



This is a printer friendly version of an article from the **The Journal News**.
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

Two Angry Moms premiere documentary about school nutrition

By **DIANA COSTELLO**
THE JOURNAL NEWS

(Original Publication: May 9, 2007)

On the Web

Visit The Hall Monitor at
<http://hallmonitor.lohudblogs.com> to keep up with
the latest education news.

Are you sick of having to send your kids to school with bagged lunches because you can't trust what's served in the cafeteria? Does your skin boil when you learn that your kids ended up buying junk food despite your best efforts?

If so, then you just might be an "Angry Mom" - or Angry Dad, Aunt, Uncle or Grandparent.

Amy Kalafa and Susan Rubin are the original Two Angry Moms.

Together, they are encouraging parents across the country to take a stand for their children's health and demand change in school nutrition.

Their new documentary, called "Two Angry Moms," had a sneak preview yesterday afternoon for about 75 people at the Fairfield Community Theater in Connecticut. Their goal is to turn the movie into a movement.

The documentary details the quest to understand how the nation's school lunch program works, looking at the roles the federal government, corporations, school administrators and parents play in

feeding schoolchildren.

It also showcases schools and colleges nationwide, including the Katonah-Lewisboro school district, that have successfully implemented healthier lunch programs, offering strategies for change.

"It just has gotten worse and worse over the years," Rubin, a holistic nutritionist from Chappaqua, said of lunch programs in the documentary. "I've met so many people who have given up ... To be persistent, you gotta get angry."

The film opens with a familiar sight of french fries being dropped into a deep fryer. Bagged chips, oversized pretzels, cookies, doughnuts and other junk foods often are seen in school cafeterias, sometimes right next to posters encouraging students to eat healthy.

Though acknowledging that several factors contribute to obesity and a general decline in health for the nation's children, the documentary points to foods such as these as contributing to the troublesome trend.

The goal is to reverse course, especially now that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that today's children will be the first generation to live shorter lives than their parents.

"That's why I made this movie," Kalafa, a filmmaker from Weston, Conn., said as she addressed the crowd. "We need to change our cultural attitude toward food."

But not everyone thought the film painted a balanced picture.

Joann D. Fitzpatrick, manager of food and nutrition services for the Fairfield public schools, said the documentary focused more on the negative aspects of food services as opposed to the positives.

She noted that students always have the option to buy healthier meals and snacks such as fruits, vegetables and whole-wheat sandwiches.

After viewing the documentary, local parents said they felt inspired to work for the changes they want in their school cafeterias - despite the resistance they have faced. It was an issue that clearly was close to their hearts.

"When I first met everyone here, I was in tears because I realized I wasn't alone," said Margarita Mateo-Saja, 36, a mother of three from White Plains.
