

For: 10th Biennial Childhood Obesity Conference

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Track: School and Expanded Learning

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Title: The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement Increased Salad Bar Usage in Middle Schools

Background: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education in Arizona implemented The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement (SLM) in middle schools during the 2017-2018 school year.

Objective: Determine which intervention school was the most effective at increasing middle school students' trips to the salad bar.

Methods: Four middle schools with salad bars were recruited (3 intervention, 1 control). The student-led intervention school created suggestive selling signs and hosted taste-testing activities. The staff-led intervention school prompted students to visit the salad bar. The student-staff intervention school implemented all three SLM activities. Intervention schools were assessed pre/post using five (Focus on Fruits; Vary the Vegetables; Highlight the Salad Bar, Lunchroom Atmosphere, and Student Involvement) of the eight sections of the SLM scorecard. All schools were assessed using an SLM observation tool that tracked the number of trips students made to the salad bar once/week for seven weeks.

Results: The five scorecard pre/post scores (total points = 34) increased in the intervention schools. The greatest increase was in the student-staff group (pre, 9/34; post, 22/34) followed by the student-led (pre, 12/34; post, 27/34). The cafeteria-led group had the smallest increase (pre, 22/34; post, 25/34); however the pre-scores were comparatively higher. The most salad bar visits were observed for the student-staff group (622), followed by the student-led (342) and cafeteria-led (201) groups. The control school had the fewest visits (91).

Conclusion: Implementing more SLM techniques and having student-staff participation increased the SLM score and the number of students who used the salad bar.

Five of the Eight SLM Scorecard Strategies Were Assessed

Focus on Fruits	_____	of 6
Vary the Vegetables	_____	of 8
Highlight the Salad Bar	_____	of 4
Lunchroom Atmosphere	_____	of 10
Student Involvement	_____	of 6

Total Possible Score _____ of 34

The SLM Observation Tool

- ✓ Counted number of whole fruits offered on the salad bar before/after lunch time.
- ✓ Talled number of students visiting the salad bar who took and did not take an item.