



Leading the Way • Annual Review

Healthy Plant-Based School Meals & Nutrition Education



Our Wonderful Volunteers

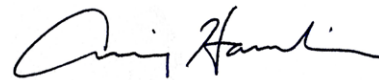
As a small non-profit, volunteers play a crucial role in our work. From serving as classroom assistants for our curriculum, helpers at Family Dinner Nights, chefs for Visiting Vegan Chefs, volunteers at tabling events, and helping out at our gala, we value our volunteers, many of whom have been helping for years. Our volunteers come from all walks of life, including but not limited to college students (who we also provide internships for), and corporate employees.

Dear Friends,

We hope you are as excited as we are about our accomplishments over the past year, building on the work we have been doing since 2005. The Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF) provides nearly all of our services for free, which removes the barriers to receiving healthy nutrition education, and provides support to getting plant-based foods on school menus. While we help schools anywhere in the country, we have ongoing formal partnerships in New York City and Ithaca, NY where we are able to learn valuable lessons to help other schools, including several small school districts in upstate and northern NY.

All the pieces are in place for change and many schools and school districts are asking for our help. With your support, we can reach even more schools, their staff, students, and their families. Be part of making history and change how schools feed kids and what they and the whole school community learn and understand about the impact of food on health, climate change, equity, and animals.

FOR THE KIDS,



Amie Hamlin, Executive Director



Kelley Wind, Program Director

& The Board of Directors

Spreading the Word

By exhibiting and presenting at conferences, we efficiently reach many decision-makers at once.

- **NYC Vegetarian Food Festival (5/22)**

We tabled and were responsible for the children's area. The children's area included yoga classes, storytime, and arts & crafts, including making bean mosaics at our own table.

- **Plant-Based World Expo (9/22)**

We had an exhibit table and our Executive Director, Amie Hamlin, gave two presentations. This was a business to business expo, and so one presentation was about how schools are looking for healthy manufactured vegan foods, and the other presentation was a panel about school food.

- **New York School Nutrition Association (10/22)**

At this conference, attended by school food service directors and cooks from around the state, we gave a presentation about getting plant-based foods on school menus. Our Executive Director, Amie Hamlin, presented jointly with Stephen O'Brien, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Policy NYC Department of Education, Office of Food & Nutrition Services, and Beth Krause, RD, Food Service Director for Ithaca City Schools. In addition to the presentation, we did a food tasting for attendees which included North African Red Lentils, Chinese Tofu Fried Rice, Crispy Tofu Bites with Orange Ginger Sauce, and Pasta Fagioli.



- **New York State School Boards Association (10/22)**

At this conference, attended by school board members and school superintendents from around the state, our exhibit was to expose attendees to the concept that school food can make a difference for school performance indicators: attendance, grades, and behavior. We featured a food tasting including two scratch made recipes – North African Red Lentils and Crispy Tofu Bites with Orange Ginger Sauce, and three manufactured foods: American Bean Falafels and Impossible Burgers and Nuggets. Staff of Impossible, including the CEO, Peter McGuinness, joined us at our table for a few hours. We collected contact information and are following up with many school districts.

Inspiring Plant-Based School Menus

It has been a primary mission of the Coalition for Healthy School Food to help schools add plant-based main-dish entrees to their menus. We have accomplished this by developing recipes (see next page) and then working with schools in a number of ways to help make the addition of the recipes to their menus successful. We have done this by providing educational programs for students, staff, and families, creating promotional flyers, conducting taste testings in the classroom and in the cafeteria line, and offering recipe-specific curriculum.

We have provided educational programming to school food service professionals over the years, and communicate with over 10,000 food service directors in 32 states each month. In 2019, we brought Michael Greger, MD, of www.nutritionfacts.org and author of *How Not to Die* and *How Not to Diet* (and also board member of CHSF) to speak to over 500 managers, supervisors, and administrators for the NYC Office of Food and Nutrition Services.

In 2012, the Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF) asked New York City Office of Food and Nutrition Services (OFNS) to create and offer a vegetarian menu that schools could opt-in to, replacing the standard menu containing meat and cheese based entrees. OFNS agreed to do this, and then we worked together to help 4 schools adopt the vegetarian menu.

