



Comfortable Cafeteria: Annotated Bibliography

This document was created to serve as a resource to school personnel and families in order to learn about best practices recommended for creating a positive cafeteria experience for all students. The literature search **included** a range of publications including professional organization or national technical assistance center information sheets and monographs, descriptive articles and research studies.

For each publication, a summary of the contents and implications for practice is provided. Articles and research studies are organized within a multi-tiered framework – universal, whole school promotion and prevention approaches; targeted strategies for students at-risk of struggling in the cafeteria; and intensive, individualized strategies for students with disabilities and/or mental health challenges who might experience significant challenges in the cafeteria.

Make sure to refer to the many useful resources and websites summarized on pp.



Look for the star! These are placed next to some of the most useful resources.

Table of Contents

○ Summary	p. 2
○ Publications	
○ Tier 1: Universal Strategies for Prevention and Promotion.....	pp. 3-9
○ Tier 2: Targeted Interventions for Children at Risk.....	pp. 10-16
○ Tier 3: Interventions for Children with Identified Disabilities.....	pp. 17-21
○ Useful Resources.....	pp. 24-41

Developed for *Every Moment Counts* by: Becca Winne & Susan Bazyk (2014)
See Cafeteria tab at www.everymomentcounts.org

Summary of the Cafeteria Research & Resources

Current literature supports the importance of a positive cafeteria environment on the physical and mental well-being of all children. By taking a more proactive universal approach to improving the cafeteria environment, all school personnel can improve lunchtime behaviors, increase positive social interactions, and increase classroom alertness, contributing to improved learning and academic performance.

When creating a more positive lunchtime experience, there are several aspects one needs to consider. These include providing an environment that not only provides ample nutritional food, but providing an environment that allows for positive social interaction for all children. This includes providing adequate training for school staff and implementing a tiered model approach utilizing promotion, prevention, and intervention strategies. In addition to utilizing a universal approach to improving the cafeteria environment, occupational therapists and other relevant school staff must provide more targeted and intensive interventions for students at-risk or with identified disabilities. These types of empirical interventions include peer-mediated strategies, such as lunch bunch groups, behavioral, and sensory approaches. These types of targeted and intensive approaches can promote friendship and social skills development and decrease situational stressors, such as bullying for students with and without disabilities during lunch.

There are many different ways to create a positive environment in the cafeteria. Each school must analyze their cafeteria, receive input from students and staff, and review their budget and resources when developing a plan. A positive cafeteria environment and healthy eating habits should also be a school-wide initiative involving all staff, students, and parents. Involving all in the process will increase the chances of success. Occupational therapists can educate the cafeteria staff on how to deal with behaviors during lunch and promote healthy eating. Teachers should teach positive socialization strategies and nutrition as a part of their lesson plans.

Research has shown that recess before lunch improves academics, provides for a more relaxed eating environment, and decreases afternoon discipline referrals to the principal's office. Schools must also consider the design of the cafeteria including making the environment more inviting, such as painting walls, hanging posters to promote healthy eating, and adjusting seating arrangements to provide more socialization opportunities and to decrease overcrowding issues. Noise level and behavior issues may be some of the main problems in many school cafeterias as well. Educating students on cafeteria rules and having the rules clearly posted for all students in the cafeteria may be ways to improve these issues, along with having a reward system for good behaviors. Healthy eating goes hand in hand with a positive cafeteria environment. Education and resources should be provided to lunch staff so they can provide healthy, appealing, and safe foods to students. This also includes food presentation, having lower priced healthy foods, rewards for healthy eating and good customer service.

Having a positive cafeteria environment is critical to improve the overall mental health of children. Lunchtime is an important part of the school day for children to enjoy their meal and enjoy spending time with peers and adults who care. Creating a positive lunchtime environment encourages healthy interaction and healthy eating, and provides a place that children can enjoy and feel safe in. Bringing all the pieces together to create this environment for promoting mentally and physically healthy students is imperative to guarantee their future well being as healthy adults.

Publications

Tier 1 ~ Universal Strategies for Promotion & Prevention in the Cafeteria

- Aviani, R. (2006). From bedlam to decorum: Improving lunchtime behavior. *Education Canada*, 46, 19-21.

