Education and Praise as a Mechanism for Increasing Healthy Choices in Children
Advised by Dr. Pittman

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Childhood Overweight Rates
- United States: 17.1%
- South Carolina: 29.1%
- Spartanburg County: 34.4%

Causes and Effects
- High energy intake
- Low energy expenditure
- Childhood diabetes
- Cardiovascular disease
- Adulthood obesity

Why target school lunch?
- Largest audience
- Homogenous environment
- Variables easily manipulated and controlled

Why Jessie Boyd Elementary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jessie Boyd Elementary</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spartanburg County</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
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</tbody>
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School Lunches
- USDA Guidelines
  - Calories, nutrients, choices
- Chartwells
  - 4 milks, 3 entrees, 4 sides
  - Balanced Lunch Program
- 2/3 of students choose lunch
The Plan

- Provide positive education
- Instill positive eating habits
- Positive emotions for making healthy choices
- Public Recognition
- Cost free
- Sustainable

Baseline Data Collection

- 9 days
- Recorded entrée, side, and milk selections
- Balanced meal + White milk
- Replication of counts
- Data compilation

Education

- Education Day
  - Presented a short video explaining the food pyramid and balanced lunches
  - Explained incentive program
  - Performed skits

Incentive Phase

- Morning announcements
- Same data collection methods
- Repeated menu
- Reinforcement
  - Public recognition
  - Receive healthy choice sticker
  - Ring bell
  - Results displayed everyday

Not Balanced Choices

Balanced Choices
**Education and praise**
- Necessary
- Sufficient

**Support from JBE & Chartwells**
- Chartwells’ balanced lunch option
  - twice per week ➔ every day

**School-wide effects**
- Students were proud of themselves
- Grades competed
- Teachers were surprised at the effectiveness

**Sustainability**
- JBE is continuing the program

**What we learned...**
- Education and praise
  - Necessary
  - Sufficient
- Support from JBE & Chartwells
  - Chartwells’ balanced lunch option
    - twice per week ➔ every day

**The Public Debate over Milk**
- National Dairy Council
- Previous studies
- Our findings
  - No need to remove flavored milks
  - Education inspires children to choose white milk
What about the future?

› Publish results

› Develop universal implementation
  - identify healthiest choice through service provider or school nurse
  - support praise

› More information available at www.Balancedchoices.info