



# Comfortable Cafeterias



Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>  
1:30-2:30pm

TEAM NUTRITION  IOWA™

## Team Nutrition

An initiative of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to support the Child Nutrition Programs through training and resource development.

### Iowa Department of Education



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Creating Comfortable Cafeterias to Improve Child Nutrition



## WELCOME TO

### Our Comfortable Cafeteria



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## Comfortable Cafeterias

### How Pleasant and Positive Mealtimes at School Can Set the Stage for Better Learning, Better Behavior, and Improved Health



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## New Standards =



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## New Standards =



## It's Only Nutrition

WHEN they eat or drink it!



## More FUEL into Kids

Less Food into the Trash Can!



## Today's Webinar

- Describe the behavioral and academic benefits of positive, pleasant mealtimes.
- Discuss the important role of school cafeterias in helping children develop positive eating habits for a lifetime.
- Share tips and resources to make school mealtimes more pleasant for both students and staff.



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## POLL #1



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*So, why should YOU care?*

# Better Learning



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*So, why should YOU care?*

# Better Behavior



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*So, why should YOU care?*

# Improved Health



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**So, what is the best schedule for her?**



**What is the best schedule for them?**



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**OPTIMAL SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS**

- Walk to school
- **BREAKFAST (10-15 minutes)**
- Classroom learning
- Recess before lunch (RBL)
- **LUNCH (15-20 minutes)**
- Classroom learning
- Recess
- After-school snack



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**The Problem** 3 in 5 K-8 public school teachers say students regularly come to school hungry.

Here's what more than 1,000 K-8 public school teachers have to say about childhood hunger in our schools:

- 3 out of 5 teachers say they have children in their classrooms who regularly come to school hungry.
- 4 out of 5 of those teachers say these children come to school hungry at least once a week.
- A majority of teachers who see hunger as a problem believe the problem is growing.

**The Impact** Three prevalent consequences of hunger in schools:

- Inability to concentrate
- Poor academic performance
- Headaches & stomach aches

**FOOD INSECURITY**

**Comfortable Cafeterias**

**How Pleasant and Positive Mealtimes at School Can Set the Stage for Better Learning, Better Behavior, and Improved Health**



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**Who should care about mealtimes in school cafeterias?**

- School Food Service Staff
- School Administrators
- Teachers
- Nurses
- Aides
- Students
- Parents
- Coaches
- Communities



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## So, what does this look like?

Every school has the opportunity to create and support a Pleasant and Positive Mealtime Environment.



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## So, what does this look like?



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## Pleasant & Positive Mealtime Environment

- One of best parts of the school day – break from classroom pressures
- Good food in a safe, welcoming atmosphere - showing that schools value the importance of nutrition
- Calm, comfortable tone that allows socialization and conversations
- Unrushed feeling so adults and children have time to enjoy meal



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## Sometimes cafeterias are not so inviting

- Students are pressured to eat certain foods or specific amounts.
- Supervising adults are not trained to support healthy eating.
- Students are not allowed to talk or socialize during meals.
- Meals are consumed in a hurry to get outside or back to classroom.



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## Pleasant & Positive Mealtime Environment

- A time for students to relax, socialize, and nourish their bodies and minds
- A time to fill critical nutrient gaps and refuel for concentration and focus in the classroom
- A learning laboratory for healthy eating habits and acceptable mealtime behaviors



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## Pleasant & Positive Mealtime Environment

- A calm, comfortable cafeteria does not happen by accident.
- Like any other important aspect of an successful school, it requires effective teamwork and communication among administrators, teachers, aides, food service, school nurses, students, and parents.



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## POLL #2



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## Best Practices for Comfortable Cafeterias



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## Best Practices for Comfortable Cafeterias

- Recess Before Lunch
- Adequate time to eat lunch
- Established Mealtime Philosophy
- Adults eating with children



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## Recess Before Lunch (RBL)

- Improved cafeteria atmosphere
  - Students are more relaxed and focused on eating rather than the playground
- Less supervision in the cafeteria
  - Students have improved behavior
- Fewer classroom discipline issues
  - Students are calmer when they return to the classroom



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## Recess Before Lunch (RBL)

- Increase in classroom time on-task
  - Students return to the classroom ready to learn
- Increased milk, vegetable, and entree consumption
  - Less plate waste, less trash
  - Results in increased nutrients and fluid intake
- Decreased number of nurse visits for tummy aches after recess



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## Recess Before Lunch (RBL)

**Recess Before Lunch**  
A Guide for Success

OPI

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Recess Before Lunch is a Service

## Adequate Time to Eat Lunch

At least  
15-20 minutes  
of  
**SEAT TIME**



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## Established Mealtime Philosophy



- Basis for training all staff who are in the cafeteria
- Simple, direct, easy to follow, consistent messages for children
- Helps children learn life-long skills for a healthy relationship with food.
- Post it in cafeteria, share with parents.

