Creating Smarter Lunchrooms in Montana Schools - a SNAP-Ed and Team Nutrition Collaboration

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Webinar
May 11, 2016
Overview

- Smarter Lunchroom projects meets both SNAP-Ed and Team Nutrition goals
- History of Team Nutrition and SNAP-Ed Partnership
- Team Nutrition’s early efforts – Project #1
- Team Nutrition and SNAP-Ed’s current efforts and collaboration – Project #2
- Lessons learned and future goals
- Resources and contacts
Smarter Lunchrooms Movement Meets Multi Level PSE Intervention

Goals for SNAP-Ed

- Expands upon direct education efforts by enhancing the School Nutrition Environment
  - Nudges students to practice behaviors learned in the classroom
  - Supports SNAP-Ed’s goal of enhancing MyPlate Behaviors (MT1)

- Builds new partnerships (ST6) with teachers, administrators, and school food service personnel in order to identify opportunities for change (ST4)

- Assists in making practical and lasting changes in the school environment through adopting nutrition supports (MT4)
Smarter Lunchrooms Movement meets Team Nutrition goals

- Nudge healthier choices by students.
- Students choose and eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Decrease food waste.
- Improve cafeteria atmosphere and customer service.
- Increase participation in School Meal Programs.
History of Partnership
Leading to Smarter Lunchrooms Project

- 2014 – SNAP-Ed staff receives School Wellness Training from Team Nutrition. Team Nutrition begins first Smarter Lunchroom pilot project in MT high schools.

- 2015 – SNAP-Ed staff is introduced to Smarter Lunchrooms at annual training, completes the Cornell online training. Online training is followed by webinar from Team Nutrition. Team Nutrition continues high school pilot project and begins planning with SNAP-Ed for second pilot project.

- 2016 – SNAP-Ed is participating in Team Nutrition's second pilot project of Smarter Lunchroom (SLAC) curriculum for future statewide use.

- 2017 – SNAP-Ed sites will all be able to utilize new SLAC curriculum along with other interested schools across the state.
MT Smarter Lunchrooms Pilot Project #1–5 high schools in the 2014-2015 school year

Strategies applied:

- Expanded fruit and vegetable menu offerings
- Service line and/or salad bar redesign
- Implementation of a sharing basket
- Enhanced marketing efforts
- Student input and buy-in
OUTCOMES

• 33% increase in Scorecard total scores
• Increased student selection at the salad bar
• Decreased waste of fruits/vegetables and milk
• Increased participation levels
Learned the Positive Impact of Partnerships

Invaluable ideas and feedback from students and staff via a Smarter Lunchroom Advisory Committee (SLAC)

SNAP-Educators provide a local connection to school wellness, so were invited to participate in 2nd pilot project.

Opened the door for communication and want to keep it open.
Montana Team Nutrition

Current Goal: Increase the use of behavioral economics cues in 30 school cafeterias to motivate students to select fruits and vegetables at mealtime.

Partners: SNAP-Ed, Montana School Nutrition Association and Team Nutrition

Funded by:
- USDA Team Nutrition Grant and
- Cornell BEN Center funding (SNAP-Ed Director is a co-principal investigator).
Montana Team Nutrition Pilot Project #2

Project Design:

1. **Schools receive individualized Smarter Lunchrooms technical support.**

2. **Schools are identified by SNAP-Ed Program and/or Team Nutrition’s School Wellness Coaches.**

3. **Schools create School Lunch Advisory Committees (SLAC’s) to implement and evaluate change.**
Montana Team Nutrition Pilot Project #2

2nd Pilot Project Goal: Develop a curriculum guide for use in middle and high schools to engage students in Smarter Lunchroom Advisory Committees.

- The outcome of this objective is to create a useful resource that can motivate school foodservice programs to engage with students to improve customer satisfaction.

- Designed for schools lead their own positive change process from start to finish with minimum support needed.
2nd Pilot Project Overview

Four Montana schools currently testing the 5 Step Process and the SLAC Curriculum materials.

- 1 high school
  - Belgrade High School, Belgrade, MT

- 3 middle schools
  - Castle Rock Middle School, Billings, MT
  - Kalispell Middle School, Kalispell, MT
  - Ronan Middle School, Ronan, MT – is a SNAP Ed site
Utilizes Easy 5 Step Process

1. **Build a Smarter Lunchrooms Action Committee:** Include food service, teacher, 2-3 students and SNAP Educator or School Wellness Coach.

2. **Score It:** Team members each complete the Self-Assessment Score Card; 20-25 photos are reviewed by the team members.

3. **Choose One:** Through a team approach, identify 1 change to make.

4. **Do It:** Implement one strategy

5. **Check It:** Measure success of the strategy in 4-6 weeks.
Evaluation Measures

- SNAP-Ed evaluation
  - # of Partnerships (ST6)
  - # of Nutrition supports adopted (MT4)
  - # of Opportunities identified (ST4)

- Team Nutrition evaluation
  - Change in Scorecard points at baseline and after Smarter Lunchrooms change (3 months later)
  - Before and after photos documenting change/techniques used
  - Changes in student participation rates and food selection
Lessons Learned

- SNAP Educators need training on the Smarter Lunchrooms Self Assessment Scorecard before jumping in.

- Relationship building is key—need buy in from both parties—the School Food Service Manager and the SNAP Educator.

- SL is not a one size fits all approach.
  - Driven by the school’s motivation to improve wellness.
  - SNAP Ed’s engagement in policy systems environmental change.

More training is needed, buy in is crucial, and tailor your approach.
Future Goals and Opportunities

- Additional training for SNAP-Ed and Team Nutrition School Wellness Coaches on the Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard.
- Provide training on data collection for evaluation.
- Share experiences from existing pilot school sites/partnerships.
Montana’s Smarter Lunchrooms

Resources

- Montana’s Smarter Lunchrooms Success Stories
  - 5 Montana School Districts (High School and Middle School) create Smarter Lunchrooms to nudge healthy choices and decrease waste.
  - Simple, low cost strategies worked!

- Simplified plate waste protocol

- SLAC Guide available soon

- Stepping into Montana’s Smarter Lunchrooms 5 part webinar series. Short, 30 minute, recorded webinars

http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/index.html

Posted soon…. or contact Montana Team Nutrition directly.
Questions?

Park High School, Livingston, MT, local beef lasagna lunch meal
Contact Info

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