



Working for a sustainable future.
Advocating for better food in schools.

SCHOOL LUNCH-IN

A great way to galvanize moms (and dads) is to attend or host a screening during School Nutrition Week in October (or any time during the school year). Then ask parents in your district to participate in a School Lunch-In. Pick a day, or a week and let your principal know that you and some other parents will be joining your children for lunch. Parents should see first-hand what their kids are eating (and not eating) at school. Most parents have no idea what is being served in their child's classroom and school cafeteria.

While the idea of a "Lunch-In" may seem radical, it actually comes from USDA guidelines suggesting that every parent should go to school and have lunch with their child.

Some tips:

- *While you're lunching - read more than the menu.*
- *Ask to see a list of ingredients for every item in the cafeteria.*
- *Read labels; check out what's in the vending machines.*
- *Don't be fooled by health claims on menus and "low calorie", "low fat" branding.*
- *How much of the food being served is real, fresh food and how much of it includes flavorings, colorings, artificial sweeteners, preservatives, binders and unpronounceable ingredients?*

You don't need a degree in nutrition to know whether the food being served in your child's cafeteria is good to be eating on a daily basis. It's really about common sense. Parents are the real customers in the cafeteria. We're the ones who pay for lunch. Our bottom line is the health and well being of our kids. Ask yourself if you want your children eating these foods as a primary source of nutrition for ten months of the year.

Then ask your school board for a wellness policy that requires real food, not junk (and enough time for children to sit down and eat a real meal)! Let us know how your visit goes and send us your favorite school food photos - we'll post them on our site.

<http://www.angrymoms.org>