



HEALTHY MENUS NOW

*Why and How We're Campaigning for
Healthier Food Environments*



DIET-RELATED DISEASE, DISABILITY, AND PREMATURE DEATH ARE AT ALL-TIME HIGHS

Unhealthy diets contribute to 678,000 deaths in the US annually.

The leading causes of preventable disease, chronic illness, and premature death in the United States are related to diet and poor nutrition.



MOST COMMON DIET-RELATED DISEASES AND CHRONIC ILLNESSES

- Obesity
- Heart Disease
- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Stroke
- High-Cholesterol
- Cancer (especially breast and colorectal)



1 IN 4

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States - accounting for 1 in 4 deaths.

Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a heart attack.

Every year, about 790,000 Americans have a heart attack.

Of these cases, 580,000 are a first heart attack. 210,000 happen to people who have already had a first heart attack

67%

67% of Americans are overweight or obese

Obesity has doubled in adults, tripled in children, and quadrupled in children over the past 30 years.

100,000,000

100 million Americans live with diabetes or prediabetes

1.5 million new cases of diabetes are diagnosed annually.

The prevalence of type 2 diabetes in children — which is associated with obesity — jumped more than 30% between 2000-2009.



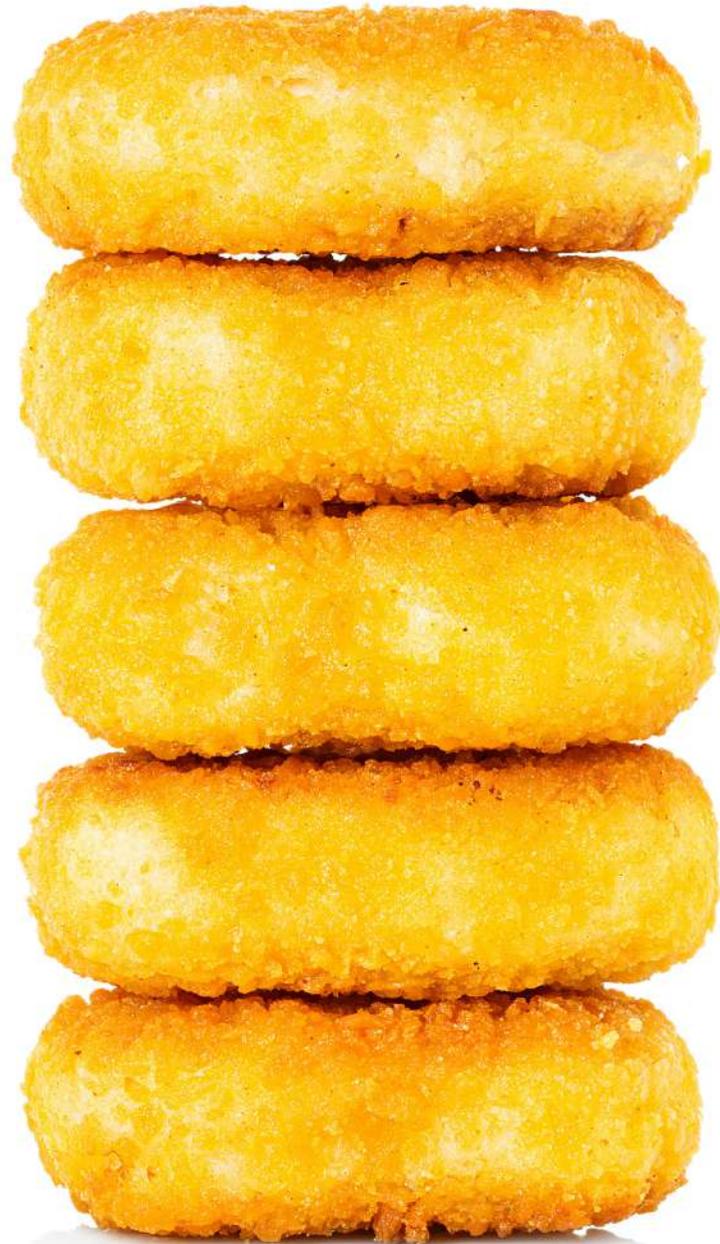
FOOD COMPANIES AND INSTITUTIONS PRIORITIZE PROFIT, NOT HEALTH

The result is a food system dominated by cheap, unhealthy foods high in fat, sodium, and cholesterol like meat, eggs, and ultra-processed products. These foods are overrepresented in nearly every food environment, while life-saving foods like fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains are limited or absent in many schools, hospitals, and other critical institutions.



