



# NO TIME TO TRAIN

A Year of 10-Minute Workshops for Lunchroom Staff

Trainer's Script

Research by the Cornell B.E.N. Center

Lessons by Erin Sharp, MAT, MS

The Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs (B.E.N. Center) / 2015

# Smarter Lunchrooms Movement

*The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement and the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs (B.E.N. Center) are funded by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service/Economic Research Service (FNS/ERS). We thank them for their help and support.*



THE SMARTER LUNCHROOMS MOVEMENT

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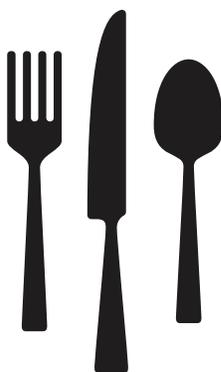
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The Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in  
Child Nutrition Programs (B.E.N. Center) / 2015

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**It's Not Nutrition...  
Until It's Eaten!**



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Suggested reference citation:

Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs (B.E.N. Center) & Sharp, E. (2015). *Smarter lunchrooms movement no time to train: A year of 10-minute workshops for lunchroom staff*. Publisher: B.E.N. Center.

For more information, please contact [ben@cornell.edu](mailto:ben@cornell.edu).

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## Dear Smarter Lunchrooms Trainer or Team Leader,

Welcome to the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement! We at the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs (B.E.N. Center) are happy you are joining us. We appreciate the opportunity to work with you and your organization in expanding Smarter Lunchrooms across the country.

To support your efforts, we are pleased to offer **No Time to Train: A Year of 10-Minute Workshops for Lunchroom Staff**. This series of mini-workshops was developed in response to trainers' concerns about finding time and funding to train complete food service teams. These lessons will help your staff members **understand, implement, and maintain** Smarter Lunchrooms strategies with enthusiasm and precision.

These lessons are inspired by the **Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover Manual** presented in our train-the-trainer workshops and at **SmarterLunchrooms.org**. We hope this workshop series helps you develop positive relationships and enact effective Smarter Lunchrooms interventions throughout your region. This program contains activities, teaching materials, and insider tips from our experience in over 20,000 schools nationwide.

As I am sure you know, Smarter Lunchrooms Makeovers can improve the health and wellness of schools and communities as a whole. It is exciting to work with you to accomplish these important goals.

We look forward to collaborating with you. My contact information appears below. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything.

*Kathryn I. Hoy MFN, RD, CDN*

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Sincerely,



**Kathryn Hoy, MFN, RD, CDN**

*Manager, Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs*



For information on upcoming workshops, conferences, webinars, and other educational opportunities, please visit **SmarterLunchrooms.org**.



# How to Use This Book

**Pro Tips  
appear in  
starbursts.**

**References to online  
resources appear in  
sidebars.**

Welcome! Thank you for joining the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement as a lunchroom staff trainer. Smarter Lunchrooms Technical Assistance Providers (TAPs), Food Service Directors (FSDs), university extension professionals, and representatives from federal, state, local, and private organizations have partnered with the Cornell B.E.N. Center to develop and disseminate this program for training lunchroom teams to **understand, implement, and maintain** Smarter Lunchrooms interventions in schools. **You are the catalyst** that brings all of these pieces together to help improve students' food choices in their school lunchrooms.

This book assumes you have completed a one- or two-day Smarter Lunchrooms Train-the-Trainer Workshop. These materials dovetail with the tools and education presented at that workshop, particularly **Module 5: Facilitating Cooperation**.

This workshop series can help lunchroom staff understand and implement Smarter Lunchrooms concepts. The lessons also generate enthusiasm, build teamwork, incorporate effective communication techniques, and can make each lunchroom a dynamic, inviting space where students **select, eat, and enjoy healthier food choices**.

Each **10 minute mini-workshop** focuses on a specific strategy developed by the Cornell B.E.N. Center. Although these lessons can stand alone, they are intended to be **used in series**, as subsequent workshops build on knowledge from previous installments. Each month includes **follow-up strategies** to help lunchroom teams maintain their positive momentum as well as a **"booster shot"**—an optional enrichment or application activity designed to reinforce and magnify the main workshop's impact. Paper-based instructional materials appear in the Appendix. Slide presentations and digital versions of printed resources can be downloaded from **SmarterLunchrooms.org**.

In all cases, feel invited to tweak the lessons to appeal to your specific audience. In our experience, **a personalized Makeover is a successful Makeover**.

We look forward to guiding you and providing assistance as you bring the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement to schools across America. Congratulations on your new role as a Smarter Lunchrooms leader and trainer!

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## GETTING STARTED: School Nutrition, Smarter Lunchrooms, and You

The history of school nutrition is like a swinging pendulum. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) were created to alleviate child hunger. The National School Lunch Act (1946), administered by the USDA, established nutritional guidelines for school meals and offered subsidies for qualifying students, ensuring students receive nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free meals in school. The NSLP and SBP now serve nearly 32 million students daily. (Courtesy of [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/))

Today, the pendulum has swung and our nation faces a new problem. Americans consume too many calories rather than too few, and those calories often do not satisfy the USDA's dietary recommendations. Lawmakers responded by issuing the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (2010). Updated USDA guidelines (commonly called "the new standards") limit calories, sodium, and sugar content and require the inclusion of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy.

These changes caused concern in some audiences, who feared they would be too costly, confusing, or foreign to appeal to schools and families. The NSLP needed a way to introduce the new standards, and the overall concept of healthy school food, in a way that minimized backlash and maximized participation and enjoyment.

That's where the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement (SLM) comes in. Since 2009, Dr. Brian Wansink and Dr. David Just of the Cornell B.E.N. Center have researched how **behavioral economics**, the science of how environmental cues influence decision-making, can **promote healthy choices in school lunchrooms**. The B.E.N. Center created the SLM to bring these strategies to schools nationwide. Small, inexpensive changes to packaging, placement, ambiance, and prompting "nudge" students to make healthier food choices without negatively impacting lunchrooms' operations or bottom line.

The Smarter Lunchrooms program works for schools throughout the country because it is **comfortable** and **customizable**. SLM leaders **work collaboratively** with diverse stakeholders to diagnose how their lunchrooms function, then plan customized changes which result in **long-lasting improvements** to students' food choices. Whether a school desires a well-publicized makeover or subtle "stealth health" change, the SLM's research-backed methods result in positive change and positive feedback.

The **No Time to Train** workshops support this cooperative, inclusive approach. Lunchroom staff are the "boots on the ground" who implement and maintain interventions. By educating and empowering them to support these changes, SLM leaders increase the enthusiasm and precision with which changes are enacted, leading to long-term success. Through this yearlong series, food service teams will understand, implement, evaluate, and plan lunchroom interventions which encourage their students to **select, eat, and enjoy healthy foods** in school.

# GETTING STARTED: Leading Staff Development



Food Service Directors (FSDs) are vital allies in bringing the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement to schools and districts. As such, it is important to respond to their needs as businesspeople and advocates for children’s health.

For many FSDs, the staff training offered by the B.E.N. Center is a major draw. FSDs often are required to provide professional development but lack the time or training needed to create lessons. Since they pay workers to attend training, they want programs with proven success records. We provide this valuable resource.

To prepare for your role as trainer, study the materials in the Smarter Lunchrooms Train-the-Trainer workshop **Module 5: Facilitating Collaboration**. When leading workshops, follow these guidelines:

- **Really study the Module 5 materials.** Become the expert. Ask for help from master teachers as needed. *Don’t try to “wing it”! It shows.*
- **Be positive and compassionate.** Frustration and negativity will spread. Handle unforeseen challenges with grace and fix them to the best of your ability.
- **Be prepared.** Make photocopies and assemble props at least 24 hours ahead of time. Bring extra writing utensils. Arrive 15–30 minutes early to set up. Make sure all provided technology is compatible with your own and works prior to starting.
- **Be prompt.** Start and end on time, even if that means cutting, adjusting, or moving an activity. For example, if an activity or discussion question appeals strongly to your audience and you wish to devote more time to it, you can repurpose later parts of the workshop as follow-up lessons.
- **Practice** to improve your comfort level and time management skills. Ask friends or colleagues for constructive feedback. Track your progress so you improve with time.
- **Speak their language.** Specialized lingo can alienate your audience. Use the down-to-earth terms and language your audience already uses.

**Smarter Lunchrooms Workshop Module 5:  
Facilitating Collaboration**



## GETTING STARTED: Document Your Progress

A picture is worth a thousand words. Show your lunchroom team, school administrators, and other stakeholders the positive results of your staff workshops and lunchroom interventions using photographs taken throughout the year.

- “Before” photos showing the lunchroom walls, entrances/exits, serving lines, and dining areas before any training or changes take place
- “Before” and “after” photos of any areas altered during a training workshop or booster lesson
- Action shots and posed smiling portraits of participants enacting lunchroom changes, especially those with student involvement
  - › Get signed permission from adult participants before photographing them, or crop images to omit people, focusing only on the lunchroom environment
  - › Get signed permission from school administration and parents before photographing students

Use these images to generate interest and support for future training opportunities and lunchroom interventions, particularly when customizing the **Share Your Success** slide presentation for your end-of-year celebration (see page 86).

Before shot



After shot





## AUGUST

# INTRODUCTION TO BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS

**Objective:** Explain how behavioral economics influences food choices and how the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement can help students *select, eat, and enjoy healthier foods* in the school lunchroom.

Participants learn the core concepts of Behavioral Economics and the 6 Principles of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement. They will be able to apply these principles, particularly Visibility and Convenience, in their own homes (if desired) as well as in their lunchrooms. In the Booster Shot lesson, participants view and discuss a video of a real-life Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover.



# LESSON 1: Introduction to Behavioral Economics

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## MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
  - SLIDE PRESENTATION:  
*No Time to Train: August (Introduction to Behavioral Economics)*
    - Projection capability, screen
  - WORKSHEET: *Behavioral Economics in the Lunchroom: 9 Key Ideas* (page 93)
  - Pens/pencils
  - Lined paper
  - Stopwatch or clock with second hand
  - Large paper, markers (optional)
- 

### ➔ DO:

- Cue up the **No Time to Train: August (Introduction to Behavioral Economics) slide presentation**. Have stopwatch/clock ready.
- Distribute paper and pens/pencils.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: August (Introduction to Behavioral Economics), slide 1: title page

### 🗨 SAY:

This year, we will conduct staff development training in 10-minute mini-workshops once or twice per month. As a whole, this will enable us to improve our lunchroom in many areas: arrangement and decor, food marketing, and relationships with students. By helping students *select, eat, and enjoy healthier foods* in the lunchroom, we can improve their health while maintaining or improving our own revenue and operations.

This month, we will learn about **behavioral economics**, the study of how our environment influences our behavior. We will discuss how to use the **6 principles of behavioral economics** in food settings, including school lunchrooms. We will learn about the **Smarter Lunchrooms Movement** and Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover techniques. You can even try them out in your home, if desired.

Let's begin.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Intro to BE, slide 2: Warm-Up Challenge

### 🗨 SAY:

Let's do a quick experiment. On the next slide, you'll see a pantry. For 15 seconds, look at the items on the shelves. Then, I'll cover the image and you'll have 45 seconds to write down as many items or brand names as you can remember from the photograph.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Intro to BE, slide 3: Pantry Photo

# LESSON 1: Introduction to Behavioral Economics continued



**SAY:**

Study this photo for 15 seconds.

**DO:**

- Wait 15 seconds, then cover the slide or return to the previous slide.

**SAY:**

Now, write down as many items or brands as you remember. (45 seconds)

**SHOW SLIDE: Intro to BE, slide 4: Warm-Up Discussion, part 1**

**SAY:**

Let's review your answers. What items did you remember?

**DO:**

- Review answers as a group. If desired, record answers on large paper. If an answer appears on multiple participants' list, add a tally mark beside it each time it is mentioned.

**SHOW SLIDE: Intro to BE, slide 5: Warm-Up Discussion, part 2**

**SAY:**

You might expect all of the items to be equally noticeable or memorable, but that isn't the case. Typically, certain items appear on many viewers' lists, while others appear on few or no lists. Let's talk about why that is.

- \* First, let's look back to the picture. Where do most of the remembered items and brands appear?
- \* Why do you think you remembered these items more than the others?

**DO:**

- Return to slide 3 (the photo). Allow participants to share their responses. Reinforce these answers:
  - > Many of the most remembered items tend to be located **"front and center"**—at eye level in the center of the middle shelves. Items on the periphery and bottom are more likely to be overlooked or forgotten.
  - > ***What we notice first and most frequently, we remember best.***

**SHOW SLIDE: Intro to BE, slide 6: Front and Center**

**SAY:**

Studies show we notice things located in the center first. For example, in this word cloud, the words "corn," "salad," "soup," "kiwi," and "grab'n'go" probably popped out at you, even though other choices may be larger. The center position is most noticeable.



## LESSON 1: Introduction to Behavioral Economics continued

Items that are **easy to see and reach** attract our attention first and become our **default setting**. For instance, if you open your pantry for a snack, you're likely to end up taking something from the front of the eye-level shelf. The same goes for the refrigerator. This can be a problem when fruits and veggies are stored in hard-to-see, hard-to-reach drawers instead of in plain sight. Out of sight and out of mind, they go uneaten.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Intro to BE, slide 7: Let's Get Scientific

#### 🗨️ SAY:

**Behavioral economics** is the study of how environmental cues (like placement) subconsciously “nudge” our decisions—and we can **use those tendencies to help us make healthier choices**.

There are six main ways behavioral economics can nudge food choices. The two most important for us are **Visibility** and **Convenience**.

- \* **Easy-to-see = Visibility**
- \* **Easy-to-reach = Convenience**

An interesting point about the environment's influence on decision-making is that it continues to happen even when you are “in the know.” It's not a magic trick that stops working once you know the secret. Learning about behavioral economics can help us **be proactive** and **reorganize our space to encourage us to make the choices we want to make**, and the changes *will work*. Conversely, just knowing about behavioral economics won't help people make better choices if their surroundings don't change—they must *act, not just think*, for it to work.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Intro to BE, slide 8: The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement

#### 🗨️ SAY:

We are going to use the power of behavioral economics to help students *select, eat, and enjoy* healthy food options in the lunchroom. This can help us in many ways:

- \* Increase participation and revenue
- \* Increase efficiency
- \* Improve relationships with students
- \* Improve feedback from students and parents

We'll use Smarter Lunchrooms techniques from the Cornell B.E.N. Center. These interventions are great because:

- \* They have been tested in real schools around the country
- \* We can mix-and-match our favorite interventions to address our lunchroom's specific needs and goals
- \* They are easy
- \* They are inexpensive or free
- \* They do not limit choices or cause negative backlash (“reactance”)



## LESSON 1: Introduction to Behavioral Economics continued

- \* They are effective
- \* They keep working long-term

These customized interventions are called Smarter Lunchrooms Makeovers.

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Intro to BE, slide 9: Let's Make Ours a Smarter Lunchroom!**

#### 🗨️ **SAY:**

Let's use behavioral economics to improve our lunchroom this year!

Each month, we'll have one or two mini-workshops to introduce and practice one Smarter Lunchrooms topic. To finish up today's lesson, let's review the key concepts of Behavioral Economics.

#### ➡️ **DO:**

- Distribute a **Behavioral Economics in the Lunchroom: 9 Key ideas worksheet** to each participant.

#### 🗨️ **SAY:**

Look over the core ideas of behavioral economics. These are the most important "take-aways":

- \* **Environmental cues** such as placement, lighting, ambiance, and prompts really do affect our purchasing and eating decisions.
- \* Therefore, **proactively arranging the environment** can prompt people to make **healthier choices and habits**.
- \* People make more impulsive, less healthy choices when in a **hot state** (emotional, rushed, or stressed) than when in a **cold state** (calm, relaxed, and logical).
- \* The **6 Principles of Behavioral Economics** are *Portion Size, Visibility, Convenience, Taste Expectations, Suggestive Selling, and Pricing*.

(Pause to let participants look over the worksheet.)

Now that you are "in the know" about the ways the environment influences habits, look for examples in your own life.

- \* **Hang your worksheet somewhere prominent** where you will see it every day, such as near the bathroom mirror or on the refrigerator. **Read** and **think** about one concept each day.
- \* **Observe your environment.** Look for behavioral economics at work in your life: the visibility of items in your pantry or refrigerator, the convenience of restaurants along your commute, the location of items on store shelves, and the messages you see and hear in commercials. Ask yourself:
  - What are the cues around you prompting people to do?
  - Is this what you, objectively, want to do?
  - How can you help yourself make the choices you want to make?

You can even try Smarter Lunchrooms techniques in your home.



## LESSON 1: Introduction to Behavioral Economics continued

\* **Optional challenge: Change two things** in your home environment to help you and your family make healthier choices. The easiest ways are in boldface. **Discuss:**

- Which changes will you make?
- Why do they appeal to you?
- How could they help you and/or your family make healthy choices at home?

### ➔ DO:

- During the remaining time, allow participants to read the worksheet and discuss home interventions. Encourage them to follow the home recommendations.

---

### FOLLOW-UP

Over the next week, spot-check for understanding and cooperation. Keeping the worksheet and recommendations visible on a daily basis is key to helping lunchroom staff members (and you) develop these habits of mind:

- *Thinking* about how behavioral economics affects our daily lives
- *Observing* these techniques in action
- *Implementing* them purposefully

You can unobtrusively encourage compliance in a number of ways:

- **Display** the worksheet prominently in a place staff see every day, such as on a tabletop or door, by the coat rack, or on the door to the restroom
- **Highlight** one concept per day with an eye-catching color
  - › Fun idea: Write the daily concept on a tabletop card or placemat using colored paper, ink, or an eye-catching font
- **Talk about** one concept per day as a group or with individuals
- **Ask** which changes they have tried at home
- **Check in** regularly—daily at first, then every few days



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**Remember: You cannot make anybody do this.** Being angry, rigid, or overly forceful will create reactance (resistance and bad feelings). Instead, encourage cooperation by leaving reminders in **visible, convenient places** and **prompting** in a **friendly, relaxed, interested manner**.

# BOOSTER SHOT 1: Lunch'd Video & Discussion



*Before the workshop, pre-screen the 9-minute movie. If you wish to reserve more time for discussion, plan which portions of the film to show vs. skip.*

*Note: This highly engaging video of a real-life Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover was made before the new USDA standards were implemented. Some suggested changes should be tweaked to suit current lunchroom scenarios. Focus this session on whichever ideas will be most valuable to your participants.*

## MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- **VIDEO: Lunch'd** (incl. all necessary technology)
- Large paper, markers

### ➔ **DO:**

- Cue up the **Lunch'd video**. Confirm internet connectivity and test the A/V system for compatibility.

### 💬 **SAY:**

Now that you've learned the essential ideas of behavioral economics and perhaps tried out some of the techniques at home, let's see Smarter Lunchrooms changes in action. The B.E.N. Center leaders, Cornell University professors Dr. Brian Wansink and Dr. David Just, conducted this Makeover at a middle school in Ithaca, NY.

### ➔ **DO:**

- Play **Lunch'd video**.
  - › <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/healthierus-school-challenge-resources/lunchd-part-one>
  - › <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/healthierus-school-challenge-resources/lunchd-part-two>
- Allow time for viewing (up to 9 minutes) and a brief discussion (varies) of participant responses.

### 💬 **SAY:**

*Instructor's Note: Discussion length and depth will vary with time allotment. Choose 1-3 of these questions for a whole-group discussion. Use remaining questions, one at a time, to prompt mealtime discussions.*



## BOOSTER SHOT 1: Lunch'd Video & Discussion continued

Let's discuss what you saw in the video.

- \* What did you like about the video?
- \* Which changes were most interesting and/or effective?
- \* Which changes looked inexpensive, easy, or fast to implement?
- \* Which ideas could we use in this lunchroom?
- \* What did you think of the students' reactions?

### ➔ **DO:**

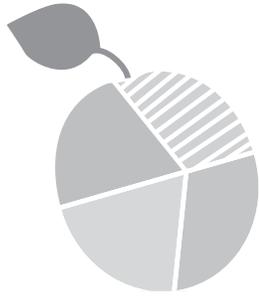
- Record interesting responses or suggestions (primarily those related to making changes in the participants' lunchrooms) on large paper. Hang the list prominently in the staff area to inspire future discussions and brainstorming.



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### FOLLOW-UP

Use the remaining discussion questions as mealtime discussion prompts.



## SEPTEMBER

# MAKE FRUITS AND VEGGIES FIRST, FAST, AND FABULOUS

**Objective:** Use Visibility, Convenience, and Suggestive Selling to promote fruits and vegetables. Use placement and signage to increase students' awareness of and interest in daily fruit and vegetable offerings.

Participants use the Smarter Lunchrooms principles Visibility, Convenience, and Suggestive Selling to promote fruits and vegetables. Participants rearrange and decorate the serving line fruit and vegetable display areas. In the Booster Shot lesson, participants create an eye-catching, engaging menu board to advertise daily fruit and vegetable offerings.



## LESSON 2: Make Fruits and Veggies First, Fast, and Fabulous

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### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- SLIDE PRESENTATION: *No Time to Train: September (Make Fruits and Veggies First, Fast, and Fabulous)*
  - Projection capability, screen
- SLM intervention supplies (see advance prep instructions below)
  - Intervention options written on index cards, one per card
  - Colorful trays, linens, and/or utensils
  - Colorful large bowl or basket
  - Gooseneck lamp or other bright, directional lighting
  - Premade food signs and labels
  - Laminating film or machine (optional)

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### ADVANCE PREPARATION

The hands-on application portion of this workshop requires preparation. **Review** the available intervention options, **choose** 3-5 options, and **gather or create** the appropriate materials. This module is customizable; you will only need the materials pertaining to your chosen interventions. Create and laminate labels and signs. Lastly, **write** each chosen intervention and its needs on a separate index card. The interventions and materials choices are:

- Switch display trays/chafing dishes for colorful trays (**trays**)
- Place colorful linens on/under/around display trays (**cloth napkins or fabric swatches**)
- Switch serving utensils for colorful new utensils (**utensils**)
- Create an attractive fruit display (**basket or bowl, label or sign**)
- Shine spotlight on fruit display (**gooseneck or clip-on lamp**)
- Hang food labels or signs (**premade labels and/or signs, tape or other fasteners**)

---

### ➔ DO:

- Cue up the **No Time to Train: September (Make Fruits and Veggies First, Fast and Fabulous) slide presentation.**
- Confirm you have access to the service line area.
- In the service area, group workshop props by intervention.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: September (Make Fruits & Veggies...), slide 1: title page

## LESSON 2: Make Fruits and Veggies First, Fast, and Fabulous continued



### **SAY:**

This month, we will use the Smarter Lunchrooms principles Visibility, Convenience, and Suggestive Selling to promote fruits and vegetables. With just a few changes to the serving line, we will encourage our students to select more fruits and vegetables. This can improve both their health and overall satisfaction with their meal. It can also help the lunchroom by completing more reimbursable meals and making the school lunch more attractive to consumers.

