

## Make the most of Georgia's School Nutrition Program

1. Encourage your child to eat school breakfast and school lunch.  
Good nutrition provides fuel for learning.
2. Know what's on the school's menu and talk to your child about healthy choices that can be made at school.
3. Encourage your child to choose all five food groups for best nutrition.  
Talk about fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, lean protein, and milk offered at school everyday.
4. Have lunch with your child at school so that you may see first-hand the nutritious options that are being offered each day.
5. You are your child's best role model. Try implementing healthy habits at home by:
  - Grilling and baking, instead of frying foods
  - Seasoning with herbs
  - Eating at the dinner table as a family
  - Serving fruit as a dessert
  - Having a vegetable or two at every meal
  - Limiting high calorie and sugary beverages
  - Choosing low-fat/fat-free milk
  - Trying whole grain bread, pasta, rice, and other whole grain-rich foods.

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# A Parent's Guide to Healthy School Meals

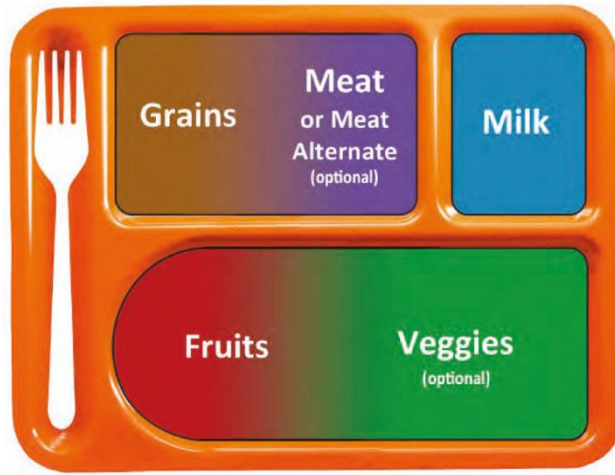
## How to Choose a Healthy Meal at School

Georgia School  
**Nutrition!**  
*Shake it Up!*

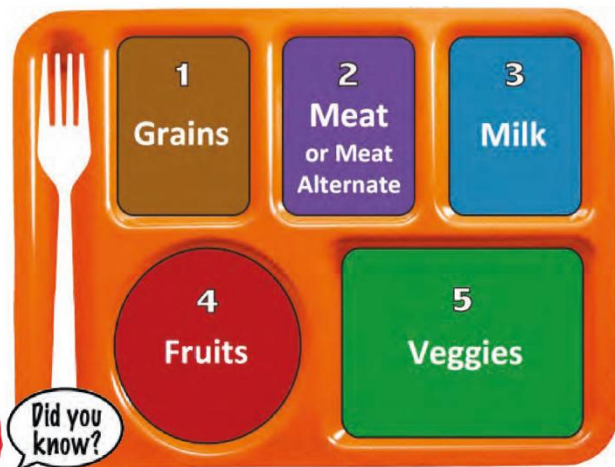


## What should your child select for a healthy school meal?

**BREAKFAST:** 1/2 Cup fruit is required and a minimum of at least 2 additional choices. For best nutrition and value, students may select 4 servings from food components offered each day.



**LUNCH:** 1/2 Cup fruit and/or vegetable and at least 2 other choices. For best nutrition and value, students may choose all 5 food components as shown on the sample tray below.



Did you know?

**The 5 Food Groups offered in a school meal help build a strong body and mind.**

## What is the Healthy School Meal Pattern?

The Healthy School Meal Pattern provides nutritious breakfasts and lunches to students across the nation. These meals safeguard the health and wellbeing of our children by providing meals that align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. School meals are served to more than 32 million students nationwide, including the 1.77 million students statewide in Georgia.

Through the Georgia Shake It Up in School Nutrition Initiative, schools are serving more local and Georgia grown foods on their school lunch and breakfast menus than ever before.

School meals focus on the whole child by providing education, nutrition and experiential learning for students that encourage students to make healthy choices.

### Why choose a school meal?

Benefits for Students:

- Students learn how to build a balanced meal, a lifelong skill important for healthy living.
- Research shows when a child's nutrition needs are met, the child is more attentive in class, has better attendance, & fewer disciplinary problems.
- USDA research shows children who participate in National School Lunch Programs eat healthier compared to those who do not participate.
- School districts participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to have a wellness policy which addresses obesity, promotes healthy eating, and physical activity.

Benefits for Parents:

School lunch offers parents a convenient way to provide a nutritious lunch or breakfast for their children at the lowest possible price.

### What makes up a school meal?

There are 3 food components (food groups) offered at breakfast, which are grains, milk, and fruits. Schools may also offer meat or meat alternate (lean protein) and vegetables.

At lunch there are 5 food components (food groups) offered which are grains, meat or meat alternate (lean protein), milk, fruits, and vegetables.

**Portion sizes of the five meal components (food groups) will reflect those recommended for students by their age grade group.**