# **About Student Nutrition Programs**

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Template from <http://www.foodshare.net/student-nutrition> – Toronto-specific but can be adapted

**What is a Student Nutrition Program?**

It is a program that offers a healthy breakfast, morning meal, snack and/or lunch to students before, during or after each school day.

**Why do students participate in Student Nutrition Programs?**

There are as many reasons why students participate as there are students participating! The main reason is that they enjoy eating good food. Other factors include the lack of healthy food options at home, the desire to share a meal or snack in a communal family-like setting that a classroom or breakfast program can provide, lack of parental supervision at home or they may be running late. Others are not able to eat upon rising and others still may have a long journey on a bus before school begins leading to them being hungry upon arrival at school, the wait for lunch being too long.

**How many Student Nutrition Programs are there in Toronto?**

There are approximately 720+ programs operating across the city every day.

**Who participates in Student Nutrition Programs?**

Students from 4 to 18; parents; school staff members; community volunteers

**Who implements, and co-ordinates, Student Nutrition Programs?**

Parents and community members who want to promote healthy eating practices for children in their community organize most programs. They form a Local Student Nutrition Program Committee (with representatives from parents, community members, local school staff, agencies, faith community members, Toronto Public Health, school boards) to apply for start-up funding and work out the daily needs of the program.

**Where are Student Nutrition Programs held?**

Student Nutrition Programs are primarily held in schools but can also be found in community centres, faith centres, apartment buildings or wherever there are kitchen/preparation/storage facilities and willing community members.

**When do Student Nutrition Programs happen?**

Student Nutrition Programs can happen at almost any time during the day. Each program decides what is best for the students, the volunteers and host staff. The most popular are breakfast, morning meal served in class before 11:00am, mid-morning snack, lunch, mid-afternoon snack and after school snack.

**How are the Student Nutrition Programs in Toronto funded?**

Parents are the main supporters of the Student Nutrition Programs. Many give both time and funds. The City of Toronto and The Province of Ontario also give financial support to each program on a yearly basis. Other funds come from local community groups, service clubs, faith communities, other private funders, The Toronto Foundation for Student Success and The Angel Foundation for Learning.

**Do Student Nutrition Programs provide other benefits to the community?**

Yes, these programs provide meaningful volunteer and work experience to parents and other community members. Many of the programs’ volunteers include new Canadians engaging with their child’s school and public society for the first time in a way that is meaningful for them and helps build their own capacity and social connections, often teaching new skills which may lead to employment opportunities.