Let's begin.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 2: Warm-Up Challenge, part 1**

### **SAY:**

Let's start with a brainteaser.

Look at this crowd of rubber ducks. Pick one. Keep your choice secret.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 3: Warm-Up Challenge, part 2**

### **SAY:**

Now imagine you will win \$100 if you can get a friend to choose the same duck. The rules are:

- \* You **can't** make noise, motion, or otherwise communicate directly with your friend
- \* You **can** alter the photo or duck pond, as long as you don't remove any ducks

How will you get your friend to choose the \$100 prize duck?

### **DO:**

- Encourage participants to call out answers. Be positive and reaffirm all answers that conform to the rules, especially those which relate to the following slides. The point of this exercise is to generate enthusiasm and get participants to think about how environmental cues get and direct attention.

### **SAY:**

Thanks for those great answers. I think you would have won the prize! Here are visualizations of many of the possible strategies for getting your friend to guess the right duck [many of which you mentioned].

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 4: Add a splash of color**

### **SAY:**

First up: color. Bright, contrasting colors immediately grab an audience's attention.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 5: Point the way**



## LESSON 2:

# Make Fruits and Veggies First, Fast, and Fabulous continued

### **SAY:**

Another easy and effective option: point an arrow or shine a spotlight on the target duck.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 6: Move your duck to the front**

### **SAY:**

Our eyes notice objects in the front of a group before those on the sides or in the back of the group.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 7: Make a big display**

### **SAY:**

Excitement is contagious. If you give your duck a prominent setting, it becomes the best duck in the pond, impossible to overlook.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 8: Add bling. Decorate your duck!**

### **SAY:**

Who could overlook a duck this fabulous? Tasteful decorations are like magnets for eyes.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 9: Make your fruits and veggies just as unforgettable.**

### **SAY:**

What does this duck game have to do with your lunchroom?

Answer: The same techniques we used to make our ducks stand out from the crowd will work on target foods in the lunchroom. This month, our **target foods** are fruits and vegetables.

Students are very preoccupied when they go through the lunch line. Classes, homework, friends, sleepiness, upcoming tests and due dates...these stressors can envelop kids in a cloud of distractions. They are on "autopilot" and often literally don't see what's in right front of them.

We can use the duck strategies to break through their distractions so they notice and select target foods in the serving line.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 10: Add a splash of color 2**

### **SAY:**

Adding color will add interest and appeal to foods. Some easy examples are:

\* Add brightly colored linens under trays or registers, or on counters

– *Note: Keep them clean!*

## LESSON 2: Make Fruits and Veggies First, Fast, and Fabulous continued



- \* Switch or hide metal tools and pans with bright plastic utensils and trays
- \* Place foods with contrasting colors near each other
  - Handheld fruits of many colors in the same bowl
  - Fruits or veggies in portioned cups arranged in a checkerboard or striped pattern
- \* Garnish the sides of dishes
- \* Write menus and food labels using brightly colored chalk or ink

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 11: Point the way 2**

#### 🗨️ **SAY:**

Use color, arrows, and pictures to grab students' attention and direct it to your target foods. Which is your favorite example? (Pause)

Signs work! Effective signs are neat, colorful, clear, and short. Put fruits and vegetables first on menus or in a "special feature" starburst.

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 12: Move target foods to the front**

#### 🗨️ **SAY:**

Front-placed objects are easier to see and reach. This concept was the basis behind moving the snacks in your home pantry or refrigerator.

- \* How many of you did that last month? (Pause for a show of hands.)
- \* Did you notice it was easier to eat healthy foods and/or resist overeating less healthy foods? (Pause for nods or discussion, depending on time.)

Place fruits in at least **two places** on every serving line. Veggies, too. First and last (by the register) are the best spots.

- \* Look at these buffets. Doesn't the left one make you want a crisp, fresh salad, while the right-hand one makes you hungry for French fries? It's because the first items in a serving line have a huge advantage in terms of what we actually select. Therefore, place target foods first in line or place signs promoting target foods where they will be seen first.

Place fruits and vegetables in the front of coolers and displays **at eye level to the students**. (Hunker down if you serve elementary students!)

Place foods, plastic display food models, or signs in **high-traffic areas** where kids stand in line, such as entrances and exits, by the trays and utensils, and by the register.

Lastly, place your salad bar in a **central** location where students will walk by it. Orient it so they walk past the serving side, not the end.

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 13: Make a big display 2**





## LESSON 2: Make Fruits and Veggies First, Fast, and Fabulous continued

### **SAY:**

Placing handheld fruit in a colorful bowl or basket by the register can double fruit sales. Get even more impact with a spotlight and sign. Wrap fruit with edible peels or offer tongs.

Feature your daily fruits and vegetables with a fun, personalized menu board.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 14: Decorate (add bling)**

### **SAY:**

Add cheery, colorful, age-appropriate art and decorations to create a fun, inviting atmosphere and increase students' awareness of their food options. Choose items which feature healthy foods, seasonal flavors, and school spirit.

**An important reminder:** Keep decorations current and attractive. Spot-clean decorations weekly and update decorations every 1–3 months.

### **SHOW SLIDE: Make Fruits & Veggies..., slide 15: Let's try it out!**

### **SAY:**

Let's make fruits and veggies the stars of the show! For the hands-on part of this workshop, we will make some fast, easy updates to the serving line.



## *Fun art ideas!*

**Invite students to create food-themed art projects** to display in the lunchroom. Talk to art and photography teachers about our Smarter Lunchrooms lesson plans. Pick a different fun theme each month or quarter, such as a food/produce of the month or the favorite foods of school "celebrities" (principal, popular teachers, clubs, student council, etc.).

**Download or request free food-themed promotional materials** from commodities groups, local farmers' co-ops or markets, and other food-based businesses.

Lesson plans and signs are on [SmarterLunchrooms.org](https://www.smarterlunchrooms.org).

## LESSON 2: Make Fruits and Veggies First, Fast, and Fabulous continued



### ➔ DO:

- Distribute the intervention index cards. (Form groups or double up on tasks, as needed.) Suggestion: match tasks to the workers' regular duties—for example, utensils can be updated by whomever usually stocks those items.

### 💬 SAY:

On your index card is an easy, fast Smarter Lunchrooms intervention to promote fruits and vegetables in the serving line.

- \* Read your intervention
- \* Collect the supplies that go with your intervention
- \* Go to the appropriate spot on the serving line and complete your task
- \* After you finish, you may assist other team members who are still working

### ➔ DO:

- Assist participants in retrieving the appropriate supplies and completing the tasks. Praise and thank each participant for his/her contribution.

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## FOLLOW-UP

Spot-check the service line to make sure interventions are implemented daily (or assign this duty to the kitchen manager or other staff member). Check daily for the first week, then 1–2 times per week thereafter. Post a friendly reminder sign in the staff break room or by the appropriate work stations.

**Praise compliance** and point out examples of when students saw, talked about, or selected fruits or vegetables based on lunchroom's new look. Ask participants to share examples. Write these examples on simple signs or index cards, then post them in staff areas to boost morale and keep positive momentum going.

If interventions are **not** consistently implemented, gently but firmly remind staff members (in private) how important their work is and how these easy interventions can help both the lunchroom and the students. Check in regularly to encourage and praise implementation.





## BOOSTER SHOT 2: Create a Fruit/Veggie-du-Jour Magnet Board

*This easy, fast art project will earn big dividends in your lunchroom! Students of all ages love to check each day to see if their favorites are on the menu. The pictures are especially appealing to young students and those with language barriers or reading challenges. You can designate student volunteers to update the board daily. Best of all, the magnet version sticks to freezers, warmers, and other hard-to-decorate large metal appliances. If you want to hang it on a wall space instead, use Velcro pieces.*

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- Menu board supplies:
  - School lunch menu
  - Color images of fruits and veggies, approx. 3"–4" tall
  - Small, adhesive magnets or adhesive Velcro pieces
  - Poster-sized paper and art supplies (pop-out letters, markers, etc.) for center sign, or printed computer-generated sign
  - Laminating machine or film
- Scissors (multiple pairs)
- Large envelope

Make a fruit/veggie board for each serving line in the lunchroom.

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Create the sign pieces.

1. List all fruits and vegetables served in a menu cycle.
2. Print out appetizing color photos of the listed fruits and vegetables. Size them to be approx. 3"–4" tall. Take your own photos, find free images on the internet, and/or go to **SmarterLunchrooms.org** to download free images. If desired, write food names below each item.
3. Create the center of the sign(s) using a computer or art supplies.
  - a. Keep the message **short and direct**—5 words or fewer. Ex.: "Pick 2!," "Today's Delicious Sides," "Fresh and Delicious," "Today's Fruits and Veggies," "Fruit and Veggie Specials," "Fruit du Jour/Veggie du Jour," "Which will YOU pick?," etc.
  - b. Use **neat, bold, big letters**. It needs to be clear from 20 feet away. Do not use cursive.
4. Proofread all writing.
5. Laminate signs and food images for durability, if possible.
6. Label the envelope "Fruits and Veggies."

Laminating machines are often located in school libraries and district-level print shops. They are often free for school-related use.

## BOOSTER SHOT 2: Create a Fruit/Veggie-du-Jour Magnet Board continued



### ➔ DO:

- Confirm access to the serving area.

### 💬 SAY:

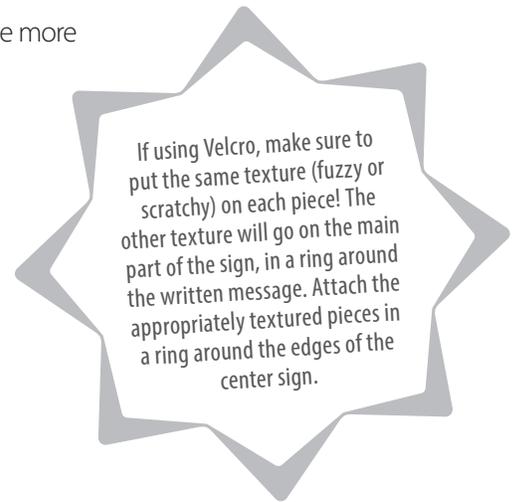
Welcome to the Booster Shot lesson! Today we will make a fun, eye-catching sign that will get students excited about the fruits and vegetables offered each day. This colorful, useful addition will benefit us in two ways:

- \* Increase students' interest in the food, so participation will rise
- \* Educate students as to what foods are available, so they will move more quickly through the serving line

Let's begin.

### ➔ DO:

- Distribute sheets of food images, scissors, and magnets/Velcro pieces. Direct participants cut out fruit and vegetable shapes and attach 2–3 magnets or Velcro pieces to each piece.
- After the pieces are all assembled, combine them. The resulting sign should feature a main message surrounded by the day's options. The options will stick to the main message board using Velcro or surround the sign on the appliance's magnetized surface. Unused food shapes can be stored in the envelope for safekeeping or stuck to a less-visible part of the appliance surface.
- As a group, go to the serving area. Hang the new sign on an appliance or wall where students will see it before ordering their meals. Use additional magnets and/or tape as needed.



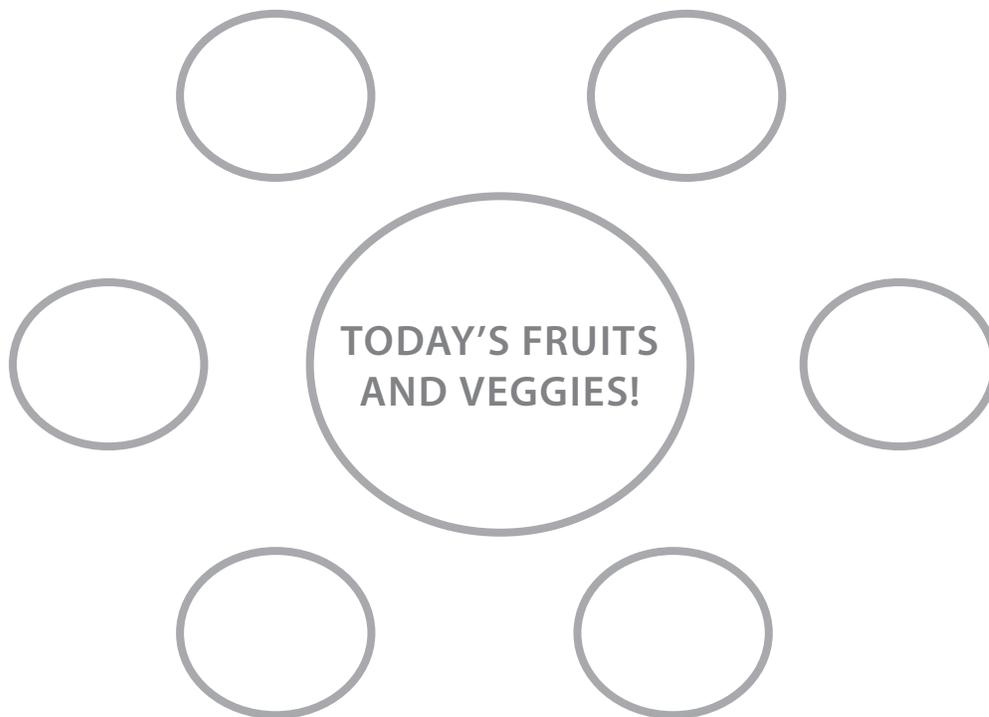


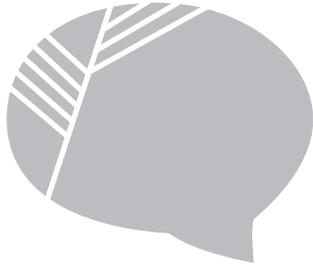
## BOOSTER SHOT 2:

# Create a Fruit/Veggie-du-Jour Magnet Board continued

### FOLLOW-UP

Designate a lunchroom staff member, student, teacher, or parent volunteer to update the sign each day by selecting the appropriate fruit and vegetable choices from the shapes envelope and sticking them to/around the sign. Encourage students to include a fruit and vegetable in their reimbursable meal. Instruct servers and cashiers to refer to the sign to accustom students to looking for it each day.





## OCTOBER POSITIVE COMMUNICATION CUES

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**Objective:** Build and improve relationships between lunchroom staff and students.

Participants use the Smarter Lunchrooms principle Suggestive Selling to promote positive interactions between lunchroom staff members and students. In the Booster Shot lesson, participants host a meet-and-greet decorating party with select students.



## LESSON 3: Positive Communication Cues

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### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
  - WORKSHEET: *Cues for Positive Communication* (page 94)
  - Highlighters
  - Pens/pencils
  - Index cards
  - Tape
  - Large paper, markers
- 

### **SAY:**

This month, we shift focus from our product (food) to our customer service. The students' interactions with staff hugely impact their perceptions of our food. As we have learned, ***in matters of taste, perception is reality***. For students to feel excited about our food, they need to feel *welcomed, informed, and respected*. When we give them options, they feel empowered. Lastly, *we are the adults*; it's our role to guide the conversation and stay positive and on task.

In today's workshop, we will use the Smarter Lunchrooms principle Suggestive Selling to promote positive interactions with students, even in difficult situations where a student may be indecisive, shy, or even hostile. With a few well-chosen words, we can nudge students to purchase and enjoy our healthy meals. We can even turn rude comments into opportunities for positive lessons.

Let's try it and see.

To begin, please form pairs. (Pause) We'll start with a **Think-Pair-Share** activity. Think about this question, then share with your partner:

- \* Can you name a situation (hypothetical or from experience) when an interaction between a lunchroom staff member and a student or school staff member led to anger, frustration, or hurt feelings (on either side)? What happened?

### **DO:**

- Prompt participant pairs to think silently, then share with each other. (1 minute)

### **SAY:**

Let's share as a group. Volunteers do not need to say whether their examples are real or hypothetical, or their own versus their partner's.

## LESSON 3: Positive Communication Cues continued



### ➔ DO:

- Allow participants to share. (1 minute) Highlight situations addressed on the **Cues for Positive Communication worksheet**. Answers will vary and may include:
  - › Students being slow to order or not knowing options and holding up the serving line
  - › Students forgetting elements of a reimbursable meal
  - › Students not wanting to take meal components (ex.: vegetables or milk)
  - › Students making negative comments about food
  - › School staff members not assisting needy students or being impatient
- Make note of situations addressed on the Positive Communication Cues worksheet.

### 💬 SAY:

These situations are common and can often be avoided or improved by using positive messages. Although it can be tempting to retaliate against negativity (for example, by saying “Well, that’s all we have today” or “You have to take this”) or to brush aside the problem for time’s sake (for example, by prompting students to take food “but you don’t have to eat it”), these responses only create long-term friction with the people we serve. They can ultimately hurt the lunchroom by alienating consumers and encouraging waste. Instead, use positive messages to *improve rapport, defuse potential conflicts, and promote target foods and reimbursable meals* to help the lunchroom be successful.

**Food for thought: Nobody wins an argument with a student.** A snappish, proud retort is more likely to prompt a student (and his/her peers) to swear off school food forever than to convince them you were in the right. In difficult situations, remember that a frustrated or angry student who lashes out is often reacting to feeling powerless. The root problem probably has nothing to do with you at all! By turning a student’s negative comment around, we show all students that our lunchroom is a *respectful, safe, and compassionate* place.

For this next exercise, imagine you are working as a server and a student approaches with slumped shoulders and an angry or worried look on his (or her) face. When it is time to order, he avoids making eye contact with you. He says something rude like “I hate this place” or “This food sucks.” With your partner, brainstorm what might be going on in his life to prompt this kind of behavior.

### ➔ DO:

- Allow participants to brainstorm. Then, encourage them to share with the whole group (1 minute). Reinforce helpful answers and write them on large paper. Answers will vary and may include:
  - › Problems at home (anything from concerns for a sick parent, to a fight with a family member, to dealing with traumatic situations such as divorce, poverty, hunger, homelessness, and abuse)
  - › Problems at school (poor grades, language barriers, worry about an upcoming assignment or audition, friction with a teacher)





## LESSON 3: Positive Communication Cues continued

- › Problems with peers (bullying, changing friend groups or romantic relationships, loneliness)
- › Any of the awkward, disappointing, or embarrassing life events that seem to characterize the school years

### **SAY:**

It's important to note that NONE of these examples is related to school food, the lunchroom, or us as people. A distraught child is not angry or frustrated with *us*. But *we can still help*. Let's remember these compassionate thoughts as we move to the final part of today's workshop. Keep these bits of wisdom in mind:

- 1. We are the adults and our responses control the situation. We can afford to be generous of spirit.**
- 2. Each day, our smiles and caring words might be the first bits of kindness a child experiences. We have the capacity to make a real, positive difference for our students every time we come to work.**

### **DO:**

- Distribute the **Cues for Positive Communication worksheet** and highlighters.

### **SAY:**

With your partner, choose two Occasions from the first column which resemble situations faced in your daily work or which you shared earlier today.

Read the Goals pertaining to each of the chosen Occasions, then take turns reading the practice cues to each other in a **positive, sincere voice**. Pretend you are speaking to a real student or school staff member.

After trying out the options listed beside your chosen Occasions, choose the 2–3 cues which felt most natural and effective to you and which you could see yourself using daily. *Highlight or mark* these cues.

### **DO:**

- Allow 2–3 minutes for participant pairs to work. Circulate to answer questions or provide support as needed.
- Distribute index cards and writing utensils.

### **SAY:**

In under 10 minutes, this workshop has let us identify a realistic problem; collaboratively select, test, and rank options; and problem-solve.

Now, write your chosen prompts on your index card, then hang this card by your work station to reinforce the new approach. If you have more than one work station, create one card per area.

LESSON 3:  
Positive Communication Cues  
continued



➔ **DO:**

- Assist participants in copying 2+ chosen prompts per card. Then direct them to tape their cards at their work stations where they will see and use them.
- Thank participants for their engagement and efforts.



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**FOLLOW-UP**

Over the next 2–3 weeks, encourage staff members to use the new cues every day. Spot-check to see that the changes are being maintained sincerely. Give positive reinforcement for their efforts. Do not be discouraged if there is some backsliding, but firmly remind participants to stick with it. It takes up to 30 days to assimilate a new habit, so *don't give up*. Repeat this workshop as needed to address other areas of need or instances of conflict.

Lastly, always thank participants for their efforts. Remind participants that change takes time and it may be a few weeks before they see significant changes in student requests or staff-student rapport. Don't be discouraged.





## BOOSTER SHOT 3: Meet and Greet Decorating Party with Students

*This easy, fast decorating project lets staff members and students work together to add beauty, fun, and interest to lunchroom spaces. It lays the foundation for friendly rapport and cooperation on future projects.*

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- Name tags for participants and students
- Decorations for lunchrooms
  - Possible themes include food, school spirit, and seasonal holidays
- Gather items for the service area, dining area, walls, ceiling, and/or bulletin boards
- Fasteners (tape, putty, hangers, thumbtacks, etc.)

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

**At least two weeks before the Booster Shot lesson, coordinate the students' visit.** Get permission from the school's administrative staff. Then ask school staff members to nominate students (approximately one student per lunchroom staff member) to collaborate on one or more short projects to improve their lunchroom. Say you are looking for students from different grades who are pleasant and positive and who will represent their peers well. Good choices are student body leaders, service club members, and students who are already known for their willingness to help out in the school. The activities will be short (10 minute) projects, 1-4 times throughout the school year.