We continue to seek additional schools that would like a vegetarian-only menu, with an emphasis on plant-based foods.

PS244 in Flushing, Queens, was the first school to adopt this menu as a result of our partnership, and it was the first public vegetarian school in the country.

PS343 in Manhattan was the second vegetarian school, followed by PS971 and PS90 in Brooklyn.



Developing Recipes

New York City-CHSF Partnership

- **Plant Powered Fridays:**

The Coalition for Healthy School Food is the non-profit behind Plant Powered Fridays, a request we made to NYC just one week before the pandemic shut-down.

- **Hummus:**

CHSF requested that NYC add hummus every day in all schools as a way for students to be able to enjoy a plant-based entree daily, and this was implemented in 2018.



- **Elimination of Processed Meat:** It's not just what we got added to the menus, it's also what we helped get removed. When the World Health Organization declared processed meats as known human carcinogens, we brought this to the attention of NYC schools and they removed it from the menu. Processed meat includes deli meats, pepperoni, and sausage, to name a few.

We are very proud to have worked in partnership with the world-famous Moosewood Restaurant to develop many recipes that are now on school menus around the country. These recipes were shared with all schools in New York State and California years ago, and now they have been shared with food service directors in 30 additional states, for a total of about 10,000 school districts.

Most of our recipes are inspired by foods from around the world and offer opportunities for students and the whole school community to learn about cultures different from their own. Some of our recipes were created by friends we have met along the way, including Ms. Patel's Rajma, an Indian kidney-bean curry, and Roy's Cuban Wraps. Both Ms. Patel and Roy were employees of the Ithaca City School District.

We continue to work with new chefs and partners to develop additional recipes and this past year began two new recipe development partnerships which will be announced in 2023.

We are currently in the process of a recipe testing project with the Culinary Institute of America, in Hyde Park, NY. See the family-size versions of our recipes to enjoy at home, use in Family & Consumer Science, or After-School cooking classes at www.healthyschoolfood.org/recipes and click on Family Size Recipes.

Teaching Students to Make Plant-Based Recipes

Our after school cooking classes introduce students to a variety of different plant-based foods that they might not have tried before.

All
Grade
Levels

A few of the tasty recipes we made were lentil salad, veggie chili, and a rainbow cabbage salad. For a sweet treat, the students chopped fresh fruit and created their own non-dairy yogurt parfait choosing from a selection of delicious toppings. This past fall we taught 8 classes at PS 134 in Kensington, Brooklyn.

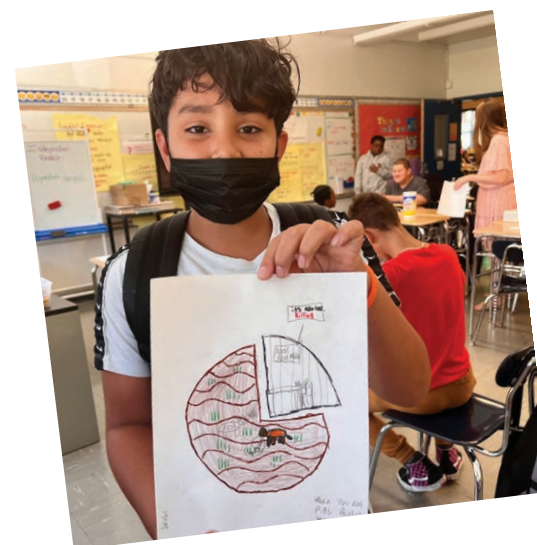
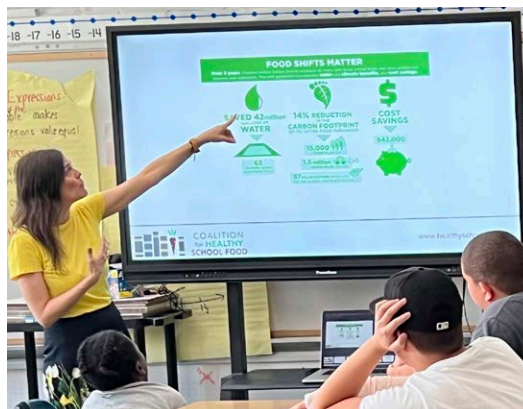


Learning About Food, Our Health, & the Environment

All
Grade
Levels

Our program services model allows us to provide customized programs for schools depending on their needs. At City Knoll Middle School in Manhattan, we taught a series of 10 classes last spring. Topics included food and mood, media literacy, label reading, and the role of animal agriculture on climate change. A healthy snack was included with each lesson. This series of lessons also included hands on cooking classes, which are a great way to introduce students to new foods in a fun and interactive way and provide students with take-home skills.

