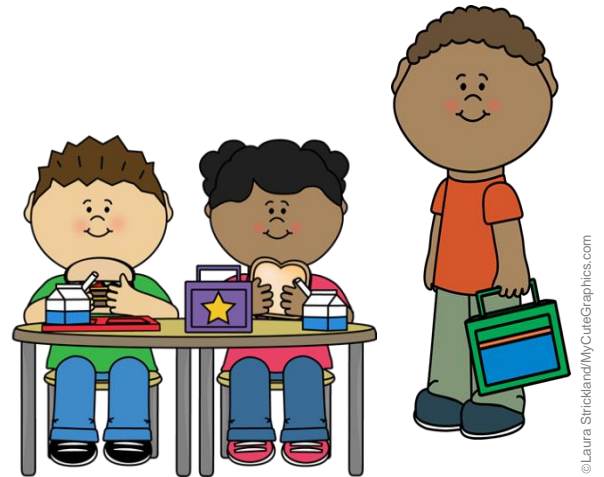


How to be a Successful Lunchtime Monitor

As a lunchtime monitor, you can help younger children learn healthy eating habits.

Before you monitor for the first time

- Follow school rules about not allowing students to share food.
- Know which students in the class have a food allergy.
- Ask your teacher what to do if a student in your class has an allergic reaction.
- Talk with the teacher about:
 - What to do if someone is choking or needs help.
 - How to handle poor behaviour.



Tips for being a successful monitor

1. 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.
- Bring your own lunch. Have a well- balanced healthy lunch that includes at least 3 of the 4 food groups.
- Use proper table manners when eating your own lunch. Set a good example for the students such as using a napkin and not talking you're your mouth full.
- Don't bring sugar sweetened beverages (like pop) or snack foods (like chips) to the class.

- Stay away from talking about diets, body size, and how much a student eats or doesn't eat.
- Don't use your electronic device while you are being the lunchtime monitor. The students need your undivided attention.

2. Be food safe.

- Ask students to clear off their desk before eating.
- Get everyone to wash their hands before and after eating. Don't forget to wash your hands too.
- Help them to wipe up any spills.

3. Be prepared for emergencies.

- Know what to do if a student has an allergic reaction, chokes, or needs an adult to help them.

4. Eat together.

- Ask students if they need help opening packages or containers.
- Sit down and eat with the students. Make sure you can see and monitor the whole class.
- Encourage everyone to talk about fun and interesting things because eating is a social event.

5. Let students pick what they want to eat from their lunch.

Children have built-in signals for feeling hungry and full. Some days they might eat a lot and other days they might eat only a little.

- Allow students to eat as much as they want from their lunch.
- Do not beg, threaten, play games, or force them to eat.
- Encourage students to put their lunch box away when they've finished eating regardless of how much food is left over.
- If your school has composting and recycling bins, encourage students to put their waste in the composting and recycling bins.

6. Do not use food as a bribe or reward.

Food such as candy is a poor choice as a reward for behaviour because it can lead to poor eating habits.

- When you see a student behaving well, give praise.
- Reward good behaviour with a smile, thumbs up, high-five, etc.

7. Keep mealtimes calm and pleasant.

- Ask students to remain seated while eating. This helps keep them safe and reduces the risk of choking.
- Enjoy your mealtime with them by talking about fun topics like games, sports, and activities they enjoy.

Adapted from *How to be a Successful Lunchroom Monitor* (GK.260.H692, October 2017) by Vancouver Coastal Health