Invite the students to come to the lunchroom at the designated time to meet the lunchroom staff and help them decorate the lunchroom. 3-5 days before the event, issue passes including each student's full name plus the date, time, location, and purpose of the event. Inform the students' teachers.

**Before the lesson,** buy, borrow, or create colorful, age-appropriate decorations. Gather appropriate fasteners. Clear lunchroom spaces (walls, bulletin boards, and even ceiling tiles) to make room for decorations. Themes may include healthy foods, school spirit, seasonal holidays, or signs the lunchroom needs (ex.: "Recycle Here ➡" or "Tomorrow's Specials"). Signs should be neat, colorful, clean, and easy to read from 20 feet away. Free and customizable sign designs are available at **SmarterLunchrooms.org**. Laminate signs for durability.

This could be a golden opportunity to start a SNAC (Student Nutrition Action Committee) at your school. To learn more, go to [SmarterLunchrooms.org](http://SmarterLunchrooms.org).

Ask guidance counselors and teachers of health/wellness, speech, gym, and home economics classes to recommend students for this activity.

## BOOSTER SHOT 3: Meet and Greet Decorating Party with Students continued



### ➔ DO:

- Assemble the prepared decorations and fasteners. Create name tags for all participants and students.
- Confirm you have access to the lunchroom and attached hallways.

### 💬 SAY: (begin with just staff members)

Welcome to the Booster Shot lesson! Earlier this month, we discussed the importance of having positive communication with students. Today we will meet some of our students and work together to decorate the lunchroom, making it inviting, attractive, and fun for all of us.

Let's invite them in. Let's be welcoming and friendly—they are new to this, too!

### ➔ DO:

- Invite the students to enter and meet the lunchroom staff. Smile! Thank them for sharing this time with you. Pair each student with a staff member.

### 💬 SAY:

Let's start with brief introductions. Tell your partner three things about yourself: your name, what you like most about your work or classes here at [school name], and your favorite thing about our lunchroom. Then you can introduce your partner to the whole group.

### ➔ DO:

- Allow pairs 1–2 minutes to talk, then direct them to briefly introduce their partner to the group. (4 minutes total)

### 💬 SAY:

Now let's get to the best part: decorating the lunchroom.

### ➔ DO:

- Invite each pair to choose a different area of the lunchroom to embellish: one team may take the waiting area, another the dining area, etc. Distribute the decorations and fasteners. (If the decorations are area-specific, make sure to send them to the correct zone.)
- Circulate to assist with the decorating and interactions. Encourage pairs to work together and have fun! Make sure signs are clearly visible to students standing 20 feet away. (Remember that elementary children are shorter!) Praise their efforts.
- At the end of the workshop time, gather participants and students for farewells and thanks.





### BOOSTER SHOT 3:

## Meet and Greet Decorating Party with Students continued

#### **SAY:**

Thank you all for being so welcoming, friendly, and creative. This is our lunchroom, all of ours, and we want to make sure we all feel welcome and comfortable here. Enjoy the spaces you helped create and say hello when you see each other in the lunchroom. We all work hard here at [school name] and a little appreciation and friendliness can go a long way.

We are working all year to improve the lunchroom and the experiences of both staff members and students. Sincere, helpful feedback is always welcome. I hope we can collaborate on other changes and celebrations in the future.

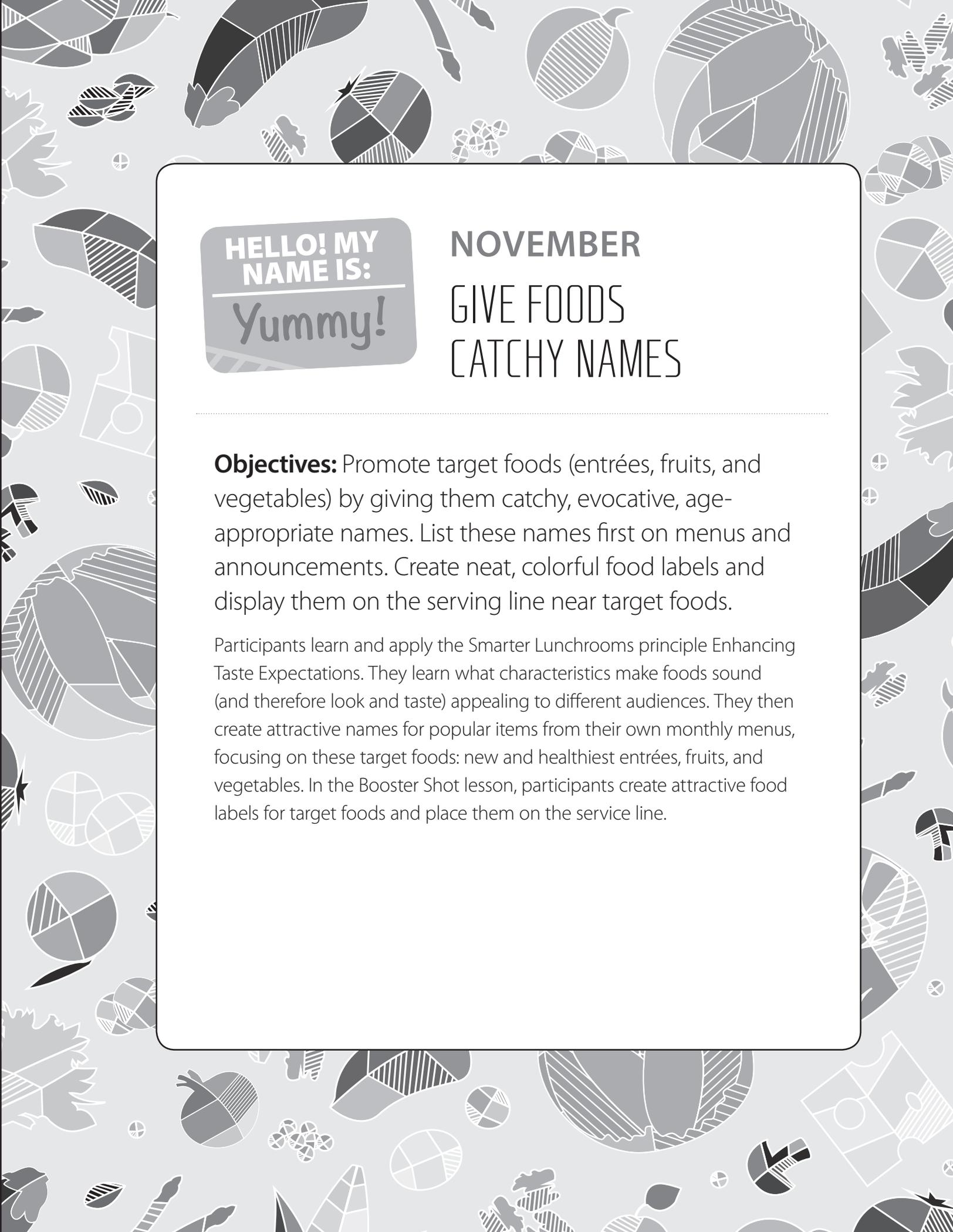
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### FOLLOW-UP

Check back with staff members about their reactions to meeting the students. Post discussion questions in the staff area or at meals. Sample questions include:

- Describe your experience interacting with the students during the workshop. How was it like what you expected? How was it different?
- What are some ways students could communicate helpful feedback to the lunchroom staff regarding future improvements?
- How could the students assist with creating a welcoming, positive, orderly lunchroom environment? How could we deliver those requests in a non-threatening, effective way?

Update seasonal decorations every 1–3 months, as appropriate.



HELLO! MY  
NAME IS:

Yummy!

## NOVEMBER

### GIVE FOODS CATCHY NAMES

**Objectives:** Promote target foods (entrées, fruits, and vegetables) by giving them catchy, evocative, age-appropriate names. List these names first on menus and announcements. Create neat, colorful food labels and display them on the serving line near target foods.

Participants learn and apply the Smarter Lunchrooms principle Enhancing Taste Expectations. They learn what characteristics make foods sound (and therefore look and taste) appealing to different audiences. They then create attractive names for popular items from their own monthly menus, focusing on these target foods: new and healthiest entrées, fruits, and vegetables. In the Booster Shot lesson, participants create attractive food labels for target foods and place them on the service line.



## LESSON 4: Give Foods Catchy Names

---

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
  - WORKSHEET PACKET: *Creating Catchy Food Names* (one per three participants) (pages 95–97)
  - Pens/pencils
  - Large paper, markers
- 

### SAY:

We have learned to use the Smarter Lunchrooms principles Visibility, Convenience, and Suggestive Selling to encourage students to select target foods in the lunchroom.

This month, we'll add another principle to our arsenal: Enhancing Taste Expectations. Basically, this means **foods taste how we expect them to taste**. If we expect them to be delicious, we'll probably enjoy them; if we expect them to be gross, we will almost certainly dislike them. It is a real shame that children are conditioned to see healthy foods as yucky or punishment and unhealthy foods as tasty rewards. We're trying to turn that perception around.

**Name, appearance** (also called **presentation**), and **reputation** create these positive or negative expectations. Easy changes such as giving foods catchy names can dramatically change students' interest in and enjoyment of foods. This is because taste and pleasure are largely in our heads.

It works on adults, too. Here is a true story from the Cornell University Food and Brand Lab, the B.E.N. Center's parent organization:

*The Food and Brand Lab tested this theory in a restaurant. Diners were offered free wine with dinner and then given a brief survey with their bill. Those who were told their wine was from California (a state known for producing excellent wine) said they enjoyed their meals more, tipped better, and made return reservations. Those who were told their wine was from Idaho (a state known for its potatoes, not wine) said they enjoyed their meal less, tipped poorly, and did not make return reservations. Yet, they were given the same exact brand of wine (from Virginia)! Their **expectations** determined how they perceived the wine and their entire dining experience.*

Use this science to promote target foods in the lunchroom. Give special entrées, fruits, and vegetables catchy, appealing, age-appropriate names.

### DO:

- Divide participants into groups of three. Distribute a **Creating Catchy Food Names worksheet packet** and pens/pencils to each group.

LESSON 4:  
Give Foods Catchy Names  
continued



**SAY:**

Within your group, divide up the three lists on the first worksheet (*What's in a Name?*). Read the prompt question and answer the items on your list.

**DO:**

- Let participants work. (30 seconds) Circulate to assist participants as needed.

**SAY:**

Did you choose mostly left-column or right-column answers?

**DO:**

- Allow participants to respond. Answer: mostly the right side answers.

**SAY:**

That's interesting. Let's discuss the follow-up questions.

- \* Why are the right-column answers more appealing?
- \* Why is it important to remember our students' perspectives when promoting school food?

**DO:**

- Invite participants to share with the whole group. Likely answers include:
  - › The right-column choices are more descriptive, use sensory words, use appealing description, create clear imagery, invite imagination, etc.
  - › It is important to remember the target audience because the products are trying to appeal and "sell" to their opinions; their likes and dislikes might be different than those of an adult.

**SAY:**

Now, turn to the *Matching* exercise. Put yourselves in your students' shoes: grades K–5 or 6–12. (Choose the age group served by your lunchroom.)

Use the boxed words to match catchy names to each food in the set.

**DO:**

- Allow participants to work. (1 minute) If they finish early, they can try the other age set, for fun. Circulate to provide assistance as needed.
- Invite one participant per group to share and explain a few of their answers. (1 minute)



## LESSON 4: Give Foods Catchy Names continued

### **SAY:**

Now let's discuss the follow-up questions.

- \* Which names are most appealing to each age group? Why?
- \* Which names could you use in your lunchrooms?

### **DO:**

- Allow participants to share with the whole group. Likely answers include:
  - › Appealing names are descriptive and evocative. Descriptive words make you hungry: crispy, savory, warm, spicy. Evocative words make you think fondly of other positive things, which you then associate with the food: holiday, Texas, American, fiesta, Green Lantern.
  - › Optional: Write the best (most popular, positive, and well-received) answers on large paper.

### **SAY:**

For our final activity, turn to the *Creative Design* activity, choosing the age group served by your lunchroom.

*Recommendation: Divide the questions among the participants/groups so they can each complete some of the top and bottom portions during the remaining time.*

### **DO:**

- Allow groups to work, stopping 1–2 minutes before the end of the workshop to allow time to share answers. Remind participants to move on to the bottom *Application* section before time runs out. Circulate to provide support.
- In the last 1–2 minutes, invite groups to share answers. Record their suggestions on large paper.

### **SAY:**

Thank you for contributing these great ideas. The imaginative, exciting, and tasty-sounding new names will increase the students' interest and confidence in the foods we serve, which will encourage them to select, eat, and enjoy these healthy foods.

## FOLLOW-UP

Display the large paper or groups' worksheets in a prominent place where they will prompt conversation, such as the walls or table of the staff area.

Use the follow-up questions as mealtime discussion prompts.



**Very effective training technique:**  
Use participants' answers (at least one per group) in your menu. Showing participants you value their ideas will give them increased confidence in themselves and interest in the workshop series.

# BOOSTER SHOT 4: Creative Food Name Labels



*This easy, fast decorating project will earn big dividends in the lunchroom! Students, especially developing readers, will feel more comfortable trying new and target foods.*

## MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- Daily lunch menu
- Scissors
- Adhesive Velcro connectors, adhesive magnets, drop-in name card holders, and/or tape
- Large envelope
- Computer-generated catchy food labels (your staff's ideas from Lesson 4 and those from **SmarterLunchrooms.org**)
  - printed in color or created by hand
  - laminated for durability

## ADVANCE PREPARATION

Choose where to display the labels: find clean, well-lit areas near the foods in the serving line, clearly visible by all students. Choose the magnet version of this project if you plan to stick the labels to metal surfaces, such as on the frame of the service line, appliances, or under the line counter/rail (for K–5). Choose the Velcro version to adhere food labels to glass and wood surfaces. Choose drop-in card holders if you will display names above the service counter.

Before the lesson, create catchy food labels, computer-generated if possible. Use clear, eye-catching fonts (at least size 36 font) and pictures or clip art. Use at least some of the names created by participants in the first part of this lesson. You can also download free examples from **SmarterLunchrooms.org**. Print the labels in color.

*Secondary option:* Create labels by hand using index cards, colored markers, and image cutouts.

Laminate the labels for durability.

### ➔ DO:

- Assemble the labels and the magnets, Velcro pieces, or drop-in label holders.
- Confirm you have access to the service line.

### 💬 SAY:

Welcome to the Booster Shot lesson! Earlier this month, you promoted target foods by giving them creative names. We can add further pizzazz by creating colorful, neat labels featuring the new names. Today we will make and place these labels. This will be another colorful, useful addition to our lunchroom décor.

Let's begin.



## BOOSTER SHOT 4: Creative Food Name Labels continued

### ➔ DO:

- Distribute the laminated sheets of labels to participants.

### 🗨 SAY:

Here are our new labels, many featuring the catchy names you invented at the last workshop. Let's talk about them for a minutes.

- \* What aspects of the labels will appeal to the students?
- \* How will adding these labels help us in the lunchroom?

### ➔ DO:

- Allow participants to share answers. (1–2 minutes) Possible answers include:
  - › Appeal: colorful, clear message; catchy art and names; something to look at while waiting in line
  - › Benefits for the lunchroom:
    - Increase students' interest and familiarity with the food, so participation will rise (less intimidated by not knowing what something is and being afraid to ask)
    - Educate them as to what is available, so they will move more quickly through the serving line

### 🗨 SAY:

Now we'll create and hang the labels.

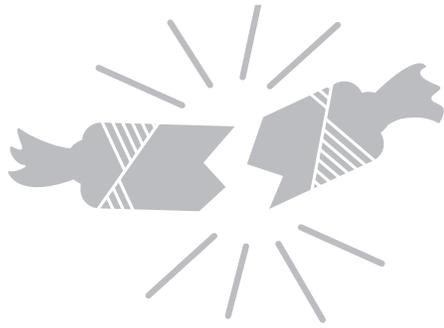
### ➔ DO:

- Distribute scissors and fasteners (adhesive magnets, adhesive Velcro pieces, or drop-in card holders). Direct participants to cut out each label carefully. Then, if you are using adhesive magnets or Velcro, direct them to place 1–3 fasteners on each label. Demonstrate. *(If using Velcro, make sure to use one texture for the labels; save the other texture for the service line surface.)*
- When the labels are ready, move as a group to the service line. Using the daily menu as a guide, choose the target food labels relevant to the next meal service. Place the labels in easily visible locations near the foods. *(If using Velcro, adhere the appropriate texture piece to the glass/wood surface, then attach the labels.)*
- Store unused labels in an envelope in a safe, convenient spot.

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## FOLLOW-UP

Designate a lunchroom staff member or other person (student, teacher, parent volunteer, etc.) to update the labels daily by selecting the appropriate choices from the labels envelope and placing them in the appropriate spots/holders. Encourage students to include these target foods in their reimbursable meals. Instruct servers and cashiers to refer to the labels to accustom students to looking for them each day.



## DECEMBER TRICK THE TREATS

**Objectives:** Use behavioral economics strategies to promote target foods and de-emphasize competitive foods. Encourage school-based stakeholders to celebrate achievements and holidays without incorporating desserts and other less-healthy treats.

Participants decorate and arrange lunchroom spaces to promote healthy foods over unhealthy seasonal treats. Participants are invited to act as ambassadors to other school groups, sharing ways to celebrate holidays and achievements without using foods (especially unhealthy foods). During the Booster Shot lesson, participants reflect upon which incentives best motivate them to go the extra mile.



## LESSON 5: Trick the Treats

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### MATERIALS

- Trainer’s Script
- Decorating supplies (prepared signs, floor decals, opaque cooler covers or paper, colorful markers, laminator)
- Menu board (create using poster-sized construction paper, art supplies, laminator, and dry-erase markers)
- Seasonal decorations, if desired
- Fasteners (tape, paper clips and string if hanging signs from the ceiling)
- Index cards featuring chosen intervention strategies
- FLYER: *Healthy Celebrations* (page 98)

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### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Choose intervention strategies from the bulleted lists on the following pages. Write each selected strategy on an index card. Secure the cards with a clip or rubber band.

Create any new signage needed, such as:

- Attractive, colorful reusable menu board
  - › Decorate poster-sized construction paper or a white board with photos, icons, or stickers featuring healthy foods, school spirit images, or seasonal themes; write “Today’s Specials” in colorful, clear large letters; laminate
  - › Create a similar “Tomorrow’s Specials” menu board to whet students’ appetite for the next day’s offerings; laminate
  - › Update daily with dry-erase markers
- “Don’t Forget Your Fruit!” signs for the frozen treats cooler
- Posters featuring seasonal characters who are:
  - › Eating healthy snacks
  - › Reminding students to eat their lunch first, save treats for later

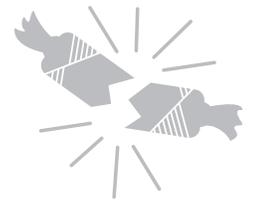
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### **SAY:**

This year, we have used Smarter Lunchrooms principles to promote healthy choices in the lunchroom.

This month, the lunchroom faces a challenge from seasonal treats and other competitive foods. Is it some combination of the cold weather, bulky clothing, a festive spirit, ever-present candy dishes, and

## LESSON 5: Trick the Treats continued



lots of “treat yourself!” messages that influence people to eat more candy, sugared beverages, desserts, and other treats this time of year? Scientists are still studying this question. Regardless of the exact cause, the effect is clear: people, students included, tend to indulge more in sweets and other less-healthy foods during the colder months.

This affects our lunchroom in many ways. When kids eat lots of sugary treats as part of classroom parties, food rewards, and candy sales, it affects their appetite and behavior, which in turn affects the lunchroom. Teachers report stories of students eating excess sweets and subsequently being hyperactive, unfocused, and jumpy; later (when they “sugar crash”), they appear tired and disengaged from learning. Worse, because they temporarily fill up on treats, they do not feel hungry for more nutritious foods at mealtimes, so they may skip meals. As a result, their bodies lack the nutrition needed to succeed at daily tasks.

Have you seen any examples of the “holiday sugar rush” in this lunchroom?

### ➔ DO:

- Allow participants to offer examples. (1 minute)

### 💬 SAY:

This year, we will use behavioral economics to reduce these seasonal disruptions as we Trick the Treats. We will promote target items this month, (healthier-choice a la carte items) and make less-healthy choices just a bit less visible or convenient, nudging students to make healthier choices without removing any options.

Previous workshops used many of these strategies to promote fruits and vegetables, so healthier snacks are the focus this month. However, use these strategies on other target foods when possible.

***To promote target items (low-sugar, low-fat, and/or low-sodium a la carte options, as well as fruits and vegetables), give them the edge:***

- \* Place them in the center, front, eye-level area of all coolers and displays
- \* Post eye-catching signs or food labels near the items
- \* Make sure they can be easily seen and reached by all students (especially K–5 students, who may have trouble reaching high foods)
- \* Place them in multiple locations along the service line
- \* Stock serving lines, coolers, and shelves 50% or more with target items
- \* Turn the snack window/line into the healthy-convenience line, featuring healthier snacks, handheld fruits, white milk, and bagged reimbursable meals; post an attractive, colorful menu board prominently nearby
- \* Advertise target items by listing them first on menus and announcements



## LESSON 5: Trick the Treats continued

### ***Conversely, use the inverse strategy to downplay less healthy choices without removing them:***

- \* Place less healthy a la carte items in the back of coolers and displays
- \* Move these items behind the counter, so students must ask a server to get them; if that is not possible, put them on the furthest rung or shelf
- \* Remove signage promoting these items

We will now use some of these strategies in the lunchroom. Let's decorate and Trick the Treats!