For many, the highlight of the cooking class was learning how to make hummus. This traditional Middle-Eastern dip is served in all NYC school cafeterias every day as a result of our efforts, but many of the students had never tried it before. By having the chance to make their own hummus in class, they were more open to trying it at lunch time.



Visiting Vegan Chefs



Classes for Culinary Students

This program brings vegan chefs to culinary high schools in New York City. We have been told that

if it wasn't for our program, the students would not have exposure to vegan culinary skills and to the reasons why more people are choosing to eat and live vegan lifestyles.

High School Program

It is vitally important that students understand how to prepare vegan food as they go forward in their culinary careers given that more and more people are eating vegan and it is a top food trend for reasons of health, the environment, and social justice, including animal suffering.

- **Jillian Mariscal** (Sabrosa Vegana, above) taught at Boerum Hill School of International Studies in Brooklyn.
- **Yesenia Mendoza** (Healthy As A Motha, right) taught at Food and Finance HS in Manhattan in May and at Francis Lewis High School in Queens.



Teaching Food Justice

High School Program

The Door is a non-profit organization in New York City with a mission to empower young people to reach their potential by providing comprehensive youth development services in a diverse and caring environment. We have been providing programming at The Door for several years now, after being introduced to the organization by The Door co-founders, and Coalition supporters Lorraine Henricks, M.D and James Turanski, M.D.

In past years, we have had a variety of community activists and organizers teach Food Justice classes at The Door. In 2021, now NYC Mayor Eric Adams presented about his health journey and how he reversed his type 2 diabetes, and took questions about food insecurity and access. Leaders from Chili's on Wheels and Black VegFest including Eloisa Trinidad and LoriKim Alexander, respectively, taught a whole series of Food & Equity classes.

This past spring we were invited to be part of the Door's culinary internship program. We provided a cooking class, a non-dairy milk tasting with a discussion about dairy, and a screening of the film "They're Trying To Kill Us" and served vegan pizza.



Being Together, Even When Apart



We have been providing Family Dinner Nights to New York City schools for nearly two decades. When we were not able to do in-person Family Dinner Nights due to COVID, we switched to creating community with virtual dinners starting in 2020. In 2022, we hosted four online dinners with PS 971 in Brooklyn. We provided the families with all of the ingredients to cook along via Zoom with our friends, Chef Terence Smith and Marcel

Rosegreen-Walters from Sentient Wellness. Families asked questions, exchanged recipe ideas, and acquired valuable plant-based nutrition knowledge while having fun cooking together. At the end of class, everyone held up their food for a mosaic image of their culinary creations. Once the class ended, families sat down to eat the meal that they had made together in the comfort and safety of their own homes.

Bringing Families, Staff & Healthy Food Together

We started doing in-person Family Dinner Nights again in the spring of 2022. As we have done for many years, we invited the entire school community (students, their families, teachers, and staff) to a free plant-based meal.

Each Family Dinner Night includes an educational component for the adults, either a medical doctor or registered dietitian, while we provide a separate fun activity for the kids that includes a nutrition education component, OR hands on activities for the adults and children.

The events are catered by a partner restaurant or the NYC Office of Food and Nutrition Services (OFNS). When catered by OFNS, attendees are able to try the plant-based recipes served on Plant Powered Fridays (which are increasingly being added on additional days of the week) to see how delicious plant-based food can be.

This past year we held in person dinners at **PS 1** in the **Bronx** with speaker **Dr. Moaz Kasubhai**, and at **City Knoll Middle School** in **Manhattan**, and **PS/MS 278** in **Inwood** with hands-on learning activities. Normally, we have many more Family Dinner Nights each year, this year it was limited due to COVID.



