

LOVE YOUR LUNCH



DEAR EDUCATOR,

Celebrate National School Lunch Week, October 9-13, by encouraging your students to eat a healthful school lunch every day.

A nutritious lunch has been proven to lead to greater success in school, less absenteeism, and overall well-being. Plus the foods served in school come from all food groups and offer a wide variety of tasty choices.

To support National School Lunch Week, the American Dairy Association North East (ADANE), together with the award-winning curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired (YMI), have developed **Love Your Lunch**, a program that helps middle and junior high school students (and parents) learn the importance of eating a healthful school lunch each and every day.

Love Your Lunch includes a fun and informative classroom activity that teaches students why choosing healthful lunch foods every day is a recipe for success in school. There is also a take-home letter explaining the beneficial role that lunch plays in school performance, positive attitude, and achievement.

We encourage you to share this resource with other teachers at your school. Although the materials are copyrighted, you may make as many copies as you need for educational purposes.

Please let us know your opinion of this program by responding through the feedback form at ymiclassroom.com/feedback-adane-lunch. We depend on your comments and ideas to continue providing free educational programs that make a real difference in students' lives.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds inspired.

 is the only company developing free, innovative classroom materials that is owned and directed by award-winning former teachers. Visit our website at www.ymiclassroom.com to send feedback and download more free programs. For questions, contact us toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by e-mail at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.



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TARGET AUDIENCE

- Middle and junior high students in health and homeroom classes

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- **Reinforce** the concept that eating school lunch can lead to success in school
- **Encourage** students to eat a healthful school lunch every day
- **Educate** parents/guardians about the importance of school lunch and the variety of healthful foods available every day in schools

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- A 3-page downloadable guide including one teacher instruction page, one activity sheet, and one take-home letter

HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM

National School Lunch Week is October 9-13, so download and photocopy the program materials prior to that week. Be sure to send home the parent letter at the same time to encourage parental support. It's important for everyone to know that the USDA nutrition standards for school meals have improved. Now,

- Fruits and vegetables are offered daily.
- There are more whole grains.
- Fat-free or low-fat milk varieties are offered.
- Calorie limits have been developed by grade level.
- There are limits on saturated fat, trans fats, and sodium.

Before beginning the activities, tell students that eating school lunch every day is a recipe for success.

Explain that students who eat a healthful school lunch are more likely to have better nutritional intake, achieve higher test scores, and have less absenteeism.*

*Source: The Wellness Impact Report, 2013

Classroom Activity LOVE YOUR LUNCH

Start by discussing the five food groups that contribute to a healthful diet—low-fat dairy, fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins. For more information on each of these food groups, go to www.choosemyplate.gov. Explain that studies have shown that students who eat a healthful lunch score higher and are absent less often.

Then hand out the **Love Your Lunch** Challenge sheet, and tell students that each day during National School Lunch week they should check off whether they included low-fat dairy foods (i.e., milk, yogurt, cheese); whole grains; vegetables; fruit; and proteins (i.e., poultry, fish, eggs, and dry beans) in their lunch selections. Have them write in their favorite lunch item each day and rate it by coloring one to five emojis. For Part 2, encourage students to create their own school lunch recipes using milk, cheese, or yogurt and choose a class-winning recipe to share with the cafeteria staff or upload it at ymiclassroom.com/adane-lunch.

RESOURCES

- American Dairy Association North East www.dairyspot.com
- National School Lunch Week <https://schoolnutrition.org/nslw>
- Ymiclassroom.com

LOVE YOUR LUNCH



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DEAR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS,

Help us celebrate National School Lunch Week, October 9-13, by encouraging your child to eat a healthful school lunch every day.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports that students who participate in school lunch have superior nutritional intake compared to students who don't. In addition, healthful eating at school correlates with higher test scores and less absenteeism.* Access to proper nutrition can also help students maintain psychosocial well-being and reduce aggression.**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has improved nutritional standards for lunch served at your child's school. Now,

- Fruits and vegetables are offered daily.
- There are more whole grains.
- Fat-free or low-fat milk varieties are offered.
- Calorie limits have been developed by grade level.
- There are limits on saturated fat, trans fats, and sodium.

We're trying to make National School Lunch Week more fun and impactful for students. That's why the American Dairy Association North East (ADANE) has created the **Love Your Lunch** educational program, with learning activities that motivate students to eat a healthful lunch every day, including low-fat dairy.



Talk with your child about the importance of eating a nutritious lunch at school. Ask them if they notice a difference in how they feel after lunch each day. Do they have more energy? Can they concentrate better? Remind your child that students who eat lunch at school every day have shown greater success in school. That's why we want all students to **Love Your Lunch!**

Sincerely,



AMERICAN DAIRY
ASSOCIATION NORTH
EAST

*Source: The Wellness Impact Report, 2013

**Nutrition and Students' Academic Performance, 2014