



# School Food-Safety Bill of Rights

On a regular school day, millions of children eat in their school's cafeteria. Contaminated food can lead to a miserable child, lost learning time, and sometimes to a serious and potentially fatal illness. Because their immune systems are still developing, children are at greater risk of experiencing severe foodborne illness, which can require hospitalization.

While schools should take all the necessary steps to minimize the risk of foodborne illness, families and students can also play a role in making sure that schools are "food-safe."

This **School Food-Safety Bill of Rights** was developed to give parents guidance on how to protect their children from foodborne hazards in school cafeterias.

## 1. Children have a right to safe food in school cafeterias

All food served in school cafeterias should be free of hazards.  
Food should be properly stored, prepared, and served.

What Parents Can Do:

- ✓ Visit your child's cafeteria during the school day and look for problems.

## 2. Parents have a right to see food-safety inspection reports

Inspection reports for each cafeteria should be posted and easy-to-see.

What Parents Can Do:

- ✓ Request your child's school food safety inspection report.
- ✓ Meet with your child's school principal to discuss the school's food safety plan and inspection scores.

## 3. Schools have a right to regular inspections.

School cafeterias should be inspected twice every year.

What Parents Can Do:

- ✓ Check the dates of the school inspections either at the school or on the health department website.
- ✓ Call the health departments to ask for an inspection if it is more than 7 months since the last inspection.

## 4. Parents have a right to be advocates.

Safe food is essential to learning. Parents and students can demand more food-safe schools by talking about food safety with school staff, principals, and the local health department.

What Parents Can Do:

- ✓ Use PTA meetings and other group settings as an opportunity to advocate for additional resources to improve food safety.