

# HEALTH INSPECTION VIOLATIONS IN SCHOOL FOODSERVICE OPERATIONS

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## Introduction

- Approximately 48 million cases of foodborne illness occur annually in the US, yielding 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths.
- Young children are highly susceptible to foodborne illnesses.
- With greater than 2.2 billion meals and snacks served annually in child nutrition programs, the opportunity exists for large-scale foodborne outbreaks to occur.
- Preparing and serving safe food to our nation's children must be a priority of all those involved in the food chain.

## Purpose

- The purpose of this study was to analyze current food safety violations in schools to explore research and educational opportunities.

## Methodology

- A random sample of 21 states, three states from each of the USDA's seven regions was selected.
- Inspection reports were requested for every school in each state.
  - This information was available online for seven states and 14 states mailed their inspection reports directly to the researchers.
- Since food codes vary among states, frequencies of each violation will be recorded at the state-level.
  - Inspection forms were then compared across states to categorize the data for comparison purposes.
  - A total of 31 categories were identified. Data were collapsed into as many categories as possible to retain the integrity of the data.
- SPSS was used to conduct the statistical analysis to determine the most common violations across the sample.

## Results

- A total of 28,106 school inspection reports were analyzed, representing 46,389 total violations.
- An average response rate of 89% of schools in each state was achieved.

## Results, Continued

### *Most Common Violations*

Violation Category	Total Violations
Premises & equipment	8,915
Non-food contact surfaces	3,230
Food protected from contamination	3,129
Food contact surfaces	2,163
Warewashing	2,149

### *Least Common Violations*

Violation Category	Total Violations
Cooling	261
Employee health	183
Thawing	174
Cooking	70
Reheating	63

## Conclusions

- Regulatory bodies, can use this data to benchmark current food safety practices in schools.
- National benchmark data can be used to improve current food safety training in schools.
- This data can help establish food safety research priorities in school foodservice operations.