

Eating in the Cafeteria

Situational Stressor



Triggers:

- Social stressors (i.e. being excluded from a conversation, not being accepted by peers, wanting to be popular)
- Noise level
- Student has difficulty maneuvering through rows carrying tray and finding a preferred seat.
- The smell of certain foods may be noxious to some students.
- Student is a picky eater.



Thinking Strategies:

Student Positive Affirmations

- I feel as good as I eat.
- Anything is possible.
- I can do anything I imagine.

Positive Adult Responses

- What you have to say is important. I am listening.
- Slow down and enjoy your lunch.

Activities

- Lunch Note Jokes - Cafeteria helpers can share jokes with students during lunch. If the students become too loud, whisper a joke. Students can submit their own jokes throughout the week. At the end of the week, several jokes are chosen. The student who submitted the joke gets to read it to his/her peers. (19)

- What do you call a fake noodle? An impasta.
- What do you call a peanut in a spacesuit? An astronaut.
- Why did the bacon laugh? The egg cracked a yolk.
- What are twins favorite fruit? Pears
- What is a pretzels favorite dance? The twist
- What do you call cheese that isn't yours? Nacho cheese
- Where do hamburgers like to dance? At a meatball
- What do you give to a sick lemon? Lemon aid
- Why do seagulls fly over the sea? If they flew over the bay they would be called bagels.



Focusing & Calming Strategies:

- Joyful Eating – Cafeteria helper instructs students to “Slowly enjoy your lunch. Take a deep relaxing breath. Smell your food. As you take a bite experience the sensation of the feel of your food in your mouth. Enjoy the colors of each food. Savor the flavor as you slowly chew and swallow each bite. Be happy and enjoy your lunch.” Adaptations: Make the students aware of the connection between healthy eating to their successful thinking and interacting at school. (27)
- **Movement Activities** – Have students perform while standing in line. (See Appendix C)
 - Positive Power
 - Focus
 - Hang Loose



Sensory Strategies:

Modify Environment

- Dim lights.
- Play calm quiet music in the background.

Teaching Moment

Thinking strategies can help you to change how you think and what you do. It focuses on the “here and now” problems and difficulties. It’s not an event that causes our emotions, but how we interpret or give meaning to that event. (31)

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