

# Food Safety Fact Sheet

## Serving Safe Foods

### INTRODUCTION

School nutrition employees take pride in serving healthy foods to their customers. Many schools participate in the HealthierUS School Challenge which includes a commitment of serving a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain products. In addition to serving healthy foods, it is important to make sure all food served is safe to eat.

### HERE ARE THE FACTS

We eat with our five senses, sight, smell, taste, touch, and sound. Serving food at the proper temperature not only enhances the quality of the product, but can also reduce the possibility of a foodborne illness. A single case of foodborne illness can cost a food establishment their reputation, loss of revenue due to liability, time lost from work, and hungry children without a well-balanced meal.

### APPLICATION

It is important to visually observe the serving line to ensure that the quality, safety, and appearance of the food has not been compromised during service.

#### Good Serving Practices

- Avoid touching ready-to-eat foods with bare hands.
- Use clean and sanitized utensils.
- Hold:
  - ◊ Plates by the edge or bottom,
  - ◊ Cups by the handle or bottom, and
  - ◊ Utensils by the handles.
- Keep food at the proper temperature.
- Keep the serving line clean and attractive during serving time.
- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Use disposable gloves appropriately.
- Use clean and sanitized linens, such as cloth napkins, to line a container for the service of food and make sure to replace each time the container is refilled.

**Remember, follow state or local health department requirements.**





# Serving Safe Foods cont.

## References

- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, & Institute of Child Nutrition. (2015). *Food safety in schools*. University, MS. Author.
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