Type of Resource: Magazine Article

Summary: This article focuses on a school-wide social skills instructional program called Effective Behavior Support (EBS), and addresses how to control lunchtime behavior for middle school students. The program is a proactive way of improving student maladaptive behaviors during lunchtime. The lunchroom is often unruly, loud, and where roughhousing is commonplace, often leading to discipline referrals from adult supervisors. The lunchroom does not mirror academic settings that are often proactive; students are given a large chunk of unstructured time without instruction on how to behave. Not only is instruction not provided, punishment is often used instead. Schools should implement a program, such as EBS to apply positive behavior interventions to bring social change among children. Some of the strategies include environmental redesign, curriculum redesign, and removal of rewards that encourage bad behavior. This type of approach focuses on encouraging positive behaviors, rather than using a reactive approach that encourages bad behavior. The first step in this program is to identify problem behaviors through surveying and observing. From this, the school should then determine how to use this information to encourage positive behavior. Once positive behavior has been achieved, schools must then determine how to reward this behavior. Schools should also collaboratively implement social skills instruction. For example, one school decided to use the first twelve weeks of school to introduce the social skills instruction program. This included teachers instructing on behavioral expectations in the lunchroom, such as using worksheets or teachers modeling appropriate behavior. This particular program for this middle school improved lunchtime behaviors significantly; discipline referrals reduced by 56% and problem behaviors observed by lunch supervisors decreased by 61%.

Assessment: Using a program such as EBS is a positive and proactive way to improve maladaptive behaviors during lunch and can address a wide variety of behaviors. EBS and other proactive behavioral approaches can also be easily adapted for other school environments, such as the playground and school busses. By doing so, schools can create a more positive school climate in all settings.

Implications for practice: Occupational therapists and other school personnel can play a large part in a program such as EBS by providing consultative services for environmental redesign. Occupational therapist's knowledge in environment analysis,

adaptation, and modification qualifies them as valuable team members for the success of a behavioral support program.

- Clayton, M. (1997). Let's do lunch! *Responsive Classroom*, February. Retrieved from <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/article/lets-do-lunch>



Type of Resource: Online Newsletter

Summary: This newsletter is geared towards teachers, but any school professional can put the principles presented here into practice. In order to make lunchtime successful, students need to understand why rules for behavior at lunchtime are set in place. Once the students understand the expectations, they can then practice positive behaviors and learn how to enjoy lunchtime. Modeling proper behavior in the classroom is also important so children carryover that positive behavior into the cafeteria. Clayton suggests using "lunch partners" so the children have someone to sit next to and expand their social group. The "lunch partner" changes on a daily basis so the children are continually learning how to make new friends, include others, and act appropriately with one another. Another suggestion is to have the children brainstorm different ideas of what to talk about at lunch. This is a great way to facilitate socially acceptable mealtime conversation. Additionally, having the children think of various games they can play with one another while waiting for lunchtime to be over, such as I Spy, is an easy strategy to implement. Posting the list of games in the classroom and having the children pick one before they head out to lunch is suggested. Finally, it is important to talk about behavior with children such as providing feedback regarding positive behaviors that were noticed during lunch and suggestions for how to handle behavior challenges.

Assessment: This newsletter is full of practical ideas any school professional can easily put into practice. The ideas are easy to apply, positive, and fun for the students.

Implications: This is a short and easy-to-read article with practical strategies that can be embedded in the cafeteria to promote friendships and mealtime conversations. Occupational therapists and other school staff can share this with cafeteria supervisors.

- Golley, R. R., Baines, E. E., Bassett, P. P., Wood, L. L., Pearce, J. J., & Nelson, M. (2010). School lunch and learning behaviour in primary schools: an intervention study. *European Journal Of Clinical Nutrition*, 64, 1280-1288. doi: 10.1038/ejcn.2010.150

