

# FOOD MANAGEMENT

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## NEWS & TRENDS – K-12 SCHOOLS

# Survey examines K-12 parent attitudes about food

Culinary adventure, food sensitivity and provenance transparency are among the top-of-mind issues, according a new Y-Pulse survey of parents of children 7 to 17 years old.

New research from the Y-Pulse organization provides perspective on the expectations of parents of children 7-17 years old for food and dining that are likely to influence their children returning to school this fall. Here are five key findings...

**Culinary Adventurism Driven by Easy Meal Kit Availability:** 77% said they consider themselves adventurous eaters as the expanded availability and affordability of cooking kits have made them more of a regular source for home cooks, with 55% saying that meal kits are part of their weekly grocery routine and 78% agreeing that international foods are easier to prepare at home when starting with a prepared sauce or flavoring component.

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**Food Sensitivity Issue Much Larger Than Just Diagnosed Allergies:** while food allergies affect approximately 8% of US children according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), food sensitivities beyond diagnosed allergies affect many more as 51% of parents reported that someone in their household has dietary restrictions, sensitivities or allergies and 47% noted that it is difficult to find interesting recipes that fit the dietary needs of their families.

**No Mystery in Food History:** today's parents want to know about the provenance of the food they are buying, with 84% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement, "Knowing the details about the source of my food is important to me."

**Looking for Culinary Engagement:** engagement beyond e-commerce is gaining importance with the parents saying that they not only like to connect with their favorite eateries, but also appreciate cooking tutorials from culinary experts, with 66% saying they have engaged their favorite restaurants/bars on social media and 82% saying they would enjoy a video tutorial on home cooking from a local chef.

**Cooking As Entertainment:** Culinary entertainment is a part of everyday life for parents, with 86% admitting that they watch celebrity chef videos more for entertainment than cooking advice.

The ramifications for K-12 meal programs are obvious as the influence of parents on their kids is undeniable, notes Y-Pulse Executive Director Sharon Olson.

"The children of the Millennial and Gen X parents who participated in this study will be defining the new normal for expectations of food and dining options as they return to school," she offers. "These are digitally-engaged parents who appreciate culinary experiences and have confidence cooking in their own kitchens and exploring new cuisines from restaurants."

Overall, Y-Pulse surveyed 2,101 consumers nationwide, with this report focusing on 407 parents of children between the ages of 7 and 17 and comparing their responses to the general audience. Participants were asked questions about specific aspects of their food and dining experiences at home and away from home.