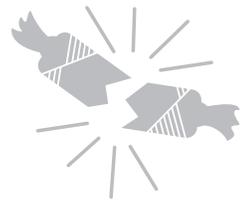
### **➔ DO:**

- Ask participants to form groups of 2–3. Invite groups to choose different areas of the lunchroom to embellish: one team may take the waiting area, another the dining area, etc. Distribute the strategy cards. Give groups the promotional materials, seasonal decorations, and fasteners needed to complete their tasks. (If decorations are area-specific, make sure to send them to the correct zone.)
- Direct groups to their chosen areas. Teams should complete tasks in this order:
  1. Remove signs promoting less-healthy (non-target) items. Remove out-of-date or unattractive decorations.
  2. Rearrange the space to promote the target items. This may mean moving displays or moving/restocking foods within the displays.
  3. Hang promotional items and seasonal decorations.
  4. Complete menus. Write in bold, clear, easily read letters with colored markers/chalk/etc. Update daily.
  5. Post index cards regarding new food placements near those stations, to remind staff members to maintain the changes.
- Circulate to assist with the decorating and interactions. Encourage pairs to work together and have fun! Make sure the new promotional items are clearly visible to students. Praise their efforts.

### **💬 SAY:**

Thank you for your enthusiasm and contributions today. We will also be sending teachers a list of suggestions for how to celebrate special occasions and reward students without incorporating food. This may include a short presentation at a teachers' staff meeting. You are invited to attend, in a speaking or supportive role, if you would like to come.

LESSON 5:  
Trick the Treats  
continued



## FOLLOW-UP

Check back every few days (or assign a staff worker to do this and report to you) to ensure that the interventions are being consistently maintained—signage is hung and updated, new food placements and stocking protocols are enacted, etc.

Practice what you preach. Do not include unhealthy treats in rewards and holiday celebrations at work. Include healthy foods and non-food rewards.

Distribute the **Healthy Celebrations flyer** to school administration and staff explaining the benefits of celebrating without unhealthy treats. Make a brief presentation at the next school staff meeting or distribute the flyers through the front office (in person is better). Include willing lunchroom staff members. Help interested school staff members to incorporate the recommendations in their classrooms.

Update the seasonal decorations every 1–3 months, as appropriate.

Learn more about the  
Healthy Food Choices  
in Schools Community  
of Practice on page 99.



## BOOSTER SHOT 5: The Incentives Game

*This game invites participants to reflect upon and share the incentives and rewards which inspire them to go to extra mile. Use these frank insights when celebrating successful lunchroom interventions, particularly during your end-of-year recognition event.*

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- *Incentives List* bundles (lists printed, cut into strips, and stored in envelopes or plastic sandwich baggies—one per participant) (page 100)
- Lined paper
- Pens/pencils
- Large paper, markers (optional)

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Prepare the incentives activity, one set per participant. Print the Incentives List 1-sided. Cut each list, one incentive per strip. Collect each set and store in an individual envelope or sandwich bag.

**NOTE:** Only include incentives you can feasibly arrange. Feel free to add more options of your own. Use colored or holiday-themed paper for extra pizzazz.

#### **SAY:**

Happy holidays!

Quick question: Who here has received a holiday gift that was utterly wrong for them—well-meant, but not what you liked at all? (Pause for a show of hands.) Who would like to share an example?

#### **DO:**

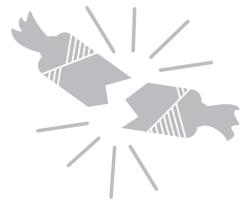
- Encourage participants to share. Keep the stories short and the mood lighthearted. (1 minute)

*Instructor's note: Prepare 1–2 humorous, relatable examples to share in case participants do not offer examples, such as an ugly/itchy sweater, tickets to a show you hated, or greatly outdated electronics.*

#### **SAY:**

Earlier this month, we discussed some negative consequences of snacking (particularly on sugary treats) in the classroom. This is true in other settings as well: using foods as **incentives** (to promote an action) or **rewards** (to celebrate an action) can lead to unhealthy habits and attitudes about food.

## BOOSTER SHOT 5: The Incentives Game continued



So what do we use instead? Today, in this season of gift-giving, we will reflect upon what rewards really ring our bells and which fall flat. Let's play a game.

### ➔ DO:

- Distribute the prepared **Incentives activity**, lined paper, and pens/pencils.

### 💬 SAY:

This game asks you to reflect upon what motivates you.

Open your baggie/envelope and read through the incentives written on the strips. They range from material rewards to recognition to professional training opportunities. A reward which might really excite one person could be a strong *disincentive* to somebody else—different strokes for different folks! There are no right or wrong answers, only what works for you.

Choose the 3–4 rewards which appeal **most** to you. Place them in one pile.

Place the 3–4 choices which appeal to you **least** in another pile.

### ➔ DO:

- Pause while participants work. (2–3 minutes) Circulate to answer questions and provide support. Participants who finish early may compare answers.

### 💬 SAY:

Now, using the lined paper, briefly write **why** those choices were most and least appealing to you. A few words or a sentence will suffice. Be honest; there are no right or wrong answers and these will not be collected.

### ➔ DO:

- Pause to let participants work (1 minute). Circulate to provide support.

### 💬 SAY:

That's a lot of food for thought! Share your picks and reasons with a coworker.

### ➔ DO:

- Pause while participants work. (1–2 minutes) Circulate to provide support.

### 💬 SAY:

Now let's poll the whole group. Raise your hand if you had any of the same answers, for either positive or negative rewards. (Pause for a show of hands.)

Did anyone have a same choice as their partner, but on different lists—you liked something they hated, or vice versa? (Pause for a show of hands.)



## BOOSTER SHOT 5: The Incentives Game continued

Which answers did you like or dislike most? Why do you think there are similarities or differences within this group?

➔ **DO:**

- Allow participants to volunteer answers, which will vary (2 minutes). Responses may include:
  - › Individuals have different personalities and preferences, so their likes and dislikes may vary widely.
  - › Some professions appeal to a certain personality type or skill set, so individuals' preferences among those groups may be similar.

🗨 **SAY:**

Lastly, let's choose the most popular incentives for this group. As a group, which rewards did you like most?

➔ **DO:**

Help the group reach consensus regarding the favorite 3–5 choices (1–2 minutes). Write these on large paper. Store these in a safe place.

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### FOLLOW-UP

Use these preferred incentives when planning staff holiday events, the year-end recognition and celebration party, and future Smarter Lunchrooms Makeovers.



## JANUARY MAKE MILK #1

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**Objectives:** Use signage and placement to promote milk (particularly white milk). Learn about and discuss a real-life Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover.

Participants promote milk (particularly white milk) as their lunchroom's preferred beverage using signage and special cues. During the Booster Shot lesson, participants read, reflect upon, and discuss a true-life Smarter Lunchrooms testimonial led by a lunchroom staff member.

*Note: These interventions can be adjusted to promote **all** milk varieties.*



## LESSON 6: Make Milk #1

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### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
  - SLIDE PRESENTATION: *No Time to Train: January (Make Milk #1)*
    - Projection capability, screen
  - Cartons from milk served in lunchroom, white and flavored varieties (empty)
  - Milk signage (prepared signs, floor decals, etc.) and decorations
  - Fasteners (tape, thumbtacks, string, etc.)
  - Chosen intervention strategies written on index cards
- 

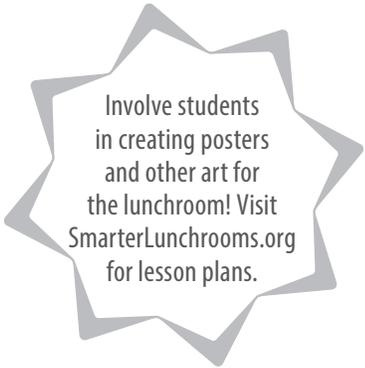
### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Choose whether you will promote all milk or primarily white milk. These strategies will work for either option. Review this lesson and adjust or annotate as needed.

Choose interventions. Gather or create signage, decorations, and props. Write each chosen strategy or task on an index card.

Signage and decorations:

- "Got Milk?" posters (and similar messages)
  - › Visit [gotmilk.com](http://gotmilk.com) or an online image search
  - › Request milk promotional items from your milk vendor
  - › Create posters featuring in-school celebrities enjoying milk
  - › Floor decals
  - › Cow-themed décor (fabric, statues, stickers, a service bell, etc.)
  - › Reminder cards for staff to place milk in new spots
- Other intervention strategies:
  - › Stock coolers at least 50% full of white milk
  - › Keep milk coolers clean and neatly organized
  - › Store white milk in the front row of all drink coolers, within easy reach
  - › If white and flavored milk are stored separately, keep the cooler with white milk colder and situated first in the serving line(s)
  - › Cover vending machines with posters, esp. those promoting white milk
  - › Include a picture of white milk on picture menus and on menu boards



Involve students  
in creating posters  
and other art for  
the lunchroom! Visit  
[SmarterLunchrooms.org](http://SmarterLunchrooms.org)  
for lesson plans.



LESSON 6:  
Make Milk #1  
continued



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➔ **DO:**

- Cue up the **No Time to Train: January (Make Milk #1) slide presentation.**
- Assemble the prepared decorations and fasteners.

■ **SHOW SLIDE: January (Make Milk #1), slide 1: title page**

💬 **SAY:**

During the first half of this school year, we have used the Smarter Lunchrooms principles Visibility, Convenience, and Suggestive Selling to promote healthy target foods in our lunchroom. This month, our target item is milk, specifically white milk.

➔ **DO:**

- Divide the participants into two groups, named A and B.

■ **SHOW SLIDE: January (Make Milk #1), slide 2: Warm-Up Challenge**

💬 **SAY:**

We'll start with two small-group questions. Group A, answer question A. Group B, answer question B. Take 1 minute to discuss together; then we'll share as a whole group. Try to come up with 2–4 reasons.

➔ **DO:**

- Circulate to assist as needed. (1 minute) Remind participants, if necessary, to discuss the question itself, not whether it is a valid question.
- Lead a quick review of answers. (1–2 minutes) Possible answers include:
  - › Question A:
    - Vitamins and minerals
    - Protein
    - Low-fat or nonfat
    - Tasty
    - Counts as part of reimbursable meal





## LESSON 6: Make Milk #1 continued

› Question B:

- **Nutritionally better**
  - › Less sugar (often 13g vs 23g, but check cartons from your lunchroom)
  - › Fewer calories, even with the small amount of fat (130 vs 150)
  - › Equal or more vitamins and minerals
- Also tastes good
- Variety (kids can mix it up, not choose flavored milk every time)

■ **SHOW SLIDE: January (Make Milk #1), slide 3: Let's compare**

🗨️ **SAY:**

Here's a close-up of cartons from our lunchroom, for comparison.

➡️ **DO:**

- Distribute real-life milk cartons for comparison. Point out the nutritional differences between the milk varieties.

■ **SHOW SLIDE: January (Make Milk #1), slide 4: Online resources**

🗨️ **SAY:**

We are going to promote milk, and white milk in particular, using Smarter Lunchrooms strategies. *We're not going to take flavored milk away. We're just giving white milk the edge.*

➡️ **DO:**

- Ask participants to form pairs. Hand out the chosen intervention strategy cards. Distribute the appropriate promotional materials, seasonal decorations, task cards, and fasteners.
- Circulate to assist with the decorating, moving of milk stock, and posting of reminders. Encourage pairs to work together and have fun! Make sure the milk is neatly placed and visible in its new locations and the promotional items are clearly visible to the students. Praise their efforts.
- At the end of the workshop time, gather participants for farewells and thanks.

---

### FOLLOW-UP

Check back every few days (or assign a staff worker to do this and report to you) to ensure that the interventions are being consistently maintained—signage remains visible, new milk placement and stocking protocols are enacted, etc.



## BOOSTER SHOT 6: True-Life Testimonial



*This activity empowers lunchroom teams to conceptualize and implement changes in the lunchroom. They learn about and discuss the testimonial of Sheila Hoyt, a kitchen manager who led a successful Makeover featuring Smarter Lunchrooms strategies.*

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- SLIDE PRESENTATION: *Sheila Hoyt Testimonial*
  - Projection capability, screen
- TESTIMONIAL: *Serving Up Health and Happiness/ Sheila's Secrets* (pages 101–103)
- Highlighters
- Pens/pencils
- Large paper, markers (one marker per participant)

#### ➔ DO:

- Cue up the **Sheila Hoyt Testimonial slide presentation**.
- Distribute paper and pens/pencils.

#### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Sheila Hoyt Testimonial, slide 1: title page

#### 💬 SAY:

Now that you've practiced implementing lunchroom changes to help students make healthier choices, it's time to set our sights on a higher goal: *designing* the changes. Today we'll study an awesome Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover designed and implemented by Sheila Hoyt, a cook manager in upstate New York. She made fun, effective, inexpensive changes to her lunchroom and staff routines that made a huge positive difference in students' choices, lunchroom efficiency, revenue, and communication between students and lunchroom staff. Today's presentation features her strategies and photos from her lunchroom.

#### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Testimonial, slide 2: Project specifications

#### 💬 SAY:

Sheila's kitchen served an elementary school and an intermediate school.

Pay special attention to the photos. Ask yourself: **How could we use this in our lunchroom?** You may jot down inspiring ideas, if desired. We'll discuss your ideas as a group after the presentation.





## BOOSTER SHOT 6: True-Life Testimonial continued

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Testimonial, slide 3: Goals**

#### ● **SAY:**

She wanted to increase students' selection and consumption of fruits, vegetables, and the new vegetable-based and healthier-choice entrées her system offered but which had failed to take off at that point. She also wanted to improve relationships between the lunchroom staff and the students, their families, and school staff. She felt these groups were really unaware of what her lunchroom had to offer and how they could help kids try and like school meals.

Lastly, she wanted to accomplish these goals without spending much money, decreasing revenue, or disrupting the lunchroom routine. Her budget was \$50.

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Testimonial, slide 4: Technique 1: Add color**

#### ● **SAY:**

She made the lunchroom look exciting and fun with color. She displayed foods on colorful trays and baskets and laid out portioned cups of fruits such as grapes and peaches in fun zigzag and checkerboard patterns. The contrasting colors looked appetizing and showed off the variety of offerings. She added seasonal décor where appropriate. The inviting, interesting decorations made students look forward to going to lunch, where they then took notice of the foods and wanted to try them. Sheila joked that they were no longer "on autopilot!"

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Testimonial, slide 5: Technique 2: Keep it new**

#### ● **SAY:**

Kids get bored with repetition, so Sheila did something new or special every day.

- \* Seasonal decorations
- \* Menu boards updated daily
- \* Special server days (featuring the principal, a special teacher, etc.)
- \* Feedback days when she and her staff went into the dining area to chat with students

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Testimonial, slide 6: Technique 3: Eye level = Visibility**

#### ● **SAY:**

She **placed** foods and signs where little kids could see them clearly. They often walked right past bulletin boards and menus mounted at an adult eye level, so she posted these signs down low on walls, on coolers, and even **under** the serving rail so the little ones could not miss them. She placed target items and white milk in the front of displays and coolers.

She **requested** nutritional posters from her food suppliers. The orange and green posters were free.



## BOOSTER SHOT 6: True-Life Testimonial continued



She **made** the tray-themed sign, updating it daily with the target entrée and sides. Students loved it! They saw a complete meal depicted, so they were more likely to order reimbursable meals.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Testimonial, slide 7: Technique 4: Whet their appetites

#### 🗨️ SAY:

Sheila noticed that when kids are put on the spot and are unprepared to answer, they default to their usual options. If her students didn't know the menu choices, they always went with the daily burger or chicken sandwich option. To prepare them to try new foods, she **advertised** these items with colorful, eye-catching signs including appetizing photos she took herself. She posted the signs both on service day and on the day before, to prepare the kids to try something new. *Note: She only made signs for the items she wanted to promote, not everything on the menu.*



### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Testimonial, slide 8: Technique 5: Offer healthy options

#### 🗨️ SAY:

Sheila went the extra mile and expanded her food options. She **surveyed** kids to see what they most wanted to see in the lunchroom, then **asked** her district supervisor and suppliers what they could do to help her offer the healthiest of these requests. She was given a 100% juice slushie machine as well as fresh, local produce, all for free.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Testimonial, slide 9: Technique 6: Ask for feedback

#### 🗨️ SAY:

To improve communication between her lunchroom team and the students (and their families), Sheila **took the first step**. She created an anonymous suggestion box for the lunchroom, circulated to talk to kids face-to-face, and made a meet-and-greet display for Back-to-School night. She got lots of fun ideas and positive feedback from these groups. She wasn't able to implement all of the suggestions, but she found that explaining nutrition guidelines to students dramatically increased their understanding of her situation and positive feelings about the lunches she served. And they loved her! **Of all of her changes, she was most proud of the bridges she built.**

Lastly, she advises that if your time is limited, focus your efforts on reaching the youngest students: "It pays off and grows for all the years they are in the school!"

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Testimonial, slide 10: Mission: Accomplished!

#### 🗨️ SAY:

Here is her lunchroom post-Makeover. How many interventions can you spot?





## BOOSTER SHOT 6: True-Life Testimonial continued

### ➔ DO:

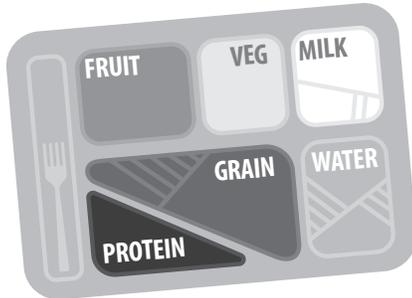
- Allow participants to study the photo, then lead a roundhouse discussion of their observations and reactions. Sample questions include:
    - › What interventions do you see?
    - › How do these exhibit Visibility, Convenience, Suggestive Selling, Enhanced Taste Expectations, and improved communication and rapport?
    - › Which ideas did you like best? How could you use or adapt them?
  - Record their observations and ideas on large paper. Hang in the staff area.
  - Thank participants for their contributions.
- 

### FOLLOW-UP

Distribute copies of the **testimonial Serving Up Health and Happiness/Sheila's Secrets** to participants to read at home. Make pens/pencils and highlighters available for them to take notes, if desired.

Leave additional copies in the staff area to inspire discussion. Hang blank large paper and markers on the wall or table of the staff area for staff members to write their favorite ideas from the article. Store these ideas for later workshops and interventions.

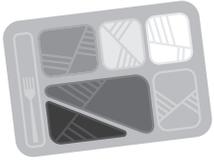




## FEBRUARY COMPLETE THE REIMBURSABLE MEAL

**Objective:** Use suggestive selling prompts to promote reimbursable meals.

Participants use suggestive selling prompts to encourage students to purchase complete reimbursable meals. They diagnose sample selections to determine which food items are needed to create a reimbursable meal. During the Booster Shot, lunchroom staff and students collaborate to give the lunchroom a festive new look and to build rapport.



## LESSON 7: Complete the Reimbursable Meal

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- WORKSHEET: *Complete the Reimbursable Meal* (pages 104–105)
- Lined paper
- Pens/pencils
- Large paper, markers
- 6 sample incomplete meals (using real food, food models, or photos/slides)

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Prepare six models of incomplete meals featuring items on the lunchroom menu, using either real foods or food models. Plate and store them for use during workshop, or photograph them and use the photos/slides during the workshop.

#### **SAY:**

This year, we have used suggestive selling to promote target foods in our lunchroom. This month, our target item is the reimbursable meal (RM).

As a warm-up, let's divide into two groups and ponder these questions:

- \* **Group A:** Why is it better for students to buy a reimbursable meal, also known as a "complete" meal, rather than individual a la carte items? Consider the diverse perspectives of the students, their parents, their teachers/administrators, and us in the lunchroom.
- \* **Group B:** What qualifies as a reimbursable meal? What are the guidelines?

#### **DO:**

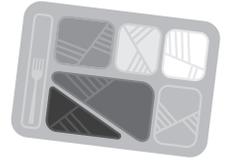
- Split participants into two equal groups. Give each group lined paper and pens/pencils for recording ideas. Let them discuss their assigned prompts (1 minute), then share their answers with the whole group (1 minute each). Confirm, correct, or embellish the answers, as needed. If desired, record correct answers on large paper where the group can see and refer to them.

Possible answers include:

**Group A:** Reimbursable meals (RMs) include complete nutrition, which is better for students' long-term health. RMs keep students fuller longer (rather than a short-term spike), so their focus, mood, behavior, and energy are improved for the rest of the school day, which is good for them and for the school staff. Their parents' money is spent on the healthy foods they want their children to eat. Lastly,



Collaborate with art, health, or photography teachers on a student-made lunchroom poster project—see [SmarterLunchrooms.org](http://SmarterLunchrooms.org) for lesson plans and advice for collaborating with teachers.



RMs are good for lunchrooms. They earn a federal subsidy (for qualifying students and schools), which helps lunchrooms financially. They are fast to serve (in grab-and-go situations) and fast to key in, which can mean smoother serving line operations and faster transaction times.

**Group B:** Reimbursable meals satisfy the USDA standards. They include three to five of the five meal elements: protein, grain, fruits and/or vegetables, and milk. At least one component must be a fruit or vegetable. Other requirements define foods' nutritional content, such as the inclusion of whole grains and limits on sugar and sodium content. Choices cannot repeat.

Source: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/faqs>

### **SAY:**

That was great information we should all know by heart.

When a student goes through our line with an incomplete meal on her (or his) tray, how can we encourage her to “make it a meal”? In the next activities, we’ll practice three important skills:

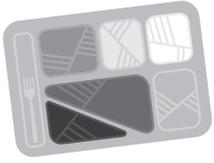
- \* Identifying incomplete meals
- \* Suggesting items to complete the meal (suggestive selling)
- \* Using great customer service to build rapport with students

### **DO:**

- Distribute the **Complete the Reimbursable Meal worksheet**. Instruct participants to complete *Part 1: Individual Practice*, naming the five meal components and identifying missing elements (if any) from the examples. They may work individually or in pairs, per the instructor’s discretion. (2 minutes) Circulate to provide support as needed.
- Review participants’ answers (2 minutes). Our answers are:
  - › Protein (meat, egg, beans/legumes, cheese, peanut butter, yogurt, meat substitute), dairy (milk), 2 fruits/vegetables, grain
  - › Ex. 1: 3/5 = incomplete, needs at least 1 fruit/vegetable
  - › Ex. 2: 3/5 = complete, but suggest milk + grain
  - › Ex. 3: 2/5 = incomplete, needs at least 1 fruit/vegetable, suggest adding milk
  - › Ex. 4: 1/5 = incomplete, suggest beans (protein) to make salad an entrée + milk, can also suggest another fruit/vegetable + grain
  - › Ex. 5: 3/5 = complete, but suggest milk + 1 fruit/vegetable
  - › Ex. 6: 2/5 = incomplete, needs at least 1 fruit/vegetable; only 1 grain can be part of a RM

### **SAY:**

Now we will practice this skill in person during *Part 2: Verbal Practice*. Please form pairs, then review the sample prompts on the second page of the worksheet.