Type of Resource: Journal Article

Type of Study: Randomized Control Study

Summary: The main purpose of this study was to determine whether or not school food and dining interventions improved primary school students' classroom behavior. Preliminary research within this study states that food provided at lunch and other times during the school day have the potential to support student's nutrition, growth, and development. Teachers and parents have observed that student's concentration, behavior, learning, and academic performance improved when healthier food and

improved lunch environments were introduced. Not many experimental studies have examined both food intake and lunch environment on academic performance, warranting a study of this nature. There were three randomly assigned groups within the study; one received the introduction of healthier foods at lunchtime followed by changes to the environment, another received changes to the environment followed by the promotion of healthier food, while the last group remained as the control. Environmental modifications were based on current guidelines and checklists designed to assess the quality of dining room environment. Food modifications were also based on government standards. Intervention components were categorized under food provision and promotion, dining space, lunchtime management, and good relations. A 91-item checklist was also developed based off of a literature review of what shapes the school lunch dining experience. This included an interview section, a menu checker, a pre-service and during-service observation checklist. This checklist was then used to tally overall dining room scores; higher scores indicated a more positive dining room environment. Systematic observations were then conducted in the classroom to measure behaviors post lunch and examined a variety of different classroom work settings and classroom interactions. Results indicated that teacher-student on-task engagement was 3.4 times more likely in the intervention groups compared to the control group. However, on-task student-to-student behavior was less likely in the intervention group than the control group. Results also concluded that food and dining environment interventions increased levels of alertness in students, but varied among different social modes (i.e. individual vs. student-to-student and teacher-to-student interactions). In conclusion, alertness is positively affected in teacher-to-student interactions, which represents a majority of classroom experiences in primary schools. The findings show that if alertness is not appropriately supervised in this age group, it may result in increased off-task behavior when students are working together.

Assessment: The results from this study indicate that improving food intake and modifying the lunchroom environment can make progress in classroom alertness among children ages 5 to 11. It should be noted that when improving alertness, children typically have higher motivation to interact, which can have a positive and negative outcome. This need for interaction may increase on-task behaviors with individual work, but may correlate for a higher need for students to interact with one another, therefore decreasing on-task behavior in groups. This highlights the need for adults to supervise student's in-group interactions in order to increase on-task group learning behaviors. Overall, increased alertness correlates to improved learning and academic performance. It should be noted that the study included a limited amount of classes observed by a small number of observers over a short period of time, indicating a need for larger and longer study.

Implications: This study, among several others within this bibliography highlights the importance of occupational therapists and other school personnel's role in lunchroom environmental analysis and modification. Not only should therapists address the environment (i.e. dining space, lunchtime management, such as lunchroom rules and

good relations such as staff behavior management training), but also should also address food provision and promotion (i.e. menu changes, displaying menus and offering rewards for healthy eating).

- Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland (n.d.). Improving the dining experience in schools. Retrieved from



http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Dining%20Experience%2009_10.pdf

Type of Resource: Free, downloadable Guidance Booklet

Summary: The overarching aim of this colorful 24-page booklet is to provide step-by-step strategies for how to make the lunchtime experience more positive and successful for students. Some benefits to improving the lunchroom experience include having a "happier and calmer population of children and young people" (p. 3). In addition, positive behavior, additional support, and a positive contribution to the child's health and well-being can be accomplished by making the lunchroom experience a positive one. A positive lunchtime experience is characterized by the use of color, pictures, appropriate seating arrangements, music, and a sense of the students belonging there. In order to make positive changes, all school staff must be on board. Staff should survey the school environment, take note of what could be improved upon, and talk to the right people at school to make the changes possible. The authors offer a step-by-step action plan to make lunch time inviting: (a) provide a good dining space with the appropriate tables and size room; (b) make the dining space feel inviting by making it relaxing, providing a name for it, having children's artwork displayed, playing calming music, and appropriate temperature; (c) if the dining room is a multi-purpose room make it feel comfortable by decorating the room, providing tablecloths, and menu boards to help children identify what the food items are for the day; (d) consider extending lunch times to allow children to relax and have a break between classes; (e) encourage healthy eating by encouraging children to help plan lunches, allow students to taste new food, and reward healthy eating, (f) encourage positive behavior by allowing students to have a sense of ownership, engage with one another socially, and have a good relationship with their teachers. In addition to this plan of action, asking for buy-in from the parents by providing newsletters about changes happening during lunchtime, asking for feedback, and inviting the parents to share a meal in the cafeteria with their children are important steps to take.

Assessment: Overall, this resource is helpful and provides useful ideas for making the cafeteria experience a positive one for students. Some of the ideas presented are not as easy to implement as others, but overall small changes and engagement from the students is key to making the cafeteria a positive experience.