## Adults Eating with Children

**Administrators**  
**Teachers**  
**Aides**  
**Parents**  
**Grandparents**  
**School Board Members**

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## Why are mealtimes so important?

1. Today's food experiences shape children's life-long relationships with food. The goal is to develop capable, competent, and smart eaters.
2. Meals consumed at school are essential to healthy students with strong bodies and sharp brains.
3. More satisfied customers in the cafeteria also means that school meals programs financially strong.

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## Pleasant & Positive Mealtime Materials

Based on the **Ellyn Satter**  
Approach to Feeding  
and the  
Division of Responsibility  
in Feeding

[www.ellynsatter.com](http://www.ellynsatter.com)

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## Ellyn Satter Approach

- Kids eat better when they are not pressured.
- Kids eat unpredictably, waste food, and are leery of trying new foods.
- Kids naturally stop eating and drinking when they are full.

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## Division of Responsibility in Feeding

- Adults decide the **what, when,** and **where** of feeding at school.
- Children decide **whether they will choose to eat the foods offered** and **how much to eat.**



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## How do kids eat?

- Differently than adults: Cautious about new food and about new people cooking it, esp. in preschool and early elementary
- Learn by repeated exposure and experience with new food (at least 7-10 times)
- Like to be in control of their eating, with supportive adults present, in a pleasant setting, with enough time to eat



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## How do kids eat?

- They like choices.
- They want to feel safe with food on their tray, not scared that they will be forced to eat it, pressured to try a bite, etc.
- They listen and respond to their own hunger and satiety cues.
- They need to have plenty of time to eat, at least 15 to 20 minutes of seat time.



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## How do kids eat?

- They eat with their eyes first and are not interested in food that is unappealing to them.
- They need limits and guidance on how to respectfully decline food.
- They like to eat and socialize with friends.



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## What's the role of School Nutrition Staff?

- Provide eye-appealing, tasty, colorful, fresh meals in a pleasant environment
  - Decide **what** foods served and how to introduce new foods successfully
  - Decide **when** (timing of meals)
  - Decide **where** (location of meals)
- **Help customers feel safe, welcomed, and valued! Model/teach respectful manners.**



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## What's the role of all adults in cafeteria?

- **Help customers feel safe, welcomed, and valued! Model/teach respectful manners.**
- Let them decide **how much to eat** and **how to make choices** respectfully.
- Teach/model social skills for meals: inside voices, eating etiquette, use of utensils, and gauging time to eat before dismissal.



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## Phrases that HELP in School Cafeterias

### Phrases that HINDER

- Finish your milk.
- You didn't eat enough of your lunch.

### Phrases that HELP

- *Are you still thirsty?*
- *Are you finished with your milk?*
- *Did you get enough to eat today?*
- *Are you finished with your lunch?*



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## Phrases that HELP in School Cafeterias

### Phrases that HINDER

- Hurry, you only have five more minutes to finish your lunch!

### Phrases that HELP

- *You have five more minutes to enjoy your lunch.*
- *If you are still hungry, fill up your tummies in the next five minutes.*



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## Things NOT to do in School Cafeterias

- Force children to eat a minimum amount of food or milk
- Force bribe, or pressure children to try a new food item
- Take it personally if students decline or dislike what was prepared
- Over-ride their bodies' hunger/fullness cues



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## Comfortable Cafeteria VIDEO

**Dr. Kim DeBruckyer, Principal, staff, students, and parents Gallatin Gateway School talks about mealtimes in their cafeteria**

**[Click here!](#)**



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## Thank you for visiting

## Our Comfortable Cafeteria



## POLL #3



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## National School Lunch Week

- October 14th – 18<sup>th</sup>
  - Take Your Parent to School Lunch
  - Local Celebrity Serve School Meals
  - Morning Announcements
  - Hold a Coloring Contest
  - Handout Stickers at Lunch
  - Send Information Home to Parents



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## IA Team Nutrition Resources

### School Meal Parent Campaign



*Iowa*  
**RECESS**  
*before lunch*

- East Elementary (Ankeny)
- Neil Armstrong Elementary (Bettendorf)
- Davis County Elementary (Davis Co)

## Questions?

- Carrie Scheidel: [carrie.scheidel@iowa.gov](mailto:carrie.scheidel@iowa.gov)
- Patti Delger: [patti.delger@iowa.gov](mailto:patti.delger@iowa.gov)
- Dayle Hayes: [eatwellatschool@gmail.com](mailto:eatwellatschool@gmail.com)



“School Meals That Rock”

*Send pictures of your school meals to Dayle to be featured during Iowa week!*

<http://schoolmeals.educateiowa.gov>