## LESSON 7: Complete the Reimbursable Meal continued

For this activity, take turns playing the lunchroom server/cashier. The other partner will play the student/audience. The server/cashier will:

- \* View the tray or slide
- \* Evaluate which items (if any) are needed to form a reimbursable meal
- \* Decide if any other target foods can be included in that meal
- \* Use or adapt a verbal prompt to make a recommendation to the “student” partner

Alternate roles with each tray. (2 minutes)

You have three goals:

- \* *Great customer service: eye contact, friendly voice, relaxed posture, smile*
- \* *Quick, accurate understanding of the content of a qualifying RM*
- \* *Accurate, helpful suggestion of item(s) to include, using appropriate prompts*

### ➔ DO:

- Lay out or cue the 6 sample trays or photos/slides.
- Facilitate the transition as participants form pairs and scan the list of prompts.
- During the activity, circulate to provide support. Spend 15–20 seconds per example. Encourage participants to be relaxed and friendly. Many correct answers are possible.



### SAY:

Thank you for your enthusiasm and participation. Going forward, use prompts like these to encourage students to select, eat, and enjoy reimbursable meals.

---

## FOLLOW-UP

Post the warm-up answers in a prominent staff area. Post prompts from part 2 at registers and along the serving line.

Check in with staff daily at first, then weekly, to ensure that prompts and customer service techniques are implemented daily to encourage students to choose reimbursable meals (or assign this duty to the kitchen manager or other staff member). Give positive feedback and encouragement.

Lay out an “incomplete meal” sample tray (using real or model food) in the staff area once or twice per week as low-pressure “pop quizzes” for the staff.

# BOOSTER SHOT 7: Seasonal Decorating Party with Students\*

*\*student involvement is strongly encouraged but not required*



*This easy, fast decorating project lets staff members and students work together to add beauty, fun, and interest to the lunchroom. It helps develop friendly rapport and cooperation.*

## MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- Decorations and bulletin board supplies
  - seasonal, food-related, and/or school-spirit themed
- Fasteners (tape, pushpins, etc.)
- Name tags (if including students)

## ADVANCE PREPARATION

**At least two weeks before the booster shot lesson, coordinate the students' visit.** See the October Booster Shot for details. Suggestion: Invite the same students as before to further develop that relationship and put staff members at ease.

Before the party, gather or create the decorations and other supplies. Clear the lunchroom spaces (walls, bulletin boards, and ceiling tiles) to make room for decorations. Themes may include food, school spirit, or seasonal holidays, as well as any new signs the lunchroom needs (ex.: "Recycle Here ➡" or "Tomorrow's Special"). All signs should be neat, colorful, clean, and easy to read from 20+ feet away. Free and customizable sign designs are at [SmarterLunchrooms.org](http://SmarterLunchrooms.org). Laminate signs for durability.

### ➡ DO:

- Assemble the signs, decorations, and fasteners.
- Create name tags for all participants and students.
- Confirm you have access to all necessary lunchroom spaces (hallways/waiting area, service lines, dining area, bulletin boards and showcases, etc.).

### 🗨️ SAY: (begin with just staff members)

Welcome! Today we will update our lunchroom's look with fresh seasonal décor and eye-catching signs. The students will help us! Let's welcome them.

### ➡ DO:

- Invite the students to enter. Distribute name tags and renew introductions.



## BOOSTER SHOT 7: Seasonal Decorating Party with Students continued

### **SAY:**

Thank you for joining us again. Today, we'll add fun and color to the lunchroom with signs and other decorations. Please form pairs, one student with each staff member.

### **DO:**

- Facilitate pairing up and the renewal of introductions. Invite pairs to choose areas of the lunchroom to embellish. Distribute the corresponding decorations and fasteners.
- Circulate to assist with the decorating and interactions. Encourage pairs to work together and have fun! Make sure signs are clearly visible. Praise their efforts.
- At the end of the workshop time, gather participants for farewells and thanks.

### **SAY:**

Thank you all for being so friendly and creative. We want students and staff alike to feel welcome and comfortable here. Enjoy the spaces you helped create and say hello when you see each other in the lunchroom. We all work hard here at [school name] and appreciation and friendliness can go a long way toward brightening everyone's day.

We are working this year to improve the lunchroom and the experiences of both staff members and students. Sincere, helpful feedback is always welcome. I hope we can collaborate on other changes and celebrations in the future.

---

## FOLLOW-UP

Check back with staff members about their reactions to working with the students. Post discussion questions in the staff area. Sample questions include:

- How was this interaction different than the first? How is the relationship developing?
- What good ideas did the students offer for the decorations?
- What future decorations or changes would you like to see?

Update the seasonal decorations every 1–3 months, as appropriate.



## MARCH

# STUDENT RAPPORT ROLE PLAY

**Objective:** Use conflict resolution strategies to improve rapport between staff members and students.

Participants analyze sample interactions, then use positive communication and conflict resolution strategies to improve staff-student relations. Creative role play (with optional student participation during the Booster Shot lesson) leads to open discussion and problem-solving.



## LESSON 8: Student Rapport Role Play

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### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- SCRIPT: *Student Rapport Role Play* (pages 106-112)
  - Skit 1 (1A + 1B)
  - Skit 2, 3, or 4 (both A and B versions)
- Lunchroom props (table to act as a service counter, optional trays, food props, aprons, etc.)
- Large paper, markers (optional)

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### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Read **all four skits**. Select skit 1 plus whichever skit (2, 3, or 4) addresses a topic of most importance to your lunchroom staff. Save the remaining skits for the Booster Shot lesson, or create new skits to address your lunchroom's particular needs. Make copies of each skit for **each participant plus the workshop leader** (who can also participate in the skits, if desired).

- **Skit 1:** student makes negative comments about school food
- **Skit 2:** student does not order a complete reimbursable meal
- **Skit 3:** FSD needs to increase sales of a target entrée
- **Skit 4:** school staff member influences students' choices and comfort level

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Always print/create BOTH versions of the skit—version A (a positive, calm, constructive way of responding to the situation) and version B (a negative, snappish, destructive way of responding to the situation). When writing your own skits (if applicable), use realistic situations and plausible dialogue to show the fine line between escalating a negative situation and turning it into an opportunity for growth and understanding (and food sales).*

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### ➔ DO:

- Set up the lunchroom props. At a minimum, you'll need a table to act as a counter, with designated areas for food service and register. Further props generate interest, but are not strictly necessary.
- Assemble the pre-selected skits (skit 1 + **either** skit 2, 3, **or** 4). See the italicized comments above for details. Lay out the corresponding props.

### 💬 SAY:

This month, we'll build on the positive communication cues learned in the October workshop by taking them a step further—to **conflict resolution**.

School is a stressful environment for adults and students. This can sometimes lead them to be grumpy, rude, and even hostile.

- \* Have you experienced this? What happened? How did you respond?

## LESSON 8: Student Rapport Role Play continued



### ➔ DO:

- Allow participants to respond. (1–2 minutes)
  - › If a participant's response to a student's negativity or criticism is positive, praise him/her and point out how the staff could use that strategy also.
  - › If the response is dismissive or hostile, observe that this reaction is natural (we are all human) but this workshop will demonstrate strategies for turning the situation into a positive one for both parties. Be supportive and compassionate and thank them for sharing.

### 💬 SAY:

You are not alone. Every day, students struggle with many challenges: difficulty with school work, trouble fitting in, bullying, family troubles, poverty, and even crisis situations such as abuse, homelessness, and hunger. We may never know the details, but we can expect that for at least a few kids each day, this stress may manifest in lashing out, even at those of us who are not the cause of their situation. ***Our challenge is: what do we do about it when it does happen? Do we make it worse, ignore it, or make it better?***

We cannot control these outside influences on our students, but we can control how we respond to them—and we can even turn these potential conflicts into opportunities to build bridges between us and the students. ***Our compassionate responses could be the first kind words a troubled or stressed student hears that day.*** By remaining calm and positive, we control the situation. (As a bonus, we can also improve our lunchroom's atmosphere, efficiency, and bottom line.)

### ➔ DO:

- Distribute Skit A (versions A and B) to participants.

### 💬 SAY:

In today's activity, we will use conflict resolution strategies to promote positive relationships between students and lunchroom staff. In particular, we will show how different responses to comments can improve or worsen situations.

We will view two versions of the same situation. We'll watch one version, discuss it briefly, then watch another version of the scene and discuss it. We'll look for ways that the lunchroom staff members' words and actions influence the outcomes. Lastly, we'll work on ways to incorporate helpful ideas into our own practices.

### ➔ DO:

- Ask for volunteers to read for the first skit (**Skit 1**). The same people can play the roles in both versions, or you can choose two sets for the two versions.
- Ask the volunteers go to the "counter/table" area, choose roles, and read the lines in character. ***Read VERSION B first (the negative scenario).***





## LESSON 8: Student Rapport Role Play continued

### **SAY:**

Let's briefly discuss what we just saw:

- \* Have any of you experienced this situation?
- \* What long-term effects could lots of interactions like this have on the lunchroom?
- \* What about on the students? (Consider both the students involved and those watching or who might hear about this afterward.) Whose side would they take, and why?

### **DO:**

- Encourage participants to point out **words, actions/gestures, and inactions** which made the situation worse (or at least, not any better). (1 minute) Answers may include:
  - \* Being impatient, not offering options ("cornering" the student)
  - \* Not starting with a friendly greeting
- Then ask volunteers (the same or a new set) to return to the counter, choose roles, and read the lines in character. **Read VERSION A (the positive scenario).**

### **SAY:**

Now let's discuss the second version (version A):

- \* The student's initial attitude and words were the same, but the staff greeting and response differed between the two versions. How did they differ?
- \* How did different staff actions change the results of the order?
- \* What could be the long-term results of each scenario for the lunchroom?
- \* Which is better, and why?

### **DO:**

- Allow participants to point out the positive aspects of what they saw in the skit, including *words, actions/gestures, and inactions* which made the situation better. (1–2 minutes) Answers may include:
  - › Friendly greeting, smile
  - › Offering options
  - › Remaining friendly and calm

### **SAY:**

This skit showed how **the adult controls the situation**. It is empowering to realize that the **students are not directing the interaction, even if they are rude or provocative**.

In today's second skit, please focus on the ways the adult can **de-escalate a conflict** situation. The goal of each student interaction is to build a harmonious rapport and have a friendly, efficient lunchroom service. **It is not to "win." Nobody "wins" by "beating" a student in an argument, because bad feelings remain and spread.**

## LESSON 8: Student Rapport Role Play continued



### ➔ DO:

- Distribute the second chosen skit (**skit 2, 3, or 4**) to each participant. Repeat the activity, holding all discussion until the end. Budget the remaining time so the final “challenge” question is addressed as a “food for thought” closing idea.
  - › Participants read/act out version B (negative version)
  - › Participants read/act out version A (positive version)
  - › Discussion:
    - The student’s initial attitude and words were the same, but the staff greeting and response differed between the two versions. How did they differ?
    - How did different staff actions change the results of the meal order?
    - What could be the long-term results of each scenario for the lunchroom?
    - Which is better, and why?
    - **Challenge: How can lunchroom staff members use these strategies in their own interactions with students?**
- After the discussion, thank participants for their acting and reflective comments.

---

### FOLLOW-UP

Post other follow-up discussion questions from the list below. **Choose a new question every 2–3 days.** Check back with the staff regarding their responses, individually or as a group.

- How have you been able to use the conflict resolution strategies with students recently?
- Has focusing on being compassionate even in the face of rudeness given you some insight into students’ situations?
- What emotions have you observed on our students’ faces today or recently? What might be going on behind-the-scenes with them which could spill over into their interactions with us?
- How can we help our students feel welcome and safe in our lunchroom? What can we say or do to demonstrate that we care for them?
- Please share an example of how you turned a potentially ugly or negative interaction with a student into a positive one.

Food for thought: Your compassionate words or friendly greeting may be the first kind thing each student has heard today. Be a hero to our kids.





## BOOSTER SHOT 8: Student Rapport Role Play #2

*with optional student participation*

*This workshop enables lunchroom service teams to practice conflict resolution in staff-student interactions. Participants confront, analyze, problem-solve, and discuss two common lunchroom scenarios, then use those strategies to ameliorate potential conflicts in their own lunchrooms.*

*For added authenticity and straight-from-the-horse's-mouth perspective, invite a few students to join you for this workshop. Guidelines for recruiting appropriate students are addressed in the October Booster Shot lesson. Consider inviting the same students back, as the lunchroom staff may be more familiar and comfortable with them than with new students. If you choose to involve students, **prepare** them for the workshop ahead of time. Hold a short meeting to explain how the skits and discussion will work, perhaps sharing the skit A example, so the Booster Shot workshop can begin promptly with everyone on the same page.*

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- SCRIPTS: *Student Rapport Role Play* (pages 106-112)
  - **Choose 2 scenarios** from Skits 2, 3, and 4 (both A and B versions)—whichever skits were not used in the first workshop—or make your own script using scenarios relevant to the lunchroom's needs
- Lunchroom props (table to act as a service counter, optional trays, food props, aprons, etc.)
- Name tags (if students are invited)

#### ➔ DO:

- Before the lesson, create name tags (if students will join the workshop).
- Make sufficient copies of the remaining two skit topics. Assemble the props.

#### 💬 SAY: (to lunchroom staff and students):

Welcome back, everyone. This month's focus is turning negative interactions into positive ones by being calm and compassionate. Today we'll view and discuss two more common lunchroom situations. We'll see two versions of each scenario and discuss how subtle differences in **our reactions, attitude, tone of voice, and body language** can create dramatically different outcomes with long-lasting positive or negative effects on all parties.

BOOSTER SHOT 8:  
Student Rapport Role Play #2  
continued



➔ **DO:**

- Distribute the name tags. Renew introductions.
- Divide the participants into two or four teams, depending on total numbers.
  - › If there are eight or fewer participants, create two teams; each team will perform both versions (A and B) of their scenario
  - › If there are nine or more participants, create four teams; each team will perform one version of one scenario
- Distribute the scripts accordingly.

💬 **SAY:**

Let's begin. As a team, quickly choose parts and read through your version(s) of your scenario. You'll have a couple of minutes to prepare, then we'll share with the group. You can use the props to help you act out the scene. Don't be nervous! We are a welcoming audience and the point of the skits is the discussion they inspire, not the acting!

During your performance, you may read your lines directly off the scripts (no need to memorize), but try to be expressive in your tone of voice and body language. We will view both versions, then discuss the differences we saw.

➔ **DO:**

- Facilitate the rest of the workshop. Circulate to assist groups, including jumping in to read a role if needed. Keep interactions light-hearted and fun. Manage the remaining workshop time.
  - › Practice/organization (1–2 minutes)
  - › First skit performances (version B, then version A) (1 minute)
  - › Discussion (2–3 minutes)
  - › Second skit performances (version B, then version A) (1 minute)
  - › Discussion (2–3 minutes)
- Discussion questions:
  - › What long-term effects could lots of interactions like this have on the lunchroom? On staff-student relations?
  - › What emotions were demonstrated by the student(s)? What was going on behind-the-scenes for the students or adults that added stress to the situation?
  - › The student's initial attitude and words were the same, but the staff greeting and response differed between the two versions. How did they differ?
  - › How did different staff actions change the results?
  - › Which response is better, and why?



## BOOSTER SHOT 8: Student Rapport Role Play #2 continued

Focus the discussions on the positive communication strategies. Encourage each participant to comment at least once.

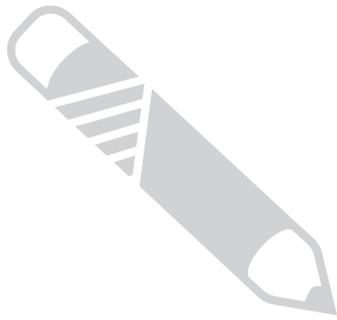
At the end of the workshop, thank the staff and students for participating. Encourage them to use these conflict resolution strategies both in the lunchroom and in their daily interactions to increase understanding and positive communication between individuals and groups.

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### FOLLOW-UP

As before, post follow-up discussion/food-for-thought questions for the staff. **Choose a new question every 2–3 days.** (These questions echo the ones from the main lesson.)

- How did the students' responses to the scenarios match our own? How were they different? What could this mean for our real-life interactions in the lunchroom?
- What emotions have you observed on our students' faces today or recently? What might be going on behind-the-scenes with them which could spill over into their interactions with us?
- How can we help our students feel welcome and safe in our lunchroom? What can we say or do to demonstrate that we care for them?
- Food for thought: Your compassionate words or friendly greeting may be the first kind thing each student has heard today. Be a hero to our kids.
- Please share an example of how you turned a potentially negative interaction with a student into a positive one.



## APRIL

# DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

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**Objective:** Understand the uses of various lunchroom data collection techniques. Practice tray waste data collection.

Participants learn why research methodologies and data management are keystones of a Smarter Lunchroom Makeover and how various lunchroom data collection techniques show progress toward lunchroom goals. They then practice analyzing tray waste examples from photographs (main lesson) and in person (Booster Shot).



# LESSON 9: Data Collection Techniques

## MATERIALS

- Trainer’s Script
- SLIDE PRESENTATION: *No Time to Train: April (Data)*
  - Projection capability, screen
- WORKSHEET: *Tray Waste Data Entry Form* (page 113)
- Pencils/Pens

### ➔ DO:

- Cue up the **No Time to Train: April (Data) Slide presentation.**

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: April (Data), slide 1: title page

### 🗨 SAY:

The words “**research**” and “**data**” often create uneasiness in newcomers to the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement. That fear is misplaced—these *valuable tools* can maximize the effectiveness of our efforts in the lunchroom. Best of all, they are *straightforward* and even easy to implement. This month we *tear down the hype* and see **why** and **how** to add a new data collection technique to our Smarter Lunchrooms toolkit.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 2: What is “data”?

### 🗨 SAY:

In simple terms, **research methods** means making sure our interventions are well-documented, consistently maintained, and able to be replicated. **Data management** means keeping careful, timely records so our before-and-after comparisons show valid results, which we can then use to make the best choices for future changes.

In a practical sense, **Data is proof** that our changes made a difference.

### ■ SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 3: What does proof look like?

### 🗨 SAY:

We use data to measure changes in overall participation, consumption of target foods, food waste (food students select but throw away), and the proportion of reimbursable meals versus competitive foods sold.

Knowing precisely how our environmental changes affect these numbers helps us make informed choices about future changes. It also gives us success stories to share with families, administration, and each other.





■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 4: How do we generate this proof?**

● **SAY:**

By comparing records from **before and after** we make a change to the lunchroom environment, we can calculate changes in the amount and types of foods sold in the lunchroom as a result of the interventions. Because sales, production, and tray waste records are the most commonly used data tools, we'll focus on them.

Records can be collected on paper or computer format, but they need to be entered into a **computer spreadsheet** to more easily compare the numbers.

For example, if production records show we need to order 10% more salad mix after we reposition the salad bar and add colorful utensils, we can reasonably assume that the changes caused a 10% increase in salad sales. Similarly, if our sales records show a 5% increase in reimbursable meal sales after the serving staff starts prompting students to include sides and milk with their a la carte entrées, we can reasonably assume the prompts influenced the students to start buying whole meals.

■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 5: Tray Waste Records**

● **SAY:**

Tray waste is the best way to know what kids actually eat. It means recording what percentage of selected food gets thrown away, which then lets us calculate what was eaten. **It is the only way to know whether our efforts to encourage kids to select more target foods result in them actually eating them.**

Don't be intimidated or grossed out; this is actually a straightforward process that yields incredibly useful information. It can be done in person in real time or by taking photos and evaluating them later. There is even a Smartphone app for this, which is really popular when students help with the data collection! Results are then entered into a computer spreadsheet for analysis. We will practice using the photo method today.

■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 6: Overview**

● **SAY:**

We'll use the B.E.N. Center's quarter-estimate system. Basically, tray waste measures mean **visually estimating** and recording what **remains** on the tray (**wasted food**) in order to then calculate what was eaten. It helps us determine what percentage of selected food made it into the students.

The process:

- \* Tray wastes days: 2–3 days before and 2–3 days after changes are made
- \* Need 150–200 trays from throughout the day
- \* Weigh full servings of each food offered that day (so we don't have to measure food from the trays themselves!)
- \* During lunch service, set up a work station for measuring tray waste in real time, or photograph trays for evaluation later





## LESSON 9: Data Collection Techniques continued

- \* Look at tray, visually estimate what foods were selected and what **remains** (how much was **wasted**): none,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ , or all of it
  - Enter 0 when none was wasted
  - Enter 1 when  $\frac{1}{4}$  was wasted
  - Enter 2 when  $\frac{1}{2}$  was wasted
  - Enter 3 when  $\frac{3}{4}$  was wasted
  - Enter 4 when all was wasted
- \* Record that number on the data collection sheet
- \* Enter handwritten records into computer spreadsheet later

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 7: Tray Waste Data Entry Form**

#### 🗨️ **SAY:**

Here is a sample data sheet, once it's filled in and entered into a spreadsheet.

Since tray waste data is so important for decreasing waste and increasing consumption, we will now practice evaluating some sample trays.