Implications: Occupational therapists and other school staff can use this user-friendly resource to obtain specific ideas for how to work together to make lunchtime a

meaningful, positive, and productive experience. Occupational therapists can assist the school in making the lunchroom environment sensory appropriate and student friendly.

- Moore, S.N., Murphy, S., Tapper, K., & Moore, L. (2010). The social, physical and temporal characteristics of primary school dining halls and their implications for children's eating behaviours. *Health Education, 110*, 399-411.

Type of Resource: Journal Article

Type of Study: Case Study

Summary: The main purpose of this article is to examine the characteristics of primary school dining environments and their effects on eating behavior. A social environment is made up of different aspects, including physical, temporal, and social dimensions. All of these aspects interact with one another to create a unique context. Therefore, the authors of this study suspected that the interaction of these dimensions would have implications on the lunchroom environment and its effect on eating behaviors. Research has noted how the eating environment is as important as the food being offered when determining the effectiveness of nutritional policies implemented during school lunch. In order to examine characteristics of the lunchroom environment and its effects on eating behaviors a case study of a Local Education Authority (LEA) in Wales was conducted over a two-year period. The results showed three distinct contexts within the lunch environment contributing to eating behaviors. These were the service area, the dining area, and the kitchen. Many nutritional policies implemented within schools do not focus on the dining area but focus rather on the food availability and kitchens. This means these policies may only fulfill partial objectives due to their lack of focus on the environment. Results also found overcrowding to be an issue, along with time constraints forcing students to eat more quickly. These space and time constraints do not allow students to enjoy their meals with accompanied social interactions. Research has indicated that physical dimensions, such as décor and adequate staffing are important in creating positive lunchroom environments. Results also found that tables, seats, plates, and tableware were selected more for convenience, rather than on creating a positive environment. As far as social dimensions, two different cultural environments within the same lunchroom were discovered, indicating that behaviors of students were independent from the physical eating space. The nutritional policy implemented during the examination of this case study focused primarily on educating lunch staff on cooking skills and food nutrition. Training for staff was also found to be at the discretion of the individual and midday supervisors were hard to recruit and had little time to encourage eating; suggesting that roles and responsibilities of midday supervisors along with skill sets needs to be addressed. In conclusion, stakeholders and school staff need to develop and implement individualized programs for their specific school in order to create a positive lunchtime experience. Nutritional policies also need to place emphasis on the eating environment, the time available for eating, the role of midday supervisors, and training all lunch staff in the promotion of choice and consumption behaviors.

Assessment: Many schools within the U.S. focus on implementing nutritional policies that can encourage healthier eating during lunch. This article brings reinforces the importance of schools promoting nutrition as well as creating a positive mealtime environment by educating cafeteria supervisors about their role.

Implications: Occupational therapists' expertise in environmental analysis, adaptation, and modifications make them key players in promoting a positive lunch environment. OTs can play a crucial role in assessing the lunchroom environment, including its physical, temporal, and social attributes to determine whether or not it promotes positive eating habits and positive social interactions.

- Storey, H.C., Pearce, J., Ashfield-Watt, PAL., Wood, L., Baines, E., & Nelson, M. (2011). A randomized controlled trial of the effect of school food and dining room modifications on classroom behaviour in secondary school children. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 65, 32-38. doi: 10.1038/ejcn.2010.227

Type of Resource: Journal Article

Type of Study: Randomized Control Study

Summary: This study examined the effect of modifications to food and dining experiences in secondary schools on learning related behaviors. Current research suggests the environment determines food choice and nutrient intake. Due to this recent discovery, many schools in England have developed standards to ensure that school lunches are nutritionally balanced, and can be supported in order for local authorities to implement and maintain these changes. It also has been widely believed that children who are fed better learn better. Evidence supports that food insufficiency is correlated to poor academics, cognitive and psychosocial development in children. Although this is the case, research has uncovered that there is not enough evidence to support a specific effect of nutrition on learning. Few studies have examined the effect of school lunches on educational outcomes and no studies have examined its effect on classroom behavior. Therefore, a study of this nature is warranted. Three schools within England participated, while 156 students from two received intervention. The intervention consisted of a food and dining room checklist tool based on best practice each of the schools used to improve food choices and nutrient intake with a list of activities to do so, such as changing menus. Dining room interventions consisted of improving the dining experience and included temporal and physical changes, such as staggering lunch times. Systematic observation of classroom behavior was then performed. Observations were made in science, arts, and humanities classes on student's behavior. Observations included gathering information on a variety of different in-class behaviors, such as peer-to-peer interaction and working individually. The child was considered 'on task' if they were engaged in behavior relevant to the activity. The child was considered 'off task' if they were engaged in behavior unrelated to the activity. Results indicate that intervention groups were 18% more likely to be on task and 14% less likely to be off-task compared to the control group. Most of the improvements in task-related behaviors