The Wellness Coordinator at the school emailed us this:

“To date, we are still receiving compliments and enthusiasm about our Fall Family Festival (which was a Family Dinner Night). Anecdotal evidence even shows an increase in consumption and interest in the Plant Powered Friday Meals.”

Food UnEarthed: Uncovering the Truth about Food



Elementary School Curriculum

Our 24-week long elementary school curriculum helps children become critical thinkers about food as they learn many new concepts that are not taught in traditional nutrition lessons. A main concept that they learn in Pre-K and K is that food comes from plants and animals and that when they have a choice about what to eat, plant foods will help them be healthier, have more energy, and be in a better mood.

Each week includes a healthy snack to expose students to plant foods in all five plant food categories, and part of the goal of each lesson is to learn about the ingredients and foods that are in their snack.

Four of the lessons each year are hands-on food preparation, including black bean tacos, three-bean salad, homemade corn tortillas, and hummus.

This past year we taught the lessons to 8 classes in three elementary schools in New York City including PS343 in Manhattan, and PS971 and PS90 in Brooklyn. These are three of the four schools that we helped transition to a completely vegetarian menu.



Creating Change in Ithaca, NY

Ithaca has been a testing-ground for our programs since 2008 when we first introduced a private version of the now very popular Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program at Beverly J. Martin Elementary School. Then, in 2011 we began creating and offering plant-based entree recipes in partnership with Moosewood Restaurant. In the spring of 2022, we provided numerous taste testings of our plant-based entrees in five Ithaca schools, including Beverly J. Martin, Caroline, Enfield, Fall Creek, and Northeast Elementary.

We are also excited that we forayed into breakfast by piloting a hot oatmeal with toppings bar at Northeast and Caroline Elementary schools, and

they were such a hit that the school district is now offering oatmeal with toppings in all of the schools.

In the upcoming year we will get back to our Cool School Food in the Classroom program. This program is a recipe specific curriculum which teaches about the culture the food comes from through a slide show featuring landscapes, architecture, transportation, animals, families, food, and more! Students then see, touch, and smell the individual ingredients in the recipes. This includes digging their hands into bowls of dry beans, which they love doing. After that, we taste the recipe (which the cafeteria makes extra of), and then we have an inquiry based discussion about the power of plants.



Hosting Expert Forums

We were thrilled to introduce “The Doctor is In” in 2022. This program featured free online live educational presentations available to the public featuring medical doctors (and in a few cases, PhD's, RD's and a chef) as shown on our promotional flyer to the right.

This program was created as a project for four students from CUNY's Masters of Public Health program, who gained a great deal of knowledge from the project and hearing all of the presenters. The students indicated that they had made changes to their diet as a result, and would be taking this information into their new careers.

The program was so successful, that we will continue it in the new year, with a new format of one doctor per presentation so they have time to go into more detail.

You can view these presentations on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/@coallitionforhealthyschool5284

THE DOCTOR IS IN: How Food Can Change Your Life

A FREE **Online Speaker Series** With Plenty of Food for Thought!

Presented in English, Spanish, and Traditional Chinese

All presentations from 7 - 8 PM Eastern Time

Food & Mood

Tuesday, January 25
Depressed? Anxious?
Bad Mood? Find out
how food can make a big
difference for you, and
school children too.



Angela
Crawford,
PhD

Ashok
Nagella,
MD

Food Addiction & Weight Loss

Thursday, March 10
The food industry intentionally
addicts us. Learn the secrets to
weight loss while eating more
than ever!



Shayla
Toombs-Withers,
DO

Chef AJ

Racism & Food

TBD, April
Racial bias in official food
guidelines hurts people's
health & the environment.
Learn the truth about the
food that will help you thrive!



Tracye
McQuirter,
MPH

Milton
Mills,
MD

Food: Nature's Medicine

Wednesday, February 9
Plant-powered nutrition can
help us prevent and treat the
top health challenges.



Bandana
Chawla,
MD

Munish
Chawla,
MD

Reversing Type 2 Diabetes: You Can Do It!

