

Marketing Strategies to Increase Breakfast Participation

Check out the competition. What are the fast food restaurants in your area offering? Prepare similar types of food, use similar packaging and give school breakfast items names similar to those at popular breakfast places.

Decorate the cafeteria to make it the "place to be" first thing in the morning. Use decorations or artwork created by students.

Survey students using a breakfast survey for their likes and dislikes.

Form a student Breakfast and Lunch Committee for students' input about menu preferences and cafeteria service. If you can't meet their recommendations, let the students know why. During the committee, discuss labor, food costs, and nutritional value with respect to their menu and service recommendations.

Offer taste-tests with students before offering new breakfast items on the menu. Serve small, sample-sized portions to students during breakfast or lunch. Advertise the results of the taste-test when offering the new food item on the menu.

Work with teachers to link classroom instruction with activities in the cafeteria. For example:

- Tie geography into the breakfast menu by offering typical breakfast foods eaten in other countries. Display posters about these foods in the cafeteria.
- Invite older students to read to younger students in the cafeteria.
- Work with the art or health teacher to have students create posters with food, nutrition, or health messages. Provide prizes to students with the best messages.

Offer incentives to students and staff who regularly eat the school breakfast. Offer school staff a school breakfast at a reduced price after a certain number of meals eaten in the cafeteria. Give a small prize to students who eat the school breakfast a pre-determined number of times. Offer a free breakfast item to students who "bring a friend" to breakfast with them for the first time. Offer the friend a free breakfast item.

Role modeling promotes participation. Teachers who eat school breakfast with their students promote breakfast eating. Students want to eat with their "cool" teachers. Offer incentives such as a free or reduced-price breakfast to teachers who eat with their students.

Promote Breakfast

To Parents:

- Parents need to see that their children are out of bed and at school in time to eat breakfast before the school bell rings. Promote the importance of breakfast as nutritious and low cost. Communicate with parents through monthly articles on the menus.

To Students:

- Promote breakfast as nutritious and tasty.

To Teachers:

- Emphasize the positive behavior and academic benefits of breakfast for their students..
- Offer promotional free breakfasts to teachers who eat breakfast with their students.

To the Community

- Invite state legislators to eat breakfast with students in the classroom. Give them information regarding the benefits of linking breakfast with academics.

For more information: **Expanding Breakfast Manual & Video Kit - Second Edition** from the National Dairy Council and the Child Nutrition Foundation; to order call (800) 728-0728.