Smarter Lunchrooms = A Positive Image

July 9, 2017
Objectives

1. Introduce the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement (SLM) through principles and real-world examples
2. Hear how Los Angeles Unified School District achieved their goals through SLM implementation
3. Learn how SLM can be implemented outside of the National School Lunch Program to grow participation and improve food access for students
Speakers

Dawn Soto
Los Angeles Unified School District

Phoebe Copp
Dairy Council of California
SMARTER LUNCHROOMS MOVEMENT
• **Food & Brand Lab**
  – Consumer Behavior Research
    • *Industry and Government Funded*
    • *How Do Environmental Cues Impact Food Choices*

• **The BEN Center**
  – School Focused Research & Outreach
    • *Changes Schools Can Make to Encourage Healthy Choices*
    • *The Smarter Lunchroom Movement*
Behavioral Economics

How Choices are Influenced

What factors affect our choices?

- Price
- Appearance
- Convenience
- Information
- State of mind
- Habit
- Expectations
What We Know About Food Decisions

• We have two decision-making mechanisms
  – **Deliberative** – Rational
  – **Emotional** – Naïve, knee-jerk reactions

• Which one takes over depends on the level of cognitive resources available
  – Stress or distraction leads us to eat more and eat worse
  – It takes effort and resources to resist temptation
Choice Architecture

• Choice architecture
  – *Designing the choice* to *lead* an individual to a particular outcome *without forcing* them
  – Uses the *tools of psychology* to access economic decision-making

• Attribution
  – It was my choice, I will repeat it in the future
  – Example: Choosing between celery and carrots
Choice Restriction and Reactance

- **Choice Restriction**
  - Forcing a choice by eliminating options
  - Can lead to reactance
    - *Example: “Don’t press this button”*
      - Makes you want to press the button, doesn’t it??
The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement

- What if we *design* the lunch room to *gently encourage the decisions we want*?
  - Use behavioral theory to *encourage* better choices
  - Some of these changes can be *extremely low cost*
  - Avoid *reactance*
    - *Banning certain foods can be self-defeating*
  - *Encourage future healthy choices*
The following principles are based on research concerning various environmental cues that influence eating behavior. They are true in school lunchrooms as well as restaurants, food courts, and even in your home kitchen.
Increase Convenience

Make healthy foods easily accessible

Chips and sugary drinks out of reach!

Milk and fruit at point of sale!
Improve Visibility

Foods displayed more visibly are chosen more often

• Eye level
• Eye-catching display
• First on buffet line
Enhance Taste Expectations

If it looks delicious and sounds delicious... it must be delicious
Utilize Suggestive Selling

Non-Verbal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TODAY'S SPECIALS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WG TACO POCKET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... OR ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEESEBURGER ON WG BUN</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SIDES

| CHILLED FRUIT CUP |
| FRESH SNOW PEAS  |
| SWEET POTATO CRISPY CUBES |

Verbal

Want some salad with your pasta?

Our special today is pasta. It’s delicious!
Set Smart Pricing Strategies

- Make a healthy bundle
- Offer alternative reimbursable meals as ‘Grab & Go’ meal deals.
Manage Portion Sizes

Right-size portions

- Pre-portioned condiments
- Appropriate serving utensils
- Smaller containers or plates
The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement
In Los Angeles Unified School District

Presented by Dawn Soto
The LAUSD Implementation

LAUSD SLM implementation goal is to systematically:

• Attract “the attention of target audiences by using slogans, packaging design, internal marketing strategies, and nutrition education.

• Improve the appearance and perception of Café LA.

• Align our Café LA brand with current SLM marketing standards and thus create a broader appeal to our customer base.
Implementing a fresh fruit cutting station showed immediate results:

- Reducing the amount of fruit discarded
- Increased excitement
- Students were eager to see fruit custom cut for their enjoyment
- Stations conveniently located near utensils and condiments
- Staff provided nutritional education with each individual student
Focusing on Fruit

Offering fruits and vegetables at more than one location.

• Similar to a supermarket, when choices are available at the POS it creates an impulse buy.
• Prompts students to select a healthy option to accompany their meal.
Attracting the Customer

Creative and fun names

- “Farm Fresh Fruit”
- “Home-Style Tuna Sandwich”
- “Summer Sweet Corn”
- “Got Milk”

Café LA packaging

- Wrappers
- Containers
- Stickers
Creating a Catchy Slogan

LAUSD created the “Choose What You Want, Eat What You Choose” slogan that students can easily understand.

- This slogan goes beyond nutrition education by also encouraging a reduction of waste.
- At the start of the next school year, school sites will implement the “Choose” campaign.
Choose What You Eat

Creative signage, printing, and communication has improved campus synergy, allowing students to retain the messages we’ve created for them.

