STUDENT NUTRITION PROGRAMS
Secondary Student Volunteers FAQ

Volunteers make student nutrition programs successful and student volunteers are encouraged and welcome to get involved! Depending on the program, staffing and student interests, there are a variety of volunteer roles for students. They contribute to the positive impacts of nutrition programs for students and can learn new skills and develop their interests in healthy eating and food literacy.

1. What are the types of duties that student volunteers do?

Most secondary schools have a daily morning breakfast or Grab & Go program, so student volunteers assisting with this part of the program need to get to school early to help with preparing the food. Student volunteers can also help to serve food, help with cleaning and sanitizing and organizing the nutrition space. Schools may have a roster of volunteers for a flexible schedule. More experienced volunteers can help train and mentor new student volunteers.

Other possible duties for student volunteers could be: organizing outreach and awareness campaigns and fundraising activities. Students can create and distribute menu surveys and brand their school nutrition program to build engagement and ownership of the program, for example, designing a logo for their school nutrition program.

Students can be part of the Local Nutrition Program Committee (LNPC); bringing student voice to decisions about the program and learning leadership skills such as menu planning, budgeting and program evaluation. Examples of projects that student leaders have initiated at TDSB schools are: organizing a pantry for take away groceries, finding local food banks to donate unused food, cooking and sharing cultural cuisine for special events, and fundraising activities.

Student councils can be involved in student nutrition program decisions and initiatives.

TDSB programs like Experiential Learning and co-op programs and local special education classrooms provide formal teacher-led opportunities for partnership.

Hospitality and Culinary programs and Family Studies class can contribute to their student nutrition programs. Students are not volunteers but support the nutrition programs as part of coursework.

2. What kind of training and support for student volunteers is available?

Student volunteers are strongly encouraged to complete the Safe Food Handling Training for Student Nutrition Programs. This training is free, offered online and takes about 3 hours to complete. This training covers what volunteers need to know about safe food storage and handling. Students can add this to their resumes and job readiness profiles. Contact one of our Nutrition Liaison Officers (NLO) to provide orientation sessions for student volunteer groups.

3. Can volunteering with a nutrition program contribute to community service hours for secondary school graduation?

Yes, volunteering at a student nutrition program can contribute to the 40 hours of community service required to obtain a secondary school diploma. Most high school students volunteer in the program running at their home school but they can also be matched up with an elementary school nearby. It's an added benefit for younger students to see their older peers active in school volunteer roles. Contact the Principal of your nearby school or one of the Nutrition Liaison Officers (NLO).

4. Are there any special requirements for high school volunteers?

TDSB staff are required to supervise high school volunteers, and the Principal/Vice Principal or Curriculum Leader oversees the student nutrition program and all its volunteers. The Toronto District School Board does not require a police reference check for persons under the age of 18 as long as they are registered in school.

Our Student Nutrition Program office is always a good place for additional information.

Find the Nutrition Liaison Officer for your School: Click HERE

For general inquiries: studentnutrition@tdsb.on.ca