#### ➔ **DO:**

- Point out the fields for data entry on the form and slide:
  - › Researcher name, affiliation
  - › Location (school)
  - › Food items offered & initial weights (average serving weight)
  - › Date and lunch period
  - › Tray numbers across the top
  - › Wasted food (# of quarters remaining)
    - Write 0-1-2-3-4 in real time and convert to 0-.25-.5-.75-1 later
    - *Important: DO NOT enter "0" in empty fields. ONLY enter "0" if an item was selected and completely consumed ("0 quarters wasted")*

#### 🗨️ **SAY:**

Whoops! Double-check data entry sheets afterward. Can you spot the entry errors in trays 6, 10, and 11? What should be done to "clean" this data? (Pause)

Answer: There are "3"s. These should be converted to quarters ➡ .75.

Remember to carefully enter the data in a spreadsheet afterward. Check for typos and errors. Fix them where they occur.



LESSON 9:  
Data Collection Techniques  
continued



➔ **DO:**

- Distribute **Tray Waste Data Entry forms** and pens/pencils.

💬 **SAY:**

Use your **Tray Waste Data Entry** form to evaluate what was **wasted** on each of the following sample trays.

■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 8: Sample tray 1**

💬 **SAY:**

What amount was wasted of each of the selected foods? Record your observations on the Tray 1 column of your sheet. (30 seconds)

■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 9: Sample tray 1 answers**

💬 **SAY:**

There is about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the soup and sandwich left, so mark a "1" for  $\frac{1}{4}$  for each of those items in the Tray 1 column. Liquids are trickier, but there looks to be about  $\frac{1}{4}$  milk wasted and no juice wasted; write "1" for milk and "0" for juice.

■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 10: Sample tray 1 things to note**

💬 **SAY:**

This tray demonstrates that photographs can be harder to gauge than real-life trays. However, photographs are faster, especially if you only have one person doing data collection. Do your best.

■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 11: Sample tray 2**

💬 **SAY:**

What amount was wasted of the selected foods? Record your observations on the tray 2 column of your sheet. (30 seconds)

■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 12: Sample tray 2 answers**

💬 **SAY:**

None (or virtually none) of the soup and sandwich is left, so mark a "0" for  $\frac{0}{4}$  for each of those items in the Tray 2 column. It looks like the milk is gone and the juice was not opened, so write "0" for milk and "4" for juice. There are a few fruit snacks scattered on the tray and perhaps more in the bag, so mark "1."

■ **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 13: Sample tray 2 things to note**





## LESSON 9: Data Collection Techniques continued

 **SAY:**

Use clues such as wrappers, cartons, crumbs, puddles, and even grease and moisture spots to determine what might items have been fully consumed. Compare remains to a full serving size and estimate to the nearest  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

 **SHOW SLIDE: Data, slide 14: online resources**

 **SAY:**

More tray waste training videos can be found online at [SmarterLunchrooms.org](https://www.SmarterLunchrooms.org).

Please write your name on your sheet and pass it to me. We'll re-use these worksheets during this month's Booster Shot.

 **DO:**

- Collect forms, making sure they include names. Store securely for later use.

 **SAY:**

Thanks for trying this out today. This sort of data can help us learn even more about how our efforts are improving the lunchroom. Do you have any final questions or thoughts about this?

 **DO:**

- Use any remaining time to facilitate a group discussion about incorporating tray waste data collection into future interventions/changes in the lunchroom.

---

### FOLLOW-UP

Tray waste training videos are available at [SmarterLunchrooms.org](https://www.SmarterLunchrooms.org). Share these with the staff using an emailed link or by showing them during a staff meal or break time.

## BOOSTER SHOT 9: Tray Waste Practice



*This workshop gives hands-on experience in real-time tray waste data collection. If you plan to incorporate student help in data collection, consider inviting students to participate in this lesson alongside lunchroom staff, or hold an identical lesson with students at another time. Invite the same students as in other staff-student workshops from this series, or expand to include new students. Resources for recruiting and incorporating students appear on [SmarterLunchrooms.org](https://www.smarterlunchrooms.org), as well as in the B.E.N. Center's lesson plans for integrating lunchroom action research into the classroom.*

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- WORKSHEET: *Tray Waste Data Entry Form* (page 113, or re-use forms from part 1)
- Pens/paper
- Clipboards (recommended)
- Work table
- Sample food portions (real or food models)
- 4+ sample trays (using actual meal remains or food models)
- **Or** Tray Waste Smartphone application, pre-loaded onto devices for each participant (contact [ben@cornell.edu](mailto:ben@cornell.edu) for details)

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Before the training session, create four sample trays with partially eaten foods or preserve four actual trays from the previous lunch period. Use the menu items listed on the Tray Waste Data Entry form. Arrange the trays in a row on a table or on separate tables. If trays are not a feasible option in the teaching space, create them ahead of time and take pictures, then present the slides during this activity. Label the sample trays #3-6.

#### **SAY:**

Today we will repeat the tray waste data collection activity using real trays. You'll see they are much easier to estimate in real life than from photographs.

#### **DO:**

- Return the **Tray Waste Data Entry Forms** from the first part of this workshop, or distribute new forms. Distribute writing utensils. Review the instructions for using the form. Answer participants' questions (if any) regarding the form.





## BOOSTER SHOT 9: Tray Waste Practice continued

### **SAY:**

There are four sample trays labeled #3-6. Examine these trays and record your observations on the data entry form. Go in any order, making sure to match your observations with the numbered columns on the form. Spend 15-30 seconds per tray.

Use the same quarter-method as last time, recording how much **remains** on the tray (how much was **wasted**):

- \* Enter 0 when none was wasted
- \* Enter 1 when  $\frac{1}{4}$  was wasted
- \* Enter 2 when  $\frac{1}{2}$  was wasted
- \* Enter 3 when  $\frac{3}{4}$  was wasted
- \* Enter 4 when all was wasted

### **DO:**

- Allow participants to observe and record the trays (2-3 minutes, depending on the number of participants and the traffic flow).
- Direct participants to compare answers with neighbors after returning to their seats. Then ask for volunteers and compare as a whole group (**Think-Pair-Share** activity). Resolve any discrepancies.

---

## FOLLOW-UP

Once or twice per week, leave a sample tray (using samples or real food) or a photograph of a sample tray in the staff break space, along with a Tray Waste Data Collection form. Ask participants to visually estimate amounts of food remaining/wasted. Ask them to compare answers, with the goal being to standardize participants' visual estimations before using this data collection method in the lunchroom.



MAY

## SEE WITH FRESH EYES (DIAGNOSE THE LUNCHROOM)

**Objective:** Use Smarter Lunchrooms tools to diagnose lunchroom spaces and prescribe Smarter Lunchrooms interventions.

Participants use Smarter Lunchroom tools to diagnose lunchroom spaces (the first step of the D.P.I.E.\* process) and suggest possible intervention strategies. In the first workshop, they diagnose sample lunchrooms; in the Booster Shot, they examine and reflect upon their own lunchroom.

*\*Diagnose, Prescribe, Implement, Evaluate*



## LESSON 10: See with Fresh Eyes (Diagnose the Lunchroom)

---

### MATERIALS

- Trainer’s Script
  - SLIDE PRESENTATION: *No Time to Train: May (Diagnose Your Lunchroom)*
    - Projection capability, screen
  - WORKSHEET: *Smarter Lunchrooms Case Studies* (pages 114–115)
  - Pencils/Pens
  - Large paper, markers, tape
  - TESTIMONIAL: *Serving Up Health and Happiness/ Sheila’s Secrets* (pages 101–103)
- 

#### ➔ DO:

- Cue the **No Time to Train: May (Diagnose Your Lunchroom) slide presentation**. Distribute the **Smarter Lunchrooms Case Studies worksheet** and pens/pencils.

#### ■ SHOW SLIDE: **May (Diagnose Your Lunchroom), slide 1: title page**

#### 🗨 SAY:

This year, we’ve studied and practiced ways to use the Smarter Lunchrooms principles Visibility, Convenience, and Suggestive Selling to nudge our students to take, eat, and enjoy healthy food options in the lunchroom.

Now let’s practice using these interventions in real lunchrooms. The following slides show areas of real lunchrooms. Study each collection of photographs and determine 2–3 ways in which the lunchrooms could be improved to nudge students to *select, eat, and enjoy more fruits, vegetables, white milk, healthier entrées, and reimbursable meals*. List your suggestions on the **Smarter Lunchrooms Case Studies worksheet**. Then write one or more intervention strategies to address each area. We will discuss the answers as a group.

#### ■ SHOW SLIDE: **Diagnose Your Lunchroom, slides 2–3: Example 1**

#### 🗨 SAY:

Study these serving areas for fruit, snacks, and milk. What are some areas for improvement? Which intervention strategies do you recommend?

#### ➔ DO:

- Allow participants to study the slides and jot down answers. Then let participants share answers with the group. (2–3 minutes total) Possible answers include:
  - › Fruit is at the end of the serving line, messy/unattractive/empty serving container
    - Place fruit in multiple convenient and prominent locations along the serving line, use attractive and neat containers and signage

## See with Fresh Eyes (Diagnose the Lunchroom) continued



- › Trays in the cooler look empty, hard to reach/inconvenient
  - Stock ample supply of target foods, make foods visible by tilting trays or using signage, direct traffic flow to go by the cooler
- › Flavored milks and snacks are right by the point of sale
  - Place fruits/vegetables and white milk by the point of sale
- › Milk coolers overwhelmingly feature chocolate milk, look messy
  - Stock 50% white milk, place white milk in front, keep coolers neat and easy to reach into, use outer surfaces for signage

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Diagnose Your Lunchroom, slides 4–5: Example 2**

#### 🗨️ **SAY:**

Study these serving lines. What are some areas for improvement? Which intervention strategies do you recommend?

#### ➡️ **DO:**

- Allow participants to study the slides and jot down answers. Then, let participants share answers with the group. (2-3 minutes total) Possible answers include:
  - › Lots of empty space in serving areas and counters
    - Add signage promoting target items
  - › Fruit may be hard to reach under sneeze guard
    - Offer tongs under the guard or wrapped fruit outside the guard
  - › Snacks are right by the point of sale
    - Place fruits/vegetables and white milk by the point of sale
  - › Milk coolers look empty and messy
    - Stock 50% white milk, place white milk in front, keep coolers neat and full

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Diagnose Your Lunchroom, slides 6–7: Example 3**

#### 🗨️ **SAY:**

Study these entrances and dining spaces. What are some areas for improvement? Which intervention strategies do you recommend?

#### ➡️ **DO:**

- Allow participants to study the slides and jot down answers. Then, let participants share answers with the group. (2–3 minutes total) Possible answers include:



## LESSON 10:

# See with Fresh Eyes (Diagnose the Lunchroom) continued

- › Bare, sterile, unwelcoming entrances; no hint of what foods are available
  - Use wall and CCTV spaces to promote target items: menu, posters/signage, “today’s specials,” “tomorrow’s specials,” etc.
- › Lots of empty, unutilized wall space
  - Use the space! (as above)
- › Garbage very prominent and in the way
  - Move these items or direct traffic flow away from unsightly or strong-smelling areas such as garbage, dishwashing, lost and found, etc.

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Diagnose Your Lunchroom, slide 8: YOUR Lunchroom**

#### 🗣️ **SAY:**

Now consider *our own* lunchroom(s). What are some areas for improvement?

Which changes could we implement to improve our own spaces?

#### ➡️ **DO:**

- Lead group discussion until time has elapsed. Copy the above questions on large paper, leaving room for answers. Post in a prominent place in the staff area, with markers. Encourage each staff member to write at least two responses on the large paper.
- Collect the Smarter Lunchrooms Case Studies worksheets for use during the Booster Shot.

### ■ **SHOW SLIDE: Diagnose Your Lunchroom, slide 9: online resources**

For more information on the D.P.I.E. process, visit [SmarterLunchrooms.org](https://SmarterLunchrooms.org).

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#### **FOLLOW-UP:**

Check regularly to see if participants are adding new ideas to the wall activity. Praise and thank those who post ideas. Leave extra copies of the Case Studies worksheet for inspiration.

Save the wall brainstorming for use during the Booster Shot.

Distribute copies of **Serving Up Health and Happiness**, for inspiration. (This testimonial, featured in the January Booster Shot, bears repeating, especially in light of the May and June topics.)

## BOOSTER SHOT 10: Case Your Space



*Participants use their Smarter Lunchrooms diagnostic and problem-solving skills to identify areas of opportunity in their own lunchroom. It is the first step to involving them in planning the next Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover, as opposed to just implementing and maintaining one.*

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- Prepared photos or slides featuring your lunchroom spaces, grouped
  - Projection capability, screen (if needed)
- WORKSHEET: *Smarter Lunchrooms Case Studies* (pages 114–115, or re-use forms from Part 1)
- Large paper featuring discussion questions from part 1 of this workshop, tape
- Pens/Pencils

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Take multiple photographs of the lunchroom during setup, service, and cleanup. Take images of the space (walls, surfaces, glass, displays, floor, tables, garbage/recycling/lost and found area, etc.) and food items—no people. If people do enter the frame, crop or cover them afterward.

Select 5–10 images from each of these four categories:

- Food service area and utensils
- Dining areas, walkways, and social areas
- Entrances and exits
- Garbage and recycling

Place each grouping in an envelope (photo prints) or on slides in a slide presentation (in the style of part 1 of this workshop).

### ➔ DO:

- Bring the prepared images, the **Smarter Lunchrooms Case Studies worksheets** from part 1 of the workshop, and the large brainstorming activity from the part 1 follow-up recommendations. Hang the large paper in a prominent area.



## BOOSTER SHOT 10: Case Your Space continued

### **SAY:**

You all did a great job analyzing real-life lunchrooms in part 1 of this month's workshop. You found areas of opportunity and suggested easy, inexpensive, yet effective interventions for improving the spaces. Remember:

- \* Every space can be improved. It's not an insult to add interest and focus by making changes. Even very disordered spaces and very beautiful spaces can be improved or given a fresh look.
- \* Little changes can make a big difference in terms of getting and focusing students' attention. The mere act of making a change is often a good way to create renewed interest and positive buzz.

## CHOOSE ONE OPTION

---

### (OPTION 1: USING PHOTO PRINTS)

#### **DO:**

- Divide participants into four groups. Return their worksheets from part 1. Distribute pens/pencils.

#### **SAY:**

Each group will receive an envelope containing photos of our lunchroom, taken during a typical service period. Study the photos. As a group, try to identify 3-5 areas for improvement and list them on the last chart on the worksheet. Then suggest 1-2 possible changes we could implement to improve each of those areas. Be objective and positive—we are all on the same team and working towards a common goal. Your brainstorming paper is available for reference.

#### **DO:**

- Distribute photo envelopes. Allow groups to work together. (2-3 minutes) Circulate to provide assistance, focus, and mediation as needed. Encourage each participant to make at least one observation and at least one suggestion for improvement.
- Then, refocus the group for presentations. Direct each group to share their ideas: areas for improvement (with photos as needed) and suggestions. (1-2 minutes each) As each group presents, the others may take notes. If time remains, open the floor for final ideas, comments, and suggestions.

#### **SAY:**

Thank you all for your attention to detail, cooperation, and positive responses and suggestions. It takes courage and insight to objectively view and critique one's own space, and you showed that today. I'm impressed by your leadership. These ideas will help frame future positive changes in the lunchroom.



**(OPTION 2: USING A SLIDE PRESENTATION)**

➔ **DO:**

- Divide participants into four groups. Return their worksheets from part 1. Distribute pens/pencils.
- Cue up your self-generated slide presentation featuring grouped photos of the four areas of your lunchroom.

💬 **SAY:**

I will show you some photos of our lunchroom, taken during a typical service period. They will be displayed in four categories: food service spaces, dining and traffic areas, entrances and exits, and garbage and recycling. Study the photos. With your group, identify 1–2 areas for improvement for each category of images and list them on the final chart on your worksheet. Then suggest 1–2 possible changes we could implement to improve on those areas. Remember to be objective and positive—we are all on the same team and working towards a common goal. Your brainstorming paper is available for reference.

➔ **DO:**

- Show each category of images for up to 1 minute, during which time each participant group will study the photos, list areas for improvement, and write suggestions for interventions to address each concern. Circulate to provide assistance, focus, and mediation as needed. Encourage each participant to make at least one observation and at least one suggestion for improvement.
- After all four categories have been viewed, refocus the group for presentations. Direct each partnership to share 2–3 observations and suggestions. As each group presents, the others may take notes. If time remains afterward, open the floor for final ideas, comments, and suggestions from the groups.

💬 **SAY:**

Thank you all for your attention to detail, cooperation, and positive responses and suggestions. It takes courage and insight to objectively view and critique one's own space, and you showed that today. I'm impressed by your leadership. These ideas will help frame future positive changes in the lunchroom.



BOOSTER SHOT 10:  
**Case Your Space**  
continued

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**FOLLOW-UP (ALL)**

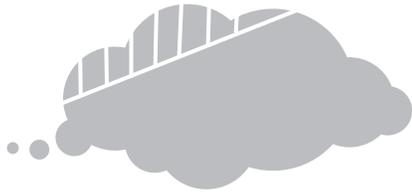
Collect the worksheets and other materials. Create a master list of the participants' observations and suggestions. Incorporate these in future lunchroom makeovers/changes.

If desired, write this master list on large paper and display it in the staff area. Refer to it when planning future Smarter Lunchrooms Makeovers and interventions.

**Trainer's Materials: Checklists and Forms**

*Photo Checklist*

**Lunchroom Self-Assessment Scorecard**



JUNE

## REFLECTION AND MISSION STATEMENT

**Objective:** Reflect upon Smarter Lunchrooms experiences from throughout the year. Create a collaborative mission statement and individual goals to guide the next year's Smarter Lunchrooms interventions.

Participants reflect upon their experiences in the lunchroom this year, including the training, interventions, and results. They collaboratively compose a mission statement for the following year's Smarter Lunchrooms interventions. During the Booster Shot, each participant creates individual goals supporting the group mission statement.



## LESSON 11: Reflection and Mission Statement

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### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- WORKSHEET: *Collaborative Mission Statement* (page 116)
- Pencils/Pens
- Large paper, markers, tape **or** blackboard, chalk **or** whiteboard, markers

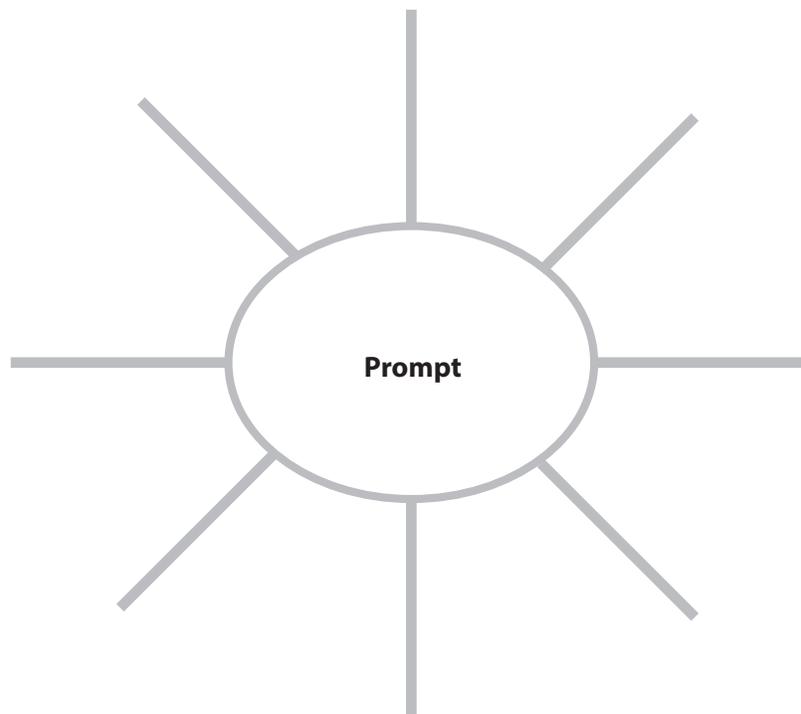
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### ➔ DO:

- Assemble the workshop materials. On two pieces of large paper\*, make "spider diagrams" with a key word in the middle and 6–10 spokes radiating from the center. The two prompts (one per page) are:
  - › Reflection
  - › Our Favorite Eating Places
- Hang the **Reflection** diagram first.

*\*If you use a blackboard or whiteboard instead of large paper, divide your board into two sections so that both diagrams can be seen at once.*

### SAMPLE DIAGRAM



## LESSON 11: Reflection and Mission Statement continued



### **SAY:**

What an exciting year this has been! We have learned and applied behavioral economics techniques to help nudge our students to select, eat, and enjoy the healthy foods we offer in the lunchroom. Today, we'll reflect on this journey and plan for the future.

Let's start by reviewing the past year. Think back to before we began the trainings and changes. What is different now? What highlights from this year stand out in your memory?

### **DO:**

- Encourage each participant to offer at least one response. Write key words on the spokes of the **Reflection** diagram, largely and legibly, adding spokes as needed. Focus on the positive comments. (1-2 minutes) Potential answers include:

Friendly atmosphere

Positive relationships with students, parents, and/or school staff

Students try new foods

Students eat healthy foods/fruits/vegetables/milk, etc.

Food looks/tastes better

Students know the menu

Students like us/the food/coming to lunch

Staff likes coming to work

Service line moves smoothly

Pretty lunchroom

Pride in lunchroom's appearance

Interesting changes

Current, new, fresh feel

Education/training

Feel empowered

Feel proud

Feel like an important part of the school

Feel like we make a positive difference

Feel appreciated

### **SAY:**

Those are great answers. I'm glad this year was such a success.

Now, let's think abstractly for a minute. Imagine your very favorite place to eat a meal. It could be a restaurant, an open space like a park, or even your own kitchen. Choose any setting. Call out your answer.

### **DO:**

- Hang the **Our Favorite Eating Places** diagram.
- Encourage participants to offer at least one answer each. Write their answers **in the middle circle** around the words "Our Favorite Eating Places." (1 minute)



## LESSON 11: Reflection and Mission Statement continued

 **SAY:**

Now, close your eyes and picture your place. How does it look, smell, and sound? How do people act there? How do you feel there? What is the food like? Why do you like it there? Call out your answers.