Wednesday, April 13
We'll debunk myths and
learn how to reverse Type 2
Diabetes in as little as 3 months!



Neal
Barnard,
MD

Robby Barbaro,
MPH &
Cyrus Khambatta,
PhD

High Blood Pressure or Cholesterol? Heal Your Heart with Food

Tuesday, May 3
Learn what to eat and
what to cut out, to reverse
America's #1 Killer.



Jane
Esselstyn,
RN

Kim
Williams,
MD

- **Universal Free Meals (Federal & NY State)**

The USDA School Meal program generally provides reimbursements to schools at three levels – for children who meet requirements to receive either a free or reduced price meal, and for children who pay “full price”. Schools that exceed a certain percentage of students who qualify for free meals may offer “Universal Free Meals,” where all students eat for free whether they qualify or not.

New York City is one example of a school district that offers Universal Free Meals. Schools that don't meet this requirement district wide, can opt into offering Universal Free Meals at individual schools that meet the requirement, as is done in Ithaca, NY.

During the pandemic, the USDA made all meals free, but this ended in June of 2022. Some states, including California and Maine offer free meals statewide, and Colorado just voted to do the same. Massachusetts, Nevada, and Vermont are continuing free meals through June 2023. New York State is one

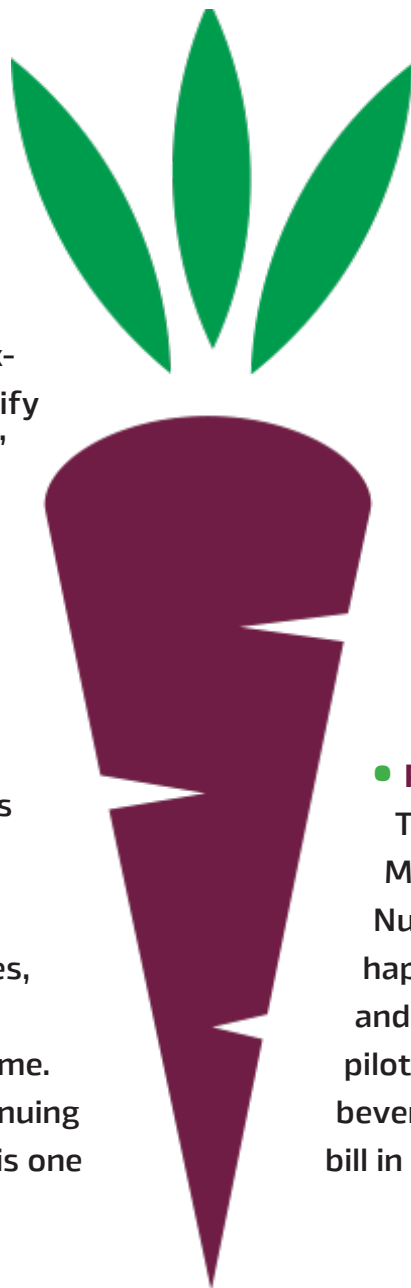
state that has a Universal Free Meals bill that did not move in this session but we expect to see in the next session.

- **Requiring Schools to Offer Vegan Food Upon Request (NY State)**

Introduced prior to the pandemic, this bill has been on hold for a few years, but efforts are being made to reintroduce it in the new session in 2023. This is a bill that we have been actively advocating for in partnership with Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine. And, though we were not involved, Illinois just passed a similar bill.

- **Plant-Based Meals Pilot (Federal)**

This would be a mark up bill as part of the “Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Act” also known as the Child Nutrition Reauthorization, which is supposed to happen every five years to update the school meal, and other child feeding programs. This is a \$10 million pilot program to support plant-based meals and beverages in schools. We have actively worked on this bill in coalition with over 100 organizations.



OUR MISSION

The Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF) is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit that introduces plant-based foods and nutrition education in schools to educate the whole school community about the health, environmental, and social justice issues of our food choices.

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Our corporate sponsors play a crucial role in supporting our work, most of them having contributed for many years. They provide support that we can count on, and this helps us to provide the vast majority of our programs to schools at no cost. Corporate sponsors receive visibility and positive vibes. Their logos and links to their websites are on our website homepage and gala page and in our monthly email newsletters.