

# How to be a Successful Lunchroom Monitor



A positive school lunch period can help children to eat healthy foods, build social skills and enjoy their meals with friends. Lunchroom monitors can play a key role in helping children gain healthy eating habits. Here are some tips to help you be a successful lunchroom monitor.

## **Be a positive role model**

Children learn by example. Introduce yourself when you meet the class for the first time or when new students join the class. Have a well-balanced, healthy meal that includes foods from the four food groups from Canada's Food Guide. Do not talk about your own or others' body size, diet and or weight. Avoid talking about the amount of food a child is eating or making negative comments about the food they are eating.

## **Be food safe**

Ask children to clear off their desk before eating. Also have them wash their hands before and after eating. You should wash your hands too.



## **Be aware of students with food allergies**

Know which children in the class have an allergy. Get training on what to do if a child has a reaction. Follow classroom/school guidelines about food allergies. Do not promote sharing of foods. Bring foods that will not trigger a student's allergy.

## **Eat together**

Sit down and eat with the children. Eating is a social event. It is a good time to talk with children and learn about them. Also, they may be more likely to try new foods when they see other people enjoying foods they have not tried before.

## **Let the child pick what they want to eat from their own lunch**

Children have built-in signals for feeling hungry and full. It is important for them to learn to listen to their bodies and eat when their bodies tell them to. Sometimes, a child may not want to eat a meal. Do not worry. They will likely have a snack or eat more at their next meal. Do not beg, threaten, play games or force a child to eat.

## **Do not use food as a bribe or reward**

Before coming to a classroom, discuss with the teacher how to handle poor behaviour. Using food, especially candies, as rewards can lead to poor eating habits and a preference for these foods.

## **Keep mealtimes calm and pleasant**

Ask children to remain seated at their desks while eating. Enjoy your mealtime with them. By not letting children run around, it helps to prevent choking. Talk about fun topics that kids enjoy.



Adapted from Ellyn Satter's Child of Mine: Feeding with Love and Good Sense

For more copies, go online at <http://vch.eduhealth.ca>  
or email [phe@vch.ca](mailto:phe@vch.ca) and quote Catalogue No. **GK.260.H692**  
© Vancouver Coastal Health, March 2011

The information in this document is intended solely for the person  
to whom it was given by the health care team.  
[www.vch.ca](http://www.vch.ca)