

**Title of Intervention:** Cafeteria Power Plus Project

**Intervention Strategies:** Campaigns and Promotions, Environments and Policies

**Purpose of the Intervention:** To increase the fruit and vegetable consumption of elementary age children

**Population:** First through fourth grade students

**Setting:** 26 schools from one large school district in the Twin Cities metropolitan area of Minnesota; school-based

**Partners:** Food service staff, parent volunteers

**Intervention Description:**

- Campaigns and Promotions: Special events included a two-week kickoff campaign featuring “life size” fruit and vegetable characters that were hung in posters around the school cafeteria. The campaign was followed by monthly samplings of fruits and vegetables during the lunch period. Students distributed samples of fruit and vegetables to their classmates with the assistance of parent volunteers. There was a challenge week at mid-year of each intervention during which students were engaged in a competition to eat three servings of fruits and vegetables per day at lunch. Classes were rewarded at the end of the week with frozen fruit yogurt if the students in their class on average met the goal. During the first intervention year, students in the intervention schools were also exposed to a theater production that encouraged eating fruits and vegetables. At the end of the second intervention year, a final special event was implemented that was a meal demonstrating all the different foods that could be made from grapes.
- Environments and Policies: The daily activities involved increasing the availability, appeal and encouragement of fruits and vegetables in the school lunch program. Changes in the lunch line and school snack cart were emphasized. Intervention staff worked closely with the school district's food service staff to increase the quantity and quality of fruits and vegetables served in the intervention schools.

**Theory:** Social Cognitive Theory, Health Behavior Planning Model

**Resources Required:**

- Staff/Volunteers: Food service staff, parents
- Training: One-day training sessions for school food service staff and cook managers
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Not mentioned
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Additional fruits and vegetables, posters, promotional materials
- Evaluation: Individuals to conduct observations

**Evaluation:**

- Design: Randomized Controlled Trial
- Methods and Measures:
  - Observers recorded the number of fruit and vegetables, as well as portion size, consumed by students during lunch
  - Lunchroom, lunch line, food cart and food service staff behaviors were observed

**Outcomes:**

- Short Term Impact: Intervention schools had more verbal encouragement and more fruits and vegetables available on the lunch line.
- Long Term Impact: The fruit and vegetable intake among intervention students was significantly higher, but there was no difference between conditions on total fruit and vegetable servings.

**Maintenance:** Not mentioned

**Lessons Learned:** Changing the opportunities, role models and social support for fruits and vegetables in school lunch can make a difference in children's eating patterns. A multi-component approach to increasing fruit and vegetable intake is recommended rather than solely relying in changes in the school cafeteria.

**Citation(s):**

Perry, C. L., D. B. Bishop, et al. (2004). "A randomized school trial of environmental strategies to encourage fruit and vegetable consumption among children." *Health Educ Behav* 31(1): 65-76.