resulted in students working better on their own. In conclusion, modifying food and dining environments improved learning behaviors post-lunch period.

Assessment: This study is useful because the evidence-based results found students who improved their food choice, spent less time waiting in lunch lines, experienced an improved dining ambience, and increased their time in physical and social activities were more alert and held better attention in class post lunch. This highlights the need not only to provide healthier food, but also to provide an overall more enjoyable lunch environment. Research states that by improving the lunch environment students are able to develop relationships, which support autonomy and competence needed for better school performance.

Implications: Results highlight the valuable role occupational therapists and other school personnel can play in environmental modifications within the lunchroom. Occupational therapist's expertise in environmental analysis makes them key players in developing a more enjoyable lunch experience for children.

- Woodruff, S.J., Hanning, R.M., McGoldrick, K. (2010). The influence of physical and social contexts of eating on lunch-time food intake among southern Ontario, Canada, middle school students. *Journal of School Health*, 80, 421-428.

Type of Resource: Journal Article

Type of Study: Qualitative Study

Summary: The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not food intake was associated with aspects of the physical and social lunch environment. A total of 1,236 students in grade 6 completed the Food Behavior Questionnaire over one academic school year. Preliminary research has identified that both individual factors and environmental factors have an influence on healthy eating. Students who eat lunch at school, with their friends had better diet quality than those eating alone or with family members. The Food Behavior Questionnaire used in this study assesses weekday nutrient intake and food behaviors. Participants completed the questionnaire during class time from Tuesday through Friday. This included documenting what foods were eaten, serving sizes consumed, toppings consumed with the food and what beverages were consumed as well. Eating behavior questions during consumption were also asked: "Who did you eat with yesterday (breakfast, lunch, dinner), Where did you eat, Who prepared the food, Where did you or your family purchase the food you ate." Results found that 30% of energy came from lunch at school. Higher amounts of energy, such as meats were consumed at a restaurant or fast food outlets compared to at home and school. Students consumed more energy when friends or others prepared lunches compared to when they or family members prepared it. Lowest intake of energy was observed when students ate at home or school. A high number of students also reported consuming sugary drinks during lunch, especially when eating at restaurants or fast food outlets. Largest portion sizes were consumed at home and/or alone. In conclusion, eating on the go or in between places should be discouraged. Lunches

consumed at home had the lowest intake of energy and were either prepared by students or by family members and had the lowest intake of sugary drinks, despite having the largest portion sizes. The authors also support school policies that restrict fast food from being accessible on and off of school premises.

Assessment: This source is important in that it highlights how school lunchtime environments have a unique opportunity to provide physical and social environments conducive for healthy eating. These concepts highlight the importance of implementing school policies that restrict fast food consumption and eating on the go. School administration should consider these points in order to provide a healthier eating environment for all students.

Implications: Occupational therapists and other school personnel play an important role in advocating for health-promoting physical and social lunchtime environments in order to promote physical and emotional well-being for all children.

Tier 2 ~ Targeted Interventions for Children at Risk of Challenges to Participation and Enjoyment in the Cafeteria

- Bundy, A., Lane, S. & Murray, E. (2002). *Sensory integration: Theory and practice*. Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis Company. Available from <http://www.amazon.com/books/dp/0803605455>

Type of Resource: Book

Summary: The credited authors of this book address theory, assessment, intervention, and research related to sensory integrative dysfunction. Topics covered on theory include: sensory integration and Jean Ayres, structure and function of the sensory systems, disorders of praxis, sensory modulation, visual-spatial abilities, and central auditory processing disorders. Topics on assessment and intervention include: assessing sensory integrative dysfunction, interpreting test scores and observations, the process of planning and implementing intervention, play theory and sensory integration, orchestrating intervention: the art of practice, creating direct intervention from theory, using sensory integration theory in schools, alternative and complementary programs for intervention, and integrating sensory integration with other approaches to intervention. Topics on research include advances in sensory integration research and sensory integration and occupation.

