

## FSSAI to ban junk food in schools

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With an aim of promoting Eat Right and healthy eating habits in young kids, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has released the draft titles Food Safety and Standards (Safe Food and healthy diets for School Children) Regulations, 2019.

It is a 10 point charter that prohibits sale and even promotion of unhealthy food items in schools and near by schools.

The Ten-point Charter of this regulation as released by FSSAI on November 4, 2019 is listed below:

- Schools, FBOs contracted by School Authority for selling or catering school meals and FBOs contracted by Department of School Education for operation of the Mid-Day Meal scheme would be required to obtain a registration or licence that complies with the mandated sanitary and hygiene requirements under schedule 4 of the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) regulations, 2011.
- Blanket ban on selling on foods high in fat, salt and sugar or HFSS (includes junk foods like colas, chips, instant noodles and other packed foods) in schools or to school children inside school canteens/ mess premises/ hostel kitchens or within 50 meters of the school campus.
- Adopting a comprehensive program to encourage healthy eating habits and Safe food and Healthy diets amongst school children. The draft also proposes converting school campuses into 'Eat Right School' which focusses on safe, local, seasonal foods and emphasize on no food wastage.
- Schools to be encourages to promote consumption of a balanced diet in schools as per National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) guidelines.
- Schools would also be required to check that the vendors supplying prepared means are doing so basis the general guidelines set by FSSA or the Commissioners of Food safety.
- Schools to periodically engage nutritionists, dieticians to assist in the preparation of menu for the children.

- HFSS foods are also barred from advertising such products to school children within school premises or 50 meters from school campus.
- Ban on support or marketing (including through logos, brand names, posters, textbook covers etc) or giving away free samples of foods which are low in nutrition anywhere on school campus.
- FSSAI also proposed regular inspection of premises to ensure safe, healthy and hygienic food is being served to students.
- A sub-committee is proposed to be created by the State Level Advisory Committee to monitor the implementation of the above said rules and regulations.

The draft is now open to stakeholders for review for their suggestions within 30 days from the date of notification – that is by December 4.