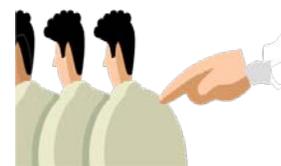


Nudging Your Students

Guiding the food choices students make, in ways they are unaware of, is called *behavioral economics*. Behavioral economics can help school staff create a cafeteria environment that subtly moves students in the direction you want them to go – an environment that “nudges” them.

Nudges



Salad Bars – Move salad carts into a high-traffic area, forcing kids to walk around the healthy offerings.

Naming – Change the names of menu items to make them sound more delicious — for example, call applesauce “chilly applesauce.”

Food Coaching – On the serving line, offer verbal prompts. Ask students if they want a salad – don’t assume they’ll take one.



Healthy Choices – Give kids a choice between two healthy options. Ask students if they want the broccoli or the carrots or if they want the fruit or fruit juice.

Milk Placement – Move the white milk in front of the chocolate.

Lunch Line Placement – Place the food items you want kids to take first in the serving line.

Taste Testing – Letting children taste test new items while they are waiting in line or going through the serving line gives students an opportunity to experiment without being forced.

Time – Offer healthy “grab and go” options to get kids through the line quicker.

Health Express Line – Create a ‘speedy express’ checkout line for kids purchasing healthy foods and not chips and desserts.

Pricing – Consider temporary discounts such as discount coupons and introductory sales to motivate students to try new products. Or charge less for healthful choices than for foods high in fat and added sugars such as pop, chips, and doughnuts.

Cafeteria Arrangement – Place the snack shop and vending machines along the back wall or in the corner of the cafeteria to minimize visibility and reduce traffic.

Presentation – Serve foods in more attractive ways. Place whole fruit in attractive serving bowls or use black serving utensils and black pans in place of metal. Ask yourself – does the food served look appealing?



Appealing Packaging – Use more fashionable packaging such domed lids on yogurt cups or black bowls in place of white.

Lighting – Increase the light on healthier options to make them more appealing and noticeable to students as they go through the line.



Comment Box – This offers an opportunity for kids to offer suggestions for healthy foods they would like to see on the menu.

Signage – Use attractive signage to promote healthier products.

Kid-Friendly Options – Especially for younger students, offer cut up fruit and vegetables in different shapes.

Decrease Size of Unhealthy Items – Decrease the size of unhealthy items to make them less appealing (example – offer small cookies).



Eye Level – Place healthier food options at eye level.

Keep Unhealthy Food Options Less Visible – Keep foods such as ice cream under an opaque top to make them less noticeable.

Limit Unhealthy Food Purchases to Cash – Instill a “cash for cookies” policy where kids can only use their lunch account for healthy options.

Appropriate Bowl Size – Using smaller bowls will help ensure students don’t over eat.

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