Assessment: This book will be a useful resource for therapists trying to create a more pleasant cafeteria environment for those with specific sensory needs. Although this book does not specifically address sensory processing within the cafeteria, there is a

specific chapter on using sensory integration theories within a school setting. These strategies may be generalized into the cafeteria environment.

Implications: This book is useful for occupational therapists who may be new to the world of sensory integration by providing comprehensive information about sensory integration evaluation and intervention. Specifically it be used for students with identified sensory processing difficulties within the cafeteria environment.

- Elledge, L., Cavell, T. A., Ogle, N. T., & Newgent, R. A. (2010). School-Based Mentoring as Selective Prevention for Bullied Children: A Preliminary Test. *Journal Of Primary Prevention*, 31, 171-187. doi: 10.1007/s10935-010-0215-7

Type of Resource: Journal Article

Type of Study: Quasi-experimental study

Summary: This study examined the benefits of school-based lunchtime mentoring as a form of bullying prevention among 36-bullied children in grades 4 and 5. Twelve students in this program were paired with a college student mentor, while the other twenty-four students were used as a control. The literature review within this study reveals that peer-mentoring programs have beneficial effects on children's relationships, often a problem area for children who are bullied. Chronic bullying is associated with social isolation, loneliness, low self-esteem, and low academic performance and attendance. Children who are bullied are also more likely to report physical and psychosocial complaints and are at risk for developing psychiatric disorders. Later in life, they are also more prone to depression, self-criticism, and suicidal behavior. All of these risks highlight the need for preventions strategies. Some successful strategies have been identified, such as support groups for bullied children, social skills training, and youth mentoring. Youth mentoring has been found to be most beneficial because of its low demands on children and staff, unlike other intervention strategies such as teacher-driven interventions and child-focused skill training. Peer mentoring has been found to directly benefit children who are bullied because of the presence of a supervising adult and the desire to work with a valued mentor changes peers perceptions of bullied students. Children in the Lunch Buddy mentoring program were paired with a college student mentor who visited twice a week during lunch. Mentors underwent a thorough training process. Mentors were assigned to sit with victimized children and their peers at their lunch tables. This study measured self-reported peer victimization through the student participants and their teachers; quality of relationships among the participants, parent, and teacher; and student satisfaction with the Lunch Buddy mentoring program. Results revealed that Lunch Buddy children and mentors viewed the relationship as positive, and parents and teachers were satisfied with the program as well. Peers also viewed the bullied children as less victimized following one semester on the mentoring program. In conclusion, this type of prevention for bullied children is effective because the mentor and surrounding children at lunch tables all contribute to intervention. Both the bullied students and their peers benefit from the mentor's presence at lunch. It was also concluded that the mere presence of college

mentors at a school lunch tables could generate positive peer attention and change peer perceptions of mentored children.

Assessment: This study is useful because it highlights the effectiveness of peer mentoring programs for children who may be at risk for bullying. It highlights interventions such as the Lunch Buddy program and may be more cost effective or easily implemented than other one-on-one interventions such as social skills training. It was identified that the presence of an adult college mentor modeled positive peer interaction and changed overall perceptions of victimized students.

Implications: Lunch Buddy mentoring programs could offer occupational therapists and other relevant school personnel (e.g. school counselors) with an empirical-based strategy to compliment other strategies used for children who may be at-risk for mental health challenges due to bullying. Other strategies can be used along with this type of program include universal bullying prevention programs, group mentoring, one-on-one mentoring, and academically oriented mentoring. Occupational therapists can also utilize the concepts from this program to implement in other school settings, such as the classroom and extracurricular activities.