 **DO:**

- Invite participants to respond, 1–3 answers each. Write answers on the spokes, adding spokes if needed. (1–2 minutes) Reinforce answers related to ambiance (feel, smell, appearance, comfort, etc.), customer service/rapport, food quality, and personal satisfaction.

 **SAY:**

Thank you for sharing. All of these answers make us want to relax and enjoy a delicious meal. How many of these words would you like your students to relate to your lunchroom? (Pause for a show of hands)

Our Smarter Lunchrooms journey doesn't end now—we will climb even higher next year, building on this year's lessons and successes. Our plan begins with writing a **mission statement** together, and we'll use these goal words to help us. ***Our mission is to make our lunchroom a favorite place for our students to eat and for us to work.***

 **DO:**

- Distribute the **Collaborative Mission Statement worksheet** and pens/pencils.
- Lead participants in completing the worksheet as a group (3 minutes):
  - › Review the descriptive words associated with ideal eating spaces. Choose the 4–5 most important terms and circle them.
  - › As a group, verbally reorganize the selected ideas into one cohesive **mission statement**. Use a sentence template or design your own.
  - › Write the final product on the worksheets and the large paper/board.
- In the remaining time, lead participants in completing the **follow-up statements** as a group. Write the final product on the worksheets and the large paper/board.
  - › *To reach these goals, we will...*
  - › *We will support each other in pursuing these goals by...*
  - › *We will know we are successful when...*
  - › *We will celebrate our achievements by...*
- Thank all participants.

## LESSON 11: Reflection and Mission Statement continued



### FOLLOW-UP

Create a neat, colorful poster-sized version of the team's mission statement and support statements. Decorate with school spirit or food images, if desired. Invite the participants to sign it. Laminate if possible, for durability. Hang it in a prominent staff area.





## BOOSTER SHOT 11: Individual Goal Statements

*Participants personalize the group mission and write individual goals. This motivates each individual to commit to and support the future Smarter Lunchrooms initiatives.*

### MATERIALS

- Trainer's Script
- WORKSHEET: *Individual Goals* (page 117)
- Pens/pencils
- Collaborative mission statement poster from part 1

#### ➔ DO:

- Display and review the group mission poster from part 1 of this workshop.

#### 💬 SAY:

Thank you for working together to create this great mission statement for our team next year. Today, you will write personal goals that support the mission and clarify your role in the group's efforts.

#### ➔ DO:

- Distribute the **Individual Goals activity** and pens/pencils.
- Lead participants in completing the worksheets as individuals. Circulate and provide prompting, examples, and other support, as needed.
- In the last 1–2 minutes of the workshop, invite participants to share their answers with the group.

### FOLLOW-UP

Post the individuals' goals around the team poster. Monitor progress toward goals and celebrate successes!



## BONUS ACTIVITY

# CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS!

**Objective:** Recognize and thank collaborators. Share success stories. Lay the foundation for future Smarter Lunchrooms interventions.

Host an end-of-year “wrap party” to celebrate and publicize your success story, recognize your participants and other collaborators, share ideas, and get fired up for the next year’s Smarter Lunchrooms interventions and training!



## BONUS ACTIVITY: Celebrate Your Success!

Host a recognition event for your participants and other stakeholders. At the least, organize a 10-minute celebration for the lunchroom staff and collaborating students. Include healthy snacks and decorations, if desired. Recognize each participant's efforts with a personalized **Certificate of Recognition**. Include one specific detail per person, such as "Friendly Customer Service" or "Spotless Work Station." Prepare and share a personalized **Share Your Success slide presentation** featuring photos and details from your lunchroom.

If you have the time, resources, and interest to host something grander, this concept can be expanded to include all present and future stakeholders: your lunchroom staff, of course, plus the students, administrators, and school staff members who helped you make changes, recruit partners, buy supplies, and spread the word of the healthy, delicious choices in your lunchroom. Also consider reaching out to potential collaborators for next year's changes—they will see how easy, fun, empowering, and effective small changes can be!



Groups to consider inviting (not an exclusive list):

- Lunchroom service team
- Lunchroom service teams from other schools in the district
- Students involved in interventions/workshops, with their parents
- Teachers and school staff involved in interventions, promotions, classroom collaborations/lessons, and student recruitment
- School administrators
- Board of Education members or representatives
- Representatives from groups you'd like to include in future initiatives
  - › Student leadership and service groups, SNAC
  - › Parent organizations: PTA/PTO, Boosters
  - › School and community leaders
- Local media



## BONUS ACTIVITY: Celebrate Your Success! continued



### MATERIALS

- SLIDE PRESENTATION: *Share Your Success*
  - Complete the template using your photos and story details
  - Projection capability, screen
- Prepared Certificates of Recognition for participants and students (page 118)
- Letters of Thanks to school administration and any groups who gave material support (page 89)
- Party supplies and healthy snacks, as desired
- FLYER: *Healthy Celebrations* (page 98)
- Name tags
- Prepared Press Release (optional)
- Suggestions box, paper, and pens/pencils (optional)

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

Before the party, prepare a brief presentation to share your story with the guests. Prepare Certificates of Recognition and Letters of Thanks. Create a Suggestions box. Use these Smarter Lunchrooms resources to guide your efforts:

- Share Your Success slide presentation template
- Sample Press Release template
- Certificate of Recognition template
- Letter of Thanks template
- Suggestions box

Samples of the Certificate and Letter appear on the next pages. A blank Certificate template appears on page 118.

At the party, create a festive mood with decorations and healthy snacks. (Refer to the **Healthy Celebrations flyer** for ideas.) Distribute name tags if there will be more than just the lunchroom staff members in attendance.

Share your success story using your **Share Your Success slide presentation** and/or **Press Release**.

Distribute **Certificates of Recognition** and **Letters of Thanks** to the lunchroom staff and other collaborators. Share an anecdote about each person or group's contributions. As guests leave, invite them to provide ideas for future changes in the **Suggestions box**.

Prepare name tags using fun details related to the Smarter Lunchrooms changes from the year, such as "Friendly Customer Service," "Best Actor," and "Poster Artist." This will break the ice and spark friendly conversation about the interventions and trainings.

#### Smarter Lunchrooms Bonus Materials

*Sample Press Release*

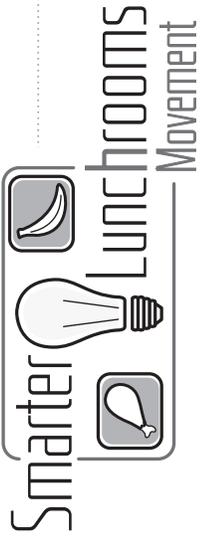
*Share Your Success*

**Instructional Guide 7B**





# Sample Certificate of Recognition



## Certificate of Recognition

PRESENTED TO:

*Green Valley High School Boosters*

FOR HELPING US CREATE A SMARTER LUNCHROOM!

It's Not Nutrition...  
Until It's Eaten!



*Eton Goode*

Eton Goode  
Smarter Lunchrooms Technical Assistance Provider

# Sample Letter of Thanks



Whether it's a formal letter on official letterhead or a personal note on your own stationary, a few words of recognition and appreciation will do wonders for your partners' morale and interest in future collaborations. Review the sample letter below, then add your own spin to these classic elements:

- Greeting (double-check the spelling of names!)
- Overview of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement
- Your specific project's site, goals, and interventions
- How the recipient(s) helped your efforts
- Successful results
- Future plans
- Thanks



Dear Green Valley Middle School Boosters,

Thank you all so much for your support of our recent Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover! The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement helps schools use behavioral economics interventions to help kids select, eat, and enjoy healthy foods in the lunchroom. Thanks to you, our school lunchroom is at the forefront of this exciting, delicious revolution.

At GVMS, we wanted to increase the students' consumption and enjoyment of fruits, vegetables, and white milk. Your financial support enabled us to buy materials to create eye-catching signs to promote fresh fruits and vegetables. They look great! Also, we were able to revamp our salad bar with colorful new utensils and a new location. Lastly, we created a daily menu board with a milk-and-cow theme.

As a result of our interventions, sales of fresh fruit nearly doubled, salad sales rose 35% while condiment use decreased, and white milk sales rose 25%. The changes were a big success. We look forward to next year's interventions and hope you will collaborate with us again.

Thank you so much for your help. We did it! Go Bobcats!

Sincerely,

*Your Name* and the GVMS lunchroom service team

*Signatures of all participants*



# STAFF FEEDBACK SURVEY: Lunchroom Staff Training

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Workshop Topic: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

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How **informed** do you feel about the workshop topic? (Very/Somewhat/ Slightly)

How **confident do you feel** about applying knowledge from the workshop in your daily work? (Very/Somewhat/ Slightly) **Why?**

How **likely are you to maintain the changes** made this month? (Very/Somewhat/ Slightly) **Why?**

What was the **most helpful part** of the training? **Why?**

What was the **most enjoyable part** of the training? **Why?**

What part (if any) of the training would you **change** (spend more time on, alter, or skip)? **What should be done instead** to make future workshops more successful?

How informed do you feel about the **Smarter Lunchrooms Movement**? (Very/Somewhat/Slightly)

Other feedback:

# Future Interventions and Staff Training



**Don't stop now!** Build on the past year's successes with more staff development and Smarter Lunchrooms interventions. Nurture the ***culture of ongoing reflection and positive change***.

Incorporate these valuable resources into your planning:

- **SMARTER LUNCHROOMS STILL NO TIME TO TRAIN PROGRAM**

- › A second year of short, engaging lessons for lunchroom staff
- › Interactions with students
- › Collaborations with teachers
- › Training videos and other resources
- › Leadership and recruitment advice
- › Expected release date: Fall 2015



- **SMARTER LUNCHROOMS MAKEOVER RESOURCES**

- › **SmarterLunchrooms.org**
- › Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover Manual—all the forms and procedures you'll need to plan, implement, and evaluate your Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover
- › Education
  - Training videos
  - Intervention ideas and materials
  - Research articles
  - Testimonials
  - Staff workshops
  - K-12 lesson plans
- › Free downloadable graphics, food labels, poster supplies, and other materials for your Makeover

- **SMARTER LUNCHROOMS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS' HANDBOOK**

- › Specialized advice and materials for organizing and managing multiple Smarter Lunchrooms Makeovers in a school district or region
  - Organization
  - Leadership
  - Communication
  - Recruitment
  - Research and data management
  - Media relations





## APPENDIX

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# Behavioral Economics in the Lunchroom: 9 Key Ideas



Behavioral economics = the study of how our environment influences our choices

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› The <b>environment</b> (appearance, placement, ambiance, prompts, etc.) strongly influences how people select, eat, and enjoy foods.</li> <li>› <b>You</b> control the lunchroom environment.</li> <li>› Change the environment ➔ change the students' food choices.</li> </ul>	<p><b>TRY IT AT HOME: This month, choose 2+ ways to rearrange your kitchen, pantry, or refrigerator to promote healthy eating at home.</b></p>
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## HOT STATE VS. COLD STATE DECISION-MAKING

<p>In a <b>hot</b> state, you are emotional, impulsive, or rushed. This leads to less-healthy food choices. <b>Remember:</b> "STRESSED" is "DESSERTS" spelled backwards!</p>	<p>In a <b>cold</b> state, you feel logical and calm. You make better long-term decisions about your health, including eating more healthy foods.</p>	<p><b>Plan ahead:</b> Pack snacks and lunches the night before. Shop for groceries after a meal, when you are full.</p>
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## 6 PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS IN THE LUNCHROOM

<b>PORTION SIZE</b>	Serve correctly sized portions, especially of treats	Ex.: small utensils for condiments, single-serving snacks	Don't eat snacks from the container. Serve yourself one portion in a small bowl.
<b>CONVENIENCE</b>	<b>Make healthy foods quick and easy to reach</b>	<b>Ex.: healthy foods window, grab and go, foods up front within easy reach</b>	<b>Put less healthy snacks on the top/bottom shelves, in the back. Put healthy choices front and center.</b>
<b>VISIBILITY</b>	<b>Make healthy foods impossible to overlook</b>	<b>Ex.: signs; color; foods first in service line, in front, &amp; by register</b>	<b>Place fruits &amp; veggies on eye level shelf of refrigerator, in front. Place a bowl of handheld fruit on kitchen table/counter.</b>
<b>TASTE EXPECTATIONS</b>	Foods that look good will taste good	Ex.: food is neat and colorful, garnish, clean service area	Bright, colorful serving-ware (plates, napkins, placemats, utensils, etc.) makes foods look more appetizing.
<b>SUGGESTIVE SELLING</b>	Talk up healthy foods, positive customer service, smile	Ex.: signs, verbal prompts, smiles; promote healthy choices	Ask, "Which vegetable would you like?" Offer 2+ options.
<b>SMART PRICING</b>	Offer deals on healthy foods and reimbursable meals.	Ex.: healthy snack combo deals, expanded RM options	Resist combo meals. Buy only what you want to eat. If you "go large," put half away before eating, for later. Pay cash.



# Cues for Positive Communication with Students and Staff

Occasion	Goal	Examples
<b>GREETING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Create a welcoming atmosphere</li> <li>› Take the first step to building rapport</li> <li>› Promote a reimbursable meal and/or target food item</li> </ul>	<p>"Good morning! What would you like to try today?"</p> <p>"Hello! Would you like to try the [entrée]?"</p> <p>"Welcome to lunch! The [entrée] is popular today. Would you like to try it?"</p> <p>"Today is [entrée] day. Would you like some?"</p> <p>"Welcome to the lunchroom! What can I get for you today? The [targeted item] is a great choice."</p>
<b>SERVING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Create a reimbursable meal</li> <li>› Promote healthy sides</li> </ul>	<p>"The [vegetable] goes well with the [entrée]."</p> <p>"Which vegetable/side would you like with that?"</p> <p>"The [fruit] is perfectly ripe."</p> <p>"If you don't like [first side offered], how about trying the [other side]?"</p> <p>"You can make [the entrée] a meal with some [fruit/vegetable sides]."</p> <p>"Today we're serving [list items]. Can I get you some [target item]?"</p> <p>"We have a great new recipe: [list targeted item(s)]. Would you like to try it? Tell us what you think!"</p>
<b>POINT OF SALE (POS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Create a reimbursable meal</li> <li>› Prompt students to "fill out" an incomplete meal</li> </ul>	<p>"I see you don't have all of your items. Why not grab a [handheld fruit in nearby basket]?"</p> <p>"You get 2 sides with your meal. You can still take one—go ahead and pick."</p> <p>"Your meal's not complete! Don't forget to take a [fruit, vegetable, or juice] as a side."</p> <p>"You forgot milk! It's included with your lunch. How about getting some now?"</p> <p>"It's not too late, go back and get [missing item]."</p> <p>"You can make that a meal with [missing item(s)]."</p>
<b>SPECIAL REQUESTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Ensure all students are able to eat a complete meal</li> <li>› Assist new readers (elementary, special needs, and ELL/ESOL students)</li> </ul>	<p>To staff (discretely): "I see that [student] has a special diet. I will try to set aside a [preferred item]; however, to ensure he/she gets the correct meal, please bring him/her to the front of the line."</p> <p>To students still mastering reading: "Today's specials are [read menu]."</p> <p>To students still mastering reading: "Here is a menu. (Show picture menu.) What would you like today? What looks the best to you?"</p> <p>To students still mastering reading: "Today's specials are [list items]. Would you like to try [target item(s)]?"</p>
<b>CONFLICT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› De-escalate situation</li> <li>› Avoid creating or fanning negative feelings on either side</li> <li>› Keep serving line moving smoothly and quickly</li> </ul>	<p>"I'm sorry you don't like [first item offered]; how about [other entrée option] instead?"</p> <p>"I'd be happily explain what makes a reimbursable meal."</p> <p>"The USDA defines what counts as a reimbursable meal, we aren't allowed to make those substitutions [ex. soda for milk, snack for fruit]."</p>

# WORKSHEET

## Creating Catchy Food Names



Q: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A: A LOT! MAKE FOOD SOUND GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT.

**Warm-Up:** Which option in each pair sounds more appealing, assuming they cost the same? Put yourself in the shoes of the items' target audience.

### List 1: Lip Gloss Colors

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Light pink | <input type="checkbox"/> Sun-kissed Strawberry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dark pink  | <input type="checkbox"/> Luscious Raspberry    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red        | <input type="checkbox"/> Friday Night Scarlet  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peach      | <input type="checkbox"/> Perfect Summer Peach  |

### List 2: Car Names

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minivan    | <input type="checkbox"/> Grand Caravan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports car | <input type="checkbox"/> Mustang       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Truck      | <input type="checkbox"/> Silverado     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SUV        | <input type="checkbox"/> Expedition    |

### List 3: Foods

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Steak          | <input type="checkbox"/> Sizzling T-bone Steak            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coleslaw       | <input type="checkbox"/> Tangy Coleslaw                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Salad          | <input type="checkbox"/> Crisp Garden Salad               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grilled Cheese | <input type="checkbox"/> Crunchy Toasted Cheddar Sandwich |

### Follow-up questions:

- 1: Why are the names in the right column more appealing than those in the left column?
- 2: Why is it important to remember the target audience's perspective?



WORKSHEET

# Creating Catchy Food Names

continued

**Matching:** Create catchy, appealing names for these foods using fun, interesting words. Choose 1–2 descriptors to add to each food to create new names for the dishes.

## Young children (K-5) enjoy imaginative, playful names

Ex.: X-ray Carrots, Big Bad Bean Burrito, Dinosaur Trees (broccoli)

**Word bank:**

American Fiesta Jumpin' Green Lantern Power Rainbow Sweet Talkin' Black Belt Snappy

\_\_\_\_\_ green beans

\_\_\_\_\_ baked apples

\_\_\_\_\_ baked sweet potatoes

\_\_\_\_\_ black bean soup

\_\_\_\_\_ peas

\_\_\_\_\_ veggie pizza

## Older students (grades 6-12) are attracted to evocative, descriptive sensory words

Ex.: Summer Salad, Savory Beef Sandwich, Crunchy Carrot Sticks

**Word bank:**

Texas VIP Snappy Sweet Harvest Homestyle Spiced Fresh Holiday Garden

\_\_\_\_\_ green beans

\_\_\_\_\_ baked apples

\_\_\_\_\_ baked sweet potatoes

\_\_\_\_\_ black bean soup

\_\_\_\_\_ peas

\_\_\_\_\_ veggie pizza

### Follow-up questions:

1: Which names are the best? What makes them appealing to each audience?

2: Which names could you use in your lunchroom?

# Creating Catchy Food Names

WORKSHEET  
continued



## CREATIVE DESIGN

**Pretend** your group is starting a restaurant but you are only allowed to serve foods from your school lunchroom. Use descriptive and fun words to add interest to these entrées and side orders.

Choose your audience: **K-5** or **6-12** (circle one).

### Entrées:

Baked Chicken: \_\_\_\_\_

Turkey Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

Chef Salad: \_\_\_\_\_

Grilled Cheese Sandwich & Tomato Soup: \_\_\_\_\_

### Sides:

Corn: \_\_\_\_\_

Kale: \_\_\_\_\_

Kiwi: \_\_\_\_\_

Salad Bar: \_\_\_\_\_

Squash: \_\_\_\_\_

Mixed/Steamed Veggies: \_\_\_\_\_

**Application:** Choose your favorite two entrées and two sides. Or, choose four items your lunchroom would *like* to promote. Write the names on the left side. Then, choose descriptors to give the chosen foods catchy new names.

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

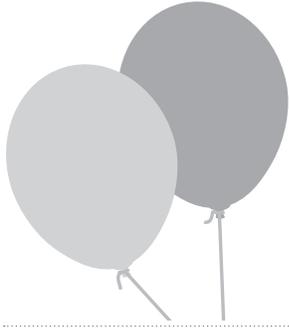
\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

### Follow-up Questions:

Which names are best? Which could you use in your lunchroom?



# Healthy Celebrations



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Celebrating holidays, birthdays, and important accomplishments is a great way to reward hard work, build relationships, and have fun! But too often, celebrations incorporate unhealthy foods such as sodas, cookies, and other sweet indulgences. These well-meant treats can have unintended negative consequences:

- Replacing healthy meals with sugary snacks can cause students to feel first jumpy, then hungry and sluggish, decreasing their ability to focus
- Students with medical and cultural food restrictions can feel excluded; some may even be harmed by eating foods considered off-limits
- Using unhealthy foods as rewards can create negative and unhealthy perceptions about foods
- In the classroom, food spills can create messes and invite pests

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**Make your parties both fun and healthy by celebrating with these alternatives:**

- Games, especially those involving movement
- Stories and interactive activities
- Music, singing, or dancing
- Small toys, stickers, or gifts

If you really want to incorporate food into your school day celebration, suggest healthy alternatives such as fresh or dried fruits, raw vegetables, and other nutritious snacks. Serve these foods after lunch, so students fill up on healthy lunches first. Send foods home, or talk with your head custodian and kitchen manager about holding your party in the lunchroom or other designated food-safe area.



For more great ideas for healthy holiday celebrations, visit the **Healthy Food Choices in Schools Community of Practice:**

[www.extension.org/pages/70218/resources-for-promoting-healthy-holiday-fun-in-school](http://www.extension.org/pages/70218/resources-for-promoting-healthy-holiday-fun-in-school)



# Join the Community of Practice

Healthy Food Choices in Schools is an online learning community of practice (CoP) at [extension.org/healthy\\_food\\_choices\\_in\\_schools](http://extension.org/healthy_food_choices_in_schools). Its mission is to provide resources that empower FSDs, lunchroom staff, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and wellness committees to make changes that encourage children to make healthier food selections in school food environments, without undermining revenue. The CoP also has tools and information families can use to improve nutrition at school and at home.

All resources made available by the Healthy Food Choices in Schools CoP are based on sound research and/or experience. They are created by knowledgeable and skilled researchers and professionals from various fields including nutrition, behavioral economics, food psychology, community education, and food service.

