?

- Do you have plans in place to address food recalls, food defense, and foodborne illness outbreaks and to manage food allergies?
- Is food for school meals prepared and/or served outside of the cafeteria? If so, how do you make sure this food is handled and served safely?
- Can you recognize and correct breakdowns in food safety practices, in the cafeteria and in other school settings?
- How can you help other members of your school community contribute to a food-safe school?

Take Action!

- Lead your school's food safety efforts. Be the school's food safety expert by knowing your district's and school's food safety policies and procedures inside out – and understanding *why* they are important. Ensure that your school nutrition team understands food safety principles and uses sound practices each time they prepare and serve food. Ask your school nutrition director about new developments in food safety.
- Share your expertise and passion for food safety. Work with your school nutrition director to learn how you can engage others in the school community in your efforts. Be proud of and confident in your role as the school's food safety expert. In this role you have a responsibility to ensure that the food kids eat through school meal and snack programs is safe – whether they eat on the bus, in the classroom, or in another school setting. You also can engage other school community partners in your efforts to ensure that all food served to kids is safe. ■