



School Lunch Fact Sheet

It's time to give kids the school lunch they deserve. Here's why:

- The National School Lunch Program feeds more than 31 million children every school day. 18 million of those children qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.
- One child in every four is overweight or obese, and one in three will develop diabetes in his or her lifetime. For African-American and Hispanic children, that number rises to one in two.
- Obesity and diabetes are so destructive that today's kids are the first in over two centuries to have shorter life expectancies than their parents.
- Obesity costs our nation \$147 billion each year, and diabetes costs our nation \$116 each year. One year of diabetes treatments costs \$11, 774.
- School districts are reimbursed \$2.68 for every meal served to a child who qualifies for free lunch. After paying for overhead costs, schools are left with only \$1.00 to purchase food. As a result, most can only afford to serve the highly processed foods that hurt children's health and keep them from performing well in school.

We're calling for Congress to give kids the school lunch they deserve. When our elected officials reauthorize child nutrition programs this spring, they must:

1. Invest in health. Find the funding to give school lunch programs \$1 more per child per day.
2. Protect kids from the junk food sold in school vending machines and as "a la carte" cafeteria items. Approve the Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act of 2009.
3. Link schools to local farms, and teach healthy eating. Guarantee \$50 million of funding for Farm to School programs.

We need to show Congress concrete support for these actions, and we need to do it before they reauthorize child nutrition programs. To learn more and to get involved in the Time for Lunch campaign, visit <http://slowfoodusa.org/timeforlunch>.