To join, contact [healthy\\_food\\_choices\\_in\\_schools@cornell.edu](mailto:healthy_food_choices_in_schools@cornell.edu). Joining will offer opportunities to:

- Network with other professionals who share your enthusiasm for encouraging healthy food choices in schools
- Discover tips and initiatives to enhance your own programs and efforts
- Disseminate your knowledge and findings to a national audience





# Incentives List

FOR NO TIME TO TRAIN DECEMBER WORKSHOP BOOSTER SHOT

**DIRECTIONS:** Review this list, removing options you cannot offer and adding incentives you can offer which are not already included. Print out one copy of the final list per participant. Cut out each activity, shuffle, secure with a paper clip, and place in sealed sandwich bag. Make one set per participant.

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Money (one-time bonus or gift card)

Money (ongoing bonuses dependent on project success)

Recognition (plaque to display at work or home)

Recognition (heartfelt card)

Recognition (public praise—verbal, in school newspaper, etc.)

Personalized aprons or hats for you/the whole lunchroom staff

Permission to come in late/leave early (once)

Permission to wear jeans/casual clothes at work for one week

Luncheon /celebration in your honor at the school

Flowers to decorate your work space or to take home with you

Acknowledgment on **SmarterLunchrooms.org** or the school/district website

Staff training (for you or the whole lunchroom staff)

Invitation to speak with or teach others

Opportunity to design the lunchroom menu for a day/week

Opportunity to design/decorate a bulletin board in the cafeteria

Host a healthy snack party for a class of your choosing

Cooking demonstration or lesson from a local chef, in the lunchroom

Funding for a future project/lunchroom makeover

Other (write-in): \_\_\_\_\_

# Serving Up Health and Happiness

Spotlight on Sheila Hoyt,  
*Cook Manager at Horseheads Intermediate & Middle Schools*



***After 12 years in school kitchens, Sheila Hoyt had learned a thing or two about school food.***

After 12 years in school kitchens, Sheila Hoyt had learned a thing or two about school food. Working her way up the ladder from a substitute worker to cook manager of two schools (Horseheads Intermediate and Middle Schools in Horseheads, NY) taught her how to manage staff, run a clean and efficient kitchen, and serve nutritious meals to 800 children per day. But attending a staff development workshop with trainers from

the Cornell B.E.N. Center “opened [her] eyes” to how small changes in the lunchroom environment “really affect how kids look at lunch and interact with the staff” and can encourage kids to take, eat, and enjoy

# Serving Up Health and Happiness

continued

healthier lunch options. Thanks to some easy, inexpensive changes to her lunchroom décor and routines, she happily reports that “the kids enjoy us, they don’t think of us as mean old lunch ladies. They are really excited and say ‘This is really cool!’ and ‘Can we do this every day?’ They even invite me to sit with them!”

---

**“The kids enjoy us, they don’t think of us as mean old lunch ladies. They are really excited and say ‘This is really cool!’ and ‘Can we do this every day?’ They even invite me to sit with them!”**

---

The Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs (B.E.N. Center) studies how the lunchroom environment influences students’ food choices in school. In spring 2011, during a workshop

with B.E.N. Center trainers, Sheila was inspired by the “common sense” ideas and implemented about a dozen of them in her two lunchrooms, adding a few ideas of her own—with terrific success. The students ate more fruits and vegetables and the relationship between lunchroom staff members and the students greatly improved. This delighted Dr. Brian Wansink, whose mission in founding the B.E.N. Center was to empower schools and districts to revitalize their lunchrooms. He insists, “These changes are so easy and every school can make a couple of changes and see their kids eat healthier.”

Sheila received lots of positive feedback from parents and school staff, who have come to check out the lunchrooms’ new look and learn about the healthy foods offered there. To reach out to families, Sheila made a display for Back-to-School Night and hosted an open house. Administrators say the kids “are really responding.” Each year, her focus is on catching the incoming 5th graders’ attention; “once you hook them,” she says, “they keep working with you and carry your message into the next grades.”

What excites Sheila most about the coming school year? “All the new staff and training—we need to know we are not all alone, we are a team, let’s help each other out and keep it new. You guys [at the B.E.N. Center] got me rolling.”

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**Read more: [SmarterLunchrooms.org](http://SmarterLunchrooms.org)**



## Easy & Inexpensive Ways to Give Your Lunchroom a Makeover

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**Add color!** Display fruits and veggies in colorful trays or bowls and use colorful linens to line shelves and metal pans. Add colorful straw holders, utensils, and décor.

**Add contrast:** Mix different fruits (in cups or handheld) so the colors play off of each other: red grapes next to peaches, green apples next to oranges.

**Show, don't tell:** Sheila created "Today's Special" and "Coming Tomorrow" **signs** with interchangeable pictures of popular items. The kids see what is offered, it interests them, and they plan to buy lunch the next day. It also lets the kids decide earlier what they'll order, so the line moves faster. Bonus: It's a great way to advertise special options, such as vegetarian entrées and local veggie sides. She also uses **plastic food models** for color and to advertise foods offered behind glass.

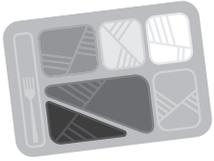
**Put target items at eye level:** "We got new snack racks (for free!) and we set signs advertising each day's meals right where the kids can see them."

**Keep it new:** Add fresh or artificial flowers, seasonal decorations, and special food items. Change it up regularly.

**Offer healthy treats:** "The most popular new item was the 100%-fruit-juice slushie machine. The kids asked, and we got it for them, and they love it. We're getting another this year. The kids are really happy, and it's 100% fruit juice."

**Be a good listener:** Make an opinion box and ask for feedback from students and other school community members. Sheila did this, then implemented the most popular feasible ideas. She also talked to kids at their lunch tables.

- **Hint: Ask for specific feedback:** What foods exactly do you like or dislike? What would you like to see added to the menu, and why?
- **Explain:** Let kids know what you can and can't work on. "Lots of kids didn't understand why we can't just serve bacon cheeseburgers every day. I explained about the dietary guidelines and gave them other options we could try—like spicy chicken nuggets—and they were more eager to try the other new foods instead."



# WORKSHEET

## Complete the Reimbursable Meal

What are the 5 reimbursable meal components?

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**PART 1:** Individual practice. Answer each question on paper, then compare answers in pairs or as a group.

Which component(s), if any, are needed to make each example a complete reimbursable meal?

<b>Ex. 1:</b> Burger (with bun), chocolate milk	<b>Ex. 2:</b> Yogurt & fruit parfait, apple, water
<b>Ex. 3:</b> Cheese pizza	<b>Ex. 4:</b> Green salad, water
<b>Ex. 5:</b> Pasta with meat sauce, orange juice	<b>Ex. 6:</b> 3 hash browns, milk

Lunchroom target foods to promote:



# Complete the Reimbursable Meal continued



## PART 2: Verbal Practice

Split into pairs. Take turns playing the server/cashier and the student buying the meal. For each sample tray, the person playing the server/cashier will survey the tray, decide which prompt to use, then deliver the line in a friendly, natural tone to the person playing the student.

**Props:** 6 sample trays with incomplete meals (real or photos/slides)

### Goals to focus on:

- Great customer service: eye contact, friendly tone of voice, relaxed body language, smile
- Quick, accurate understanding of the content of a qualifying reimbursable meal
- Accurate, helpful suggestion of item(s) to include in the meal, using appropriate prompts

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Sample Prompt for Lunchroom Staff</b> <i>Mix and match</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Create a reimbursable meal</li> <li>› Promote healthy sides (and/or other target items)</li> <li>› Prompt students to “fill out” an incomplete meal</li> </ul>	<p>“The [vegetable] goes well with the [entrée].”</p> <p>“Which vegetable/side would you like with that?”</p> <p>“The [fruit] is perfectly ripe.”</p> <p>“If you don’t like [first side offered], how about trying the [other side]?”</p> <p>“You can make [the entrée] a meal with some [fruit/vegetable sides].”</p> <p>“Today we’re serving [list items]. Can I get you some [target item]?”</p> <p>“I see you don’t have all of your items. Why not grab a [fruit in nearby basket]?”</p> <p>“You get 2 sides with your meal. You can still take one – go ahead and pick.”</p> <p>“Your meal’s incomplete! Don’t forget to take a [fruit/vegetable/milk].”</p> <p>“You forgot milk! It’s included with your meal. How about taking some now?”</p> <p>“It’s not too late, go back and get [missing item].”</p> <p>“You can make that a meal with [missing item(s)].”</p> <p>“If you add [missing item], you’ll have a complete meal. It would... ...actually cost less than these items separately.” ...cost the same as these items separately --- the {new item(s) would essentially be free to you.” ...only cost _____ more, and you’d get a whole meal.”</p> <p>“A complete meal offers a lot more value for your money.”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› De-escalate conflict</li> <li>› Avoid negative feelings</li> <li>› Keep line moving</li> </ul>	<p>“I’d be happily explain what makes a reimbursable meal.”</p> <p>“The USDA defines what counts as a reimbursable meal, we aren’t allowed to make that substitution [ex. soda for milk, snack for fruit].”</p> <p>“Instead of two [items], why not switch one for a [other item], mix it up? Then it’ll be included in your meal and not cost any extra.”</p> <p>“The [items] are also delicious/popular/fresh, and they are included in your meal whereas [a la carte or duplicate item] is not.”</p>



## SCRIPTS

# Positive Communication Role Play

## SKIT 1

### Student makes negative comment about school food.

#### VERSION 1A (POSITIVE RESPONSE)

*2 participants*

**Server:** Hello! *<smile>* Which entrée would you like to try today?

**Student:** Nothing. This food is gross.

**Server:** I'm sorry you feel that way. We also have cold salads, sandwiches, and yogurt parfaits, which you might like better.

**Student:** Oh, well, okay, I'll get a yogurt parfait.

#### VERSION 1B (NEGATIVE RESPONSE)

*2 participants*

**Server:** What would you like?

**Student:** Nothing. This food is gross.

**Server:** Well, it's what we have. Do you want something or not?

**Student:** Well, no! *<makes a rude face>* I'll just get some cookies and chips.



## SKIT 2

### Student does not immediately order a complete meal.

#### VERSION 2A (POSITIVE RESPONSE)

4 participants

**Server:** Hello! *<smile>* Which veggie would you like to try today? We have steamed green beans and fluffy mashed potatoes.

**Student 1:** Um, the mashed potatoes.

**Server:** Great! Which entrée would you like to go with that?

**Student 1:** Nothing, just the potatoes.

**Server:** Well, we have fresh fruit and carrot sticks down the line.

**Student 1:** *<goes to checkout>*

**Student 2:** I'll have the potatoes, too, please.

**Server:** Great! Which entrée would you like to go with that? We have a Texas Rib-B-Que sandwich or chicken patty sandwich.

**Student 2:** The Rib-B-Que looks okay. I'll try that. *<goes to checkout>*

**Cashier (to Student 1):** You get five items with your meal, it's not too late.

**Student 1:** I don't want to hold up the line.

**Server:** Not a problem. There's a milk cooler at this end of the line. And here's a bowl of fresh fruit. Which do you like most, apples or oranges?

**Student 1:** Oranges. *<takes an orange and milk>*

**Cashier:** Enjoy! *<rings up purchase>* Have a super day. *<turns to Student 2>* And you get two fruits or veggies, would you like an orange also?

**Student 2:** I forgot to grab fruit in the line – oh, I'll take an apple. Thanks for the reminder.

**Server:** Great. *<rings up purchase>* Have a super day.



SCRIPTS:  
Positive Communication Role Play  
continued

VERSION 2B (NEGATIVE RESPONSE)

4 participants

**Server:** Hi, what would you like today?

**Student 1:** Um, the Rib-B-Que sandwich, I guess.

**Server:** Do you want a side? We have beans or potatoes.

**Student 1:** Nothing, just the sandwich. *<goes to checkout>*

**Server (to Student 2):** Hi, what would you like today?

**Student 2:** I'll have the sandwich too, please.

**Server:** And which side? We have green beans and mashed potatoes.

**Student 2:** Um, not today—I'd rather have fruit.

**Cashier (to Student 1):** Is that all? *<rings up purchase>* That'll be *[a la carte price]*.

**Student 1:** But I got a meal!

**Server:** It's not a full meal unless you get at least one fruit or vegetable.

**Student 1:** Fine! *<takes 2 oranges>* I'm just going to throw them away. *<throws the 2 oranges conspicuously in the trash as exits>*

**Cashier:** You can't have two of the same side... oh, whatever. You're holding up the line. *<annoyed, cancels first purchase and rings up purchase>* Next! *<turns to Student 2>* Is that all you want?

**Student 2:** Um, well— *<looks at fruit but feels embarrassed>* I'll just have the sandwich and milk. *<pays, hurries to lunchroom to sit with friend, Student 1>*

**Server:** *<rings up purchase>* But you need a fruit or vegetable as a part of your meal! *<rolls eyes>* What's with these kids today?!



## SKIT 3

### FSD needs lunchroom to sell more target entrées.

VERSION 3A (POSITIVE RESPONSE)

4 participants

**Food Service Director (to Server, before lunch):** We need to sell more of the new entrées. Encourage kids to try them. They taste good; if they try them, they'll probably like them. And try to get the kids to buy the full meal; otherwise, we'll have a hard time breaking even.

**Server:** Okay, I'll do my best. <goes to serving line> Hello! <smiles at student> Would you like to try the Big Bad Bean Burrito? It's new and really tasty.

**Student 1:** I don't know... I've never had it before. I usually just get pizza or a burger.

**Server:** We're trying new recipes. Let us know what you think! Here's a comment card to give us your feedback, like at a restaurant.

**Student 1:** Oh, cool! Okay, I'll try it.

**Server:** Great! And the golden corn and spicy stewed tomatoes go really well with it. Want to try them too?

**Student 1:** Well, sure.

**Server:** Enjoy! We look forward to hearing your opinion! Turn in the card when you return your tray.

**Student 1:** <goes to checkout>

**Student 2:** I'll try it, too. I like Taco Bell. I'll let you know what I think.

**Server:** Great! Enjoy!

**FSD (to Server, after lunch):** Wow, our reimbursable meals numbers look great, and we sold out of burritos! Awesome job! <high five>



SCRIPTS:  
Positive Communication Role Play  
continued

VERSION 3B (NEGATIVE RESPONSES)

4 participants

**Food Service Director (to Server, before lunch):** We need to sell more of the new entrées. Encourage kids to try them. They are pretty good; if they try them, they'll probably like them. And try to get the kids to buy the full meal; otherwise, we'll have a hard time breaking even.

**Server:** Okay, I will. *<goes to serving line>* ...Not that it'll make a difference. *<sees student>* Hi, want a burrito?

**Student 1:** I don't know... I've never had it before. I usually just get pizza or a burger.

**Server:** It's healthy and you fill out a survey.

**Student 1:** I hate healthy food, yuck. Nope, pizza for me.

**Server:** How about corn and tomatoes?

**Student 1:** With pizza? They don't go together. *<goes to checkout>*

**Student 2:** I was thinking of trying it but I don't want to look dumb in front of my friends... I'll take the pizza, too. No sides, thank you. Sorry. Good luck with your survey. *<looks guilty but goes to cashier anyway>*

**FSD (to Server, after lunch):** Our numbers don't look good, for meals or burrito sales. I'd really like to offer these new recipes, but we just end up wasting them... *<looks sad and worried>* I don't know how we're going to stay in business.



## SKIT 4

### Teaching staff member influences students' choices and comfort level.

VERSION 4A (POSITIVE RESPONSE)

5 participants

**Food Service Director (to Teaching Staff at a staff meeting):** The lunchroom offers many healthy, tasty meals. Some students are intimidated by new things, though, so we need help to break the ice and invite the kids try new foods. You make a huge difference in how the kids view our food, so we are asking you to please walk through the serving line (even if you don't buy anything) and make one positive comment. You might say, "Oh, I love sweet potatoes!" or "Today's turkey sandwich looks great!" or "Hello [server's name], what's today special?" Be creative and help our kids see that the people they look up to like school lunch.

Also, if you have a student who needs extra attention—for example, special assistance or a special diet—please let us know so we can help them discretely. Thank you! We look forward to working together to serve our kids.

**Teaching Staff Member (to FSD, discretely after the meeting):** Just a heads-up, two of my students might need help. Thanks for thinking ahead. Serena is really shy and needs help with reading the menu, and Joey's parents are vegetarian and insist he doesn't eat meat. Oh, and I'll be happy to go through the line and say something nice in front of the kids.

**FSD:** Thank you for letting me know. I'll tell the servers about helping Serena and reserving a veggie entrée for Joey. Bring them through first in the line at lunch.

*<later, at lunch: Teaching Staff Member leads students Serena and Joey to the Server>*

**Teacher:** Wow, I love butternut squash! The roasted squash looks great.

**Server:** Thanks, they are today's special. We also have a black bean burrito, a chicken sandwich, and Hawaiian pizza—that means ham and pineapple. For veggies, we have roasted butternut squash, golden corn, and green peas. Serena, which sounds best to you?

**Serena (student):** Oh, they sound good. Hawaiian pizza please. And corn and squash.

**Server:** And Joey, I held a bean burrito for you. Which veggies would you like with that?

**Joey (Student):** Corn and squash, please. Thanks so much!



SCRIPTS:  
Positive Communication Role Play  
continued

VERSION 4B (NEGATIVE RESPONSE)

5 participants

**Food Services Director (to teaching staff at a staff meeting):** The lunchroom offers many healthy, tasty meals. Some students are intimidated by new things, though, so we need help to break the ice and invite kids to try new foods. You make a huge difference in how the kids view our food, so we are asking you to please walk through the serving line (even if you don't buy anything) and make one positive comment. You might say, "Oh, I love sweet potatoes!" or "Today's turkey sandwich looks great!" or "Hello [server's name], what's today special?" Be creative and help our kids see that the people they look up to like school lunch.

Also, if you have a student who needs extra attention—for example, special assistance or a special diet—please let us know so we can help them discretely. Thank you! We look forward to working together to serve our kids.

**<outside lunchroom: Teaching Staff Member leads students to the lunchroom door>**

**Teacher:** Okay, it's time for my break. Have a nice lunch, kids!

**<Teacher leaves. Students (Serena and Joey) go to the server.>**

**Server:** Hello, welcome to the lunchroom. What can I get for you today?

**Serena (student):** Um... I guess... a hamburger?

**Server:** We don't have burgers today. The menu is posted right there. **<points to the wall>**

**Serena (student):** **<embarrassed>** Oh, sorry. I guess I'll just have... milk. Never mind.

**Joey (student):** I'd like a bean burrito, please.

**Server:** We ran out of that last lunch period, sorry. How about a chicken sandwich or Hawaiian pizza?

**Joey (student):** **<disappointed>** No, I don't eat meat...

**Server:** Well, that's all we have left. What's wrong with eating meat?

**Joey (student):** **<sigh>**... Nothing for me, thanks.

**<Students exit. FSD sees their empty trays and goes to Server.>**

**FSD:** What happened with those kids? They need to eat lunch and we need to sell more lunches. How did we just lose two sales?

**Server:** **<shrugs>** I guess they just don't like our food.





# WORKSHEET Smarter Lunchrooms Case Studies

## DIRECTIONS:

For each sample lunchroom, identify 3–5 areas for improvement. For each area of improvement, suggest at least one intervention strategy.

### Example 1: Fruit, Snacks, and Milk

Area for Improvement	Suggested Interventions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

### Example 2: Serving Lines

Area for Improvement	Suggested Interventions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	



### Example 3: Entrances and Dining Spaces

Area for Improvement	Suggested Interventions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

### Example 4: Your Own Lunchroom

Area for Improvement	Suggested Interventions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	



# WORKSHEET

## Collaborative Mission Statement

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### MISSION STATEMENT TEMPLATES

At (School or District Name), we strive to create a lunchroom...

*Examples:*

...that is \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and serves \_\_\_\_\_ food that \_\_\_\_\_ ...

...where students \_\_\_\_\_, staff \_\_\_\_\_, parents \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ ...

...where staff members feel \_\_\_\_\_, students feel \_\_\_\_\_, and we feel \_\_\_\_\_ ...

...that looks \_\_\_\_\_, sounds \_\_\_\_\_, smells \_\_\_\_\_, and feels \_\_\_\_\_ ...

---

**At \_\_\_\_\_, we strive to create a lunchroom...**  
*(School or District Name)*

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**To reach these goals, we will...**

---

**We will support each other in pursuing these goals by...**

---

**We will know we are successful when...**

---

**We will celebrate our achievements toward these goals by...**

---

# Individual Goals

Complete individually and hang in staff room or work space.

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**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **School:** \_\_\_\_\_

My personal goals to help improve the lunchroom are:

1.

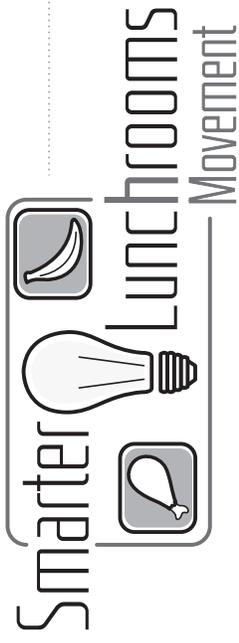
2.

To reach my goals, I will make sure to:

To reach my goals, I will request these items and/or support:

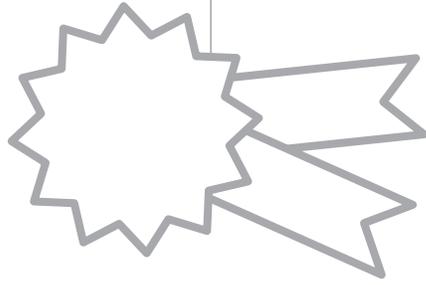
My goals connect with the group mission because:

I'll know I am successful when:



# Certificate of Recognition

PRESENTED TO:



FOR HELPING US CREATE A SMARTER LUNCHROOM!

It's Not Nutrition...  
Until It's Eaten!







Smarter    
 Lunchrooms  
Movement



**No Time to Train: A Year of 10-Minute Workshops for Lunchroom Staff**

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