



10 Benefits

of Putting More Plants On the Plate

In a world where health, image and nutrition are often in conflict, and evidence-based information can be unclear, the value of plant-based foods, especially for school children, cannot be overstated.

Incorporating plant-based options into the diets of young minds, positively impacts not only their physical well-being, but also contributes to their development and academic success.

1 Essential Vitamins and Minerals

Plant-based foods are nutrient powerhouses, providing a rich array of essential vitamins and minerals crucial for the growth and development of school children.

From vitamin A to zinc, these foods offer a diverse spectrum that supports overall health, helping to build strong immune systems and prevent nutrient deficiencies.¹

2 Fiber for Digestive Health

A diet abundant in plant-based foods introduces high levels of dietary fiber. In fact, fiber only comes from plant foods.

Fiber not only aids in maintaining a healthy digestive system but also contributes to a feeling of fullness, preventing overeating and promoting weight management among school children.²

3 Fiber to Boost Immune System

A diet rich in fiber also supports our immune systems.

Eating more plants directly contributes to the strength, diversity, and responsiveness of the gut microbiome which is a big part of how we fight off and recover from bacterial and viral infections.

4 Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Certain plant-based foods, such as nuts, seeds, avocados, and olives are rich sources of omega-3 fatty acids.

These essential fatty acids play a pivotal role in brain development and function, positively influencing concentration, memory, and overall cognitive performance in school children.

5 Antioxidants for Brain Protection

Plant-based foods are often packed with antioxidants that act as protective shields for the brain.

These antioxidants combat oxidative stress, reducing the risk of cognitive decline and supporting optimal brain function during crucial periods of learning.

6 Neurotransmitter Support

Some plants like spinach, beans, squash, oranges, sweet potatoes, peas, strawberries, and many others provide neurotransmitters that we all need to self-regulate, manage impulse control, focus, learn, remember, and competently manage new situations.

These are all important skills for school children all day every day.⁶

7 Exposure to New Foods and Flavors

Introducing plant-based foods at an early age exposes children to a broad range of tastes and textures.

This early exposure fosters a palate for nutritious options, laying the foundation for a lifelong commitment to (and enjoyment from) healthy eating habits.

8 Long-Term Health Benefits

By promoting plant-based eating in schools, we not only address immediate health concerns but also contribute to the prevention of chronic diseases later in life.

Establishing healthy eating habits during childhood can have a lasting impact on lifelong well-being.⁸

9 Teaching Sustainable Choices

Research shows that many children are worried about climate change and planetary health.

One way to decrease “eco-anxiety” is to empower children to make a difference. Embracing plant-based foods in school settings provides an opportunity to educate about the environmental impact of dietary choices.⁹

10 Reducing Carbon Footprints

Plant-based diets generally have a lower carbon footprint compared to meat-heavy diets.

Educating school children about the environmental benefits of choosing plant-based options fosters a sense of global awareness and responsibility.¹⁰



Prioritizing plant-based foods in school cafeterias is not just a dietary choice; it's a holistic approach to nurturing healthy, intellectually vibrant individuals. From enhancing nutrient intake to fostering cognitive development and instilling a sense of environmental responsibility, the benefits are far-reaching.



Sources