- Plate waste studies show a decrease in waste
  - Initial plate waste: 22 lb. Oranges, 52 lb. apples
  - Post Analysis: 5 lb. oranges (77% decrease) 13 lb. apples (75% decrease)

### Apples & Oranges

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial Plate Waste (lbs.)</th>
<th>Post Implementation Plate Waste (lbs.)</th>
<th>Decrease %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPLES</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ORANGES</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>77</td>
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</table>
Increasing Milk Consumption

In April 2017, chocolate milk was reintroduced onto lunch and supper menus after a ban of flavored milk in 2012.

• Favorable results include:
  – Increased meal participation
  – Waste decreased from 13 gallons to 30 ounces daily (Lillian El. plate waste study)
  – Building bones and muscle
Increase in Lunch Participation

Reintroducing chocolate milk and Smarter Lunchroom concepts played a pivotal role in increasing overall meal participation.

- Lillian El. achieved an 11% gain in lunch participation as a result from:
  - Offering chocolate milk
  - Fresh fruit cutting station
  - Reimbursable meal education for students
  - Marketing, design, and campus synergy
Lillian El. Grant Highlights

Connecting with the customer
• SMILE training for staff
• Providing verbal cues

Signage
• Building a reimbursable meal
• Offering nutrition education

PA announcements
• Lunch menu items
• Hot supper menu items
Lillian El. Grant Highlights
Mobile Dairy Classroom

The Mobile Dairy Classroom Assembly brought agriculture to Lillian elementary teaching students how milk and dairy foods are produced and how they contribute to healthy eating.
Hollenbeck MS Grant Highlights

Improving school synergy
- Signage that communicates our goals
- Providing positive PA announcements

Changing the Lunchroom Atmosphere
- Create excitement and buzz around the campus.

Eye level messaging
- Nutrition education that is bright and easily seen in the cafeteria to motivate and influence selection of healthy items.
LAUSD was awarded with two Smarter Lunchroom Grants in 2016 to implement strategies proven effective in the school cafeteria to influence healthy nutrition choices by our students.

- 1 Elementary School and 1 Middle School
- With the help and technical assistance from Dairy Council of California, LAUSD implemented change that took Lillian Elementary from Bronze to Gold.
  - This would not have been accomplished without the tremendous support of Dairy Council of California!
LAUSD Award Levels

683 LAUSD schools achieved the Healthy US School Challenge Bronze level

This rating puts LAUSD cafeteria’s in the “Great Job” category when it comes to inspiring students to eat healthier and physical activity.

• Our cafeterias are off to a good start.
• With our continued efforts we are striving to reach the gold level on any future assessments.
LAUSD Looking Ahead

LAUSD will continue to implement scorecard strategies that are beneficial to students healthy eating habits.

• Provide training for noon aides and students on how to make healthier choices
• Encourage students to be mindful of the foods they choose and “Taste Don’t Waste”
• Require Food Service Managers to conduct annual scorecard assessments of their school to determine award levels
• Prepare individual action plans to increase award levels using the Smarter Lunchroom 4 Steps
  - Diagnose, Prescribe, Implement, Evaluate
Smarter Lunchroom and More

LAUSD not only utilizes the creative, low-cost, no-cost techniques of the Smarter Lunchroom Movement during lunch. We implement these scorecard strategies to our:

• Breakfast in the Classroom program
• Hot Supper Expansion Program
• Summer Food Service Program

The SLM strategies can be effective along with any meal programs, benefiting our customers.
Expand Smarter Lunchroom to More

Applying Smarter Lunchroom concepts to other meal programs such as; after-school has resulted in meal participation increases.

• In 2016-2017 LAUSD expanded their After School Supper Program from service cold supper to serving hot-supper items.

• Up to 400% increase.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cold Supper Average Participation</th>
<th>Hot Supper Average Participation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Moore El.</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>333</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marina Del Rey MS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monroe HS</td>
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<td>361</td>
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Connecting SLM to the School Environment

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement

Nutrition Education

Local School Wellness Policy
Mission:

To provide training and technical advising for school foodservice in California on the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement theory and practices created by the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Program funded by the USDA.
Smarter Lunchrooms Movement of California Collaborative

Collaborative Partners

[Logos of partners including Dairy Council of California, University of California, California Department of Education, CDPH, California Food Policy Advocates, Smarter Lunchrooms Movement]
Smarter Lunchrooms
Movement Resources

HealthyEating.Org/SLM
• Tools Created by Schools
• Sample language for Local School Wellness Policies
• School Milk Cooler Poster

SmarterLunchrooms.org
• Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard
• National Smarter Lunchrooms Handbook
• No Time to Train Handbook
Smarter Lunchrooms Movement of California Collaborative

Dedicated to:

• Training Technical Advising Professionals (TAPs)
• Training School Nutrition Professionals
• Providing the Monthly Nudge e-newsletter
Thank you!
• This session provides one (1) CEU
  – Presentation Title: Smarter Lunchrooms = A Positive Image
  – Key Area: Key Area 4 - Communications & Marketing
  – Professional Standards Code: 4160