DIETARY PATTERNS REFLECT THE CHANGING FOOD SYSTEM

Overconsumption of foods high in cholesterol, saturated fat, and sodium like meat and egg products, coupled with radical underconsumption of fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains is damaging public health in epidemic proportions.



WE'RE BEING SERVED DISPROPORTIONATE AMOUNTS OF UNHEALTHY FOODS

90% of Americans do not consume the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables.

Over 50% of the American diet is made up of ultra-processed foods like chicken nuggets, pizza, and hot dogs.

On average, Americans eat 50% more meat than is recommended.

NUTRITION SCIENCE IS CLEAR

It's time for more balanced menus.

Overconsumption of animal protein increases a person's risk of cardiovascular disease by 60% compared to eating plant protein.

Replacing some animal protein with plant-proteins may result in a 10% decreased chance of premature death.

Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption to recommended amounts could cut 7.8 million deaths annually (worldwide)



WHY CAN'T WE JUST TELL PEOPLE TO EAT BETTER?

1. *It doesn't work.* Even nutritionally well-educated individuals struggle to make consistently healthy choices - especially when those choices are more expensive, less available, poorly prepared, or inconvenient to locate.
2. *Personal choice is a myth* - especially in food environments in which menus are pre-determined (schools, hospitals, offices, prisons, military bases).
3. *The system is set up to value profits over health.* Government subsidies to the agriculture industry coupled with mass produced low-cost, nutrient-poor, calorie-dense foods incentivize less healthy food choices.
4. *It's incredibly resource intensive.* Educating individuals without tackling system reform is a poor use of money, time, and energy.

#1

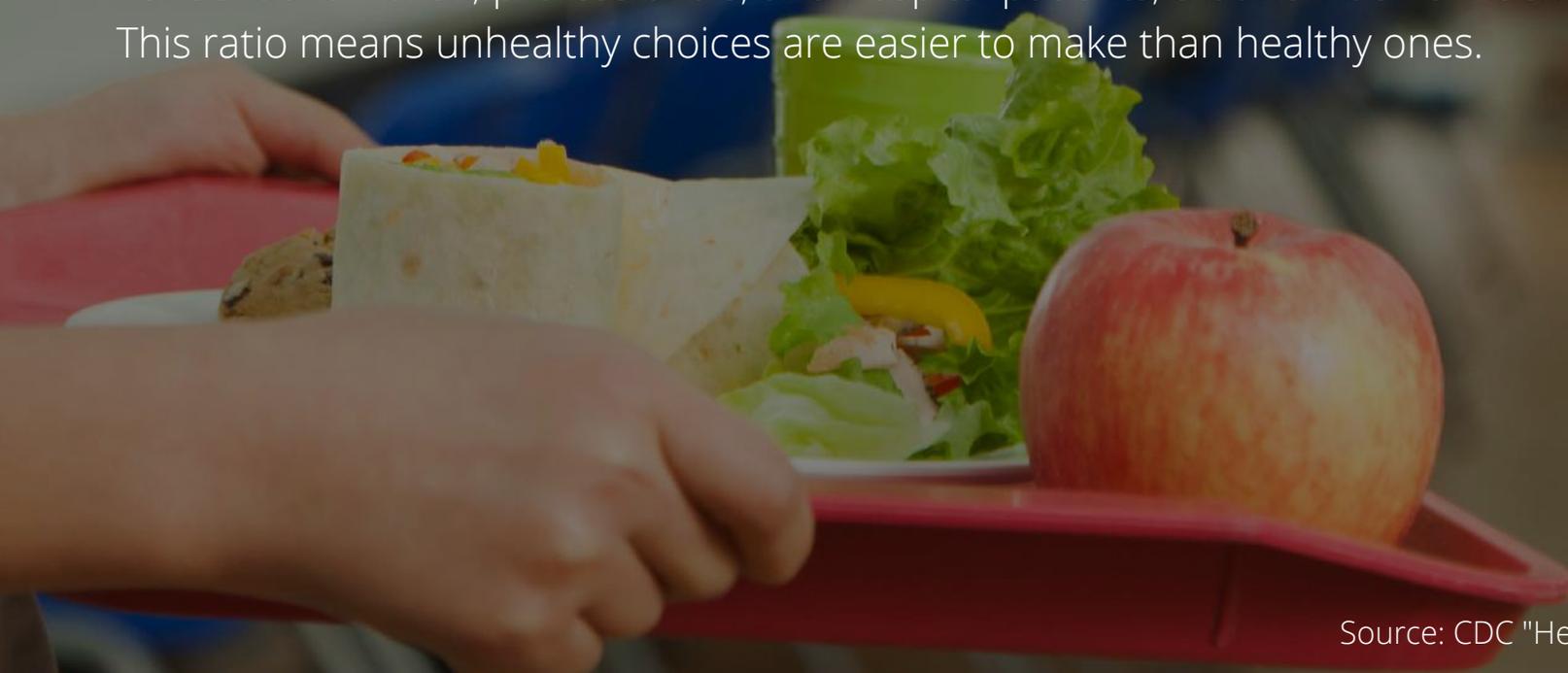
The primary driver of food choice is the food environment

More so than willpower or personal dietary preference, the quality of a person's food environment influences their food choices.

4:1

In many communities and major institutions, unhealthy foods outnumber healthy foods 4:1

For school children, professionals, and hospital patients, that number is much higher. This ratio means unhealthy choices are easier to make than healthy ones.



THE NEED FOR A **HEALTHIER** **FOOD SYSTEM** IS INDISPUTABLE.

We have power to transform the food system by encouraging institutions to improve the healthfulness of their menus and demanding change from the food industry.



THE HIGHEST IMPACT CAMPAIGNS ENCOURAGE CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

To improve the health of the most people, our schools, hospitals, and other community institutions must take responsibility for redesigning their menus.

Public health depends on healthy foods becoming the default options.

To do that, menus must emphasize more fruits, vegetables, plant-proteins, and whole grains. Fewer meat and egg products must be served and ultra-processed food items must be reduced dramatically or removed all together.

ASK NICELY

```
graph TD; A[ASK NICELY] --> B[EDUCATE]; A --> C[ORGANIZE]; A --> D[PUBLICIZE]; B --> E[APPLY PRESSURE]; C --> E; D --> E;
```

EDUCATE

ORGANIZE

PUBLICIZE

APPLY PRESSURE

The ask:

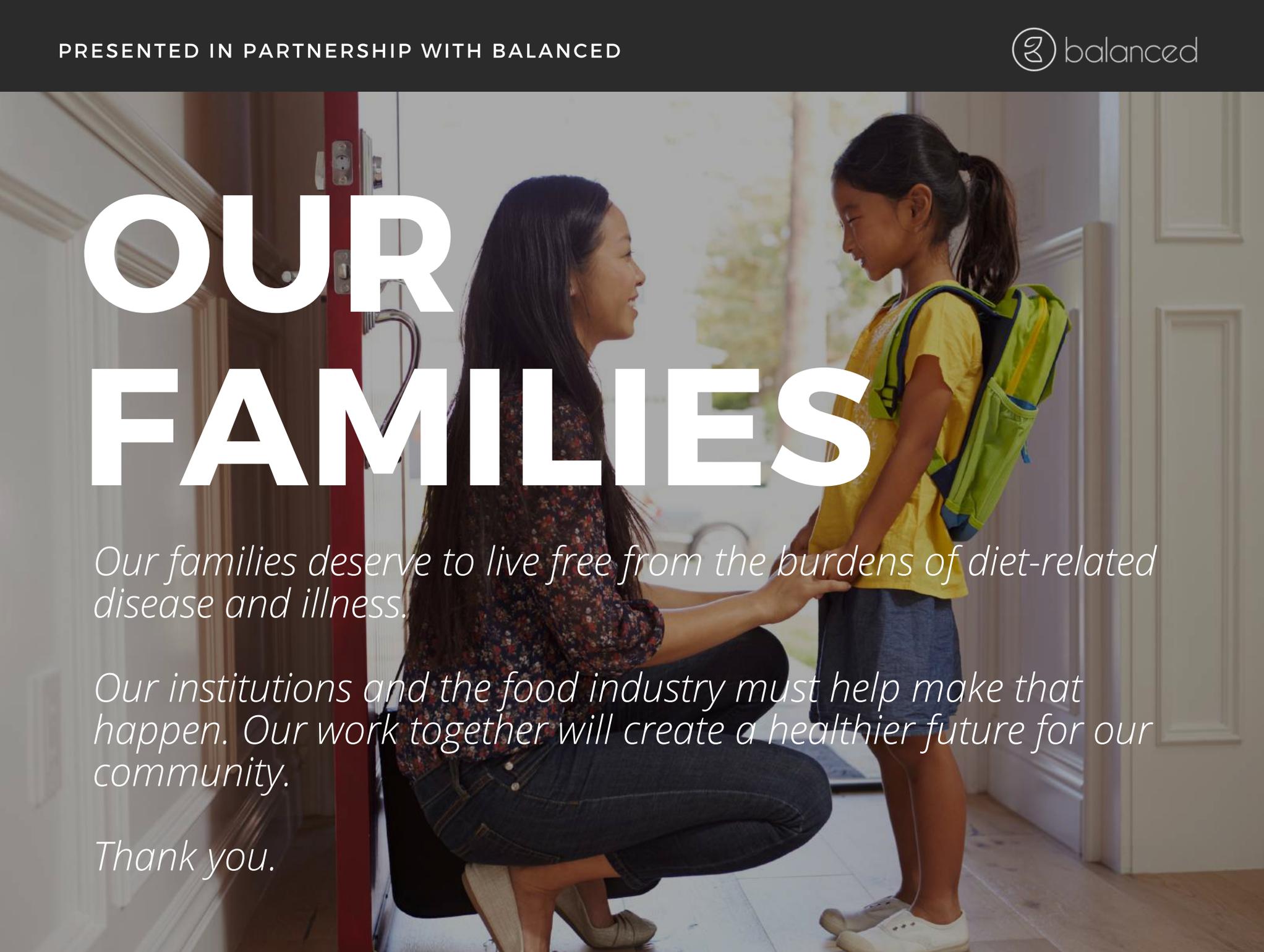
REPLACE 20% OF THE MEAT AND EGG PRODUCTS ON MENUS WITH FRUITS, VEGETABLES, PLANT-PROTEINS, AND WHOLE GRAINS.



GET INVOLVED

1. Sign the petition
2. Reach out to the key decision makers personally
3. Join the action alert mailing list and take action every day
4. Share our website on social media and with everyone you know!
5. Attend meetings and organized demonstrations
6. Canvass or distribute education materials
7. Write op-eds or letters to the editor
8. Never give up! Keep speaking up! Maintain pressure!

OUR FAMILIES

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark floral patterned top and dark jeans, is kneeling on one knee in a hallway. She is looking at a young girl with her hair in a ponytail, wearing a yellow shirt, a blue skirt, and a bright green backpack. The girl is standing and looking back at the woman. The hallway has white walls and a wooden floor. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a window or door is open nearby.

Our families deserve to live free from the burdens of diet-related disease and illness.

Our institutions and the food industry must help make that happen. Our work together will create a healthier future for our community.

Thank you.