- Kashman, N. & Mora, J. (2005). *The sensory connection: An OT and SLP approach: sensory and communication strategies that WORK!* Arlington, TX: Future Horizons Inc. Available from <http://www.amazon.com/Sensory-Connection-Approach-Communication-Strategies/dp/1932565485>

Type of Resource: Book

Summary: The authors of this book, who have extensive knowledge on expertise on sensory processing interventions in the home, school and clinic, provide practical strategies for children and adults with sensory and communication disorders. The unique perspective from occupation and speech therapists highlights how a collaborative team approach can increase intervention effectiveness. The topics covered in the book include: an overview of sensory integration, sensory processing difficulties, sensory-based behaviors, approaches to intervention, assessment, the environment, intervention, strategies for both adults and children, transition and informational tools, oral and feeding interventions, developing communication skills, and an appendix filled with creative activities and sample handouts.

Assessment: The cafeteria is an environment that has a variety of stimuli that may be noxious to some students, including different sounds smells and visual stimuli. This book is a great resource for children who may have sensory issues within the cafeteria environment. It offers several strategies and interventions that may be utilized in order to make these students lunchtime experience more enjoyable.

Implications for Occupational Therapy: This book can serve as a helpful reference for occupational therapists who have identified students that may be experiencing sensory processing issues within the cafeteria environment.

- Phillips, S. (1994). Fulfilling roles for lunchtime supervisory staff. *Health Education*. 94, 18-20. doi: 10.1108/09654289410055921

Type of Resource: Journal Article

Summary: This article provides solutions for typical problems encountered by lunchtime supervisory staff. One of the problems lunchtime staff often encounter is inclement weather. The weather can mean the difference between an enjoyable lunchtime and a nightmare. Classrooms are often off limits for lunchtime, so if there was bad weather the only place for students to play is in the halls where lunches are served. This means lunch staff have to make sure noise levels are kept down. Very often, the lunch staff are not properly trained to manage students and do not have the proper resources. Although this is the case, students often spend up to an hour of their school day with lunchtime staff. This is a time where student's attitudes and self-esteem can be developed and where maintaining discipline can be influential. This article highlights the need to include lunch staff on school-wide behavior initiatives. For example, it is often hard to prevent bullying in the school, with lunch staff often contributing to bullying by implementing punitive strategies (e.g. having students eat in silence, yelling at students). In order to overcome some of these obstacles lunch staff should: develop play rules and provide sufficient play resources (i.e. outdoor and indoor resource boxes filled with appropriate toys), be given clear job descriptions to meet objectives in order to promote appropriate student interaction and behavior, have patience and understanding for cultural differences among students, increase general communication about students' needs and school behavior policies, develop gentle and patient strategies for dealing with inappropriate language, be provided two to three two-hour paid training sessions to develop appropriate strategies and policies to prevent bad behavior, and reward good behavior. Lunch supervisory staff often felt more valued and had a better understanding of the students needs when properly trained. This allowed them to feel like important contributors to the student's social development. As one lunchtime supervisor said, "I never realized my being there could make so much difference" and one teacher said "Since the training, my afternoons are so much easier- I didn't really believe it would have made so much difference" (p. 20).

Assessment: This article is useful in that it provides several pertinent areas to address when training lunch staff in providing appropriate lunchtime environments. These include clearly explaining their roles and expectations and providing them with the necessary skills in order to properly address inappropriate behaviors and role modeling appropriate behaviors during lunchtime.

Implications: Occupational therapists, along with other school staff (i.e. school

administration, teachers) can play a direct role in the education and training of lunch supervisory staff. Occupational therapists can take on a more consultative service delivery approach and provide in-services to lunch staff on how to promote positive lunchtime behavior, along with how to address maladaptive behaviors when they do occur.

- Riffel, L.A. (n.d.). *Positive interventions and effective strategies for cafeteria staff*. Retrieved from <http://www.behaviordocor.org/paraprofessionals.html>

Type of Resource: Electronic Book

Summary: This online book is provided on Dr. Laura Riffel's website "Behavior Doctor". Dr. Riffel has specialized in promoting positive behavior for over thirty years with Pre-K through adults and now offers free online resources and professional development seminars on behavior management. This specific online book begins with a brief overview of positive behavior support. She indicates that if 3-5 behavioral expectations are clearly taught, modeled, practiced, and rewarded 80% of students will not need behavioral interventions. The main focus of this book is to offer a guide for cafeteria staff on how to implement positive behavior supports within the cafeteria. It helps identify what causes problem behaviors and how to adjust the behavior through proactive, education and effective strategies. Riffel suggests creating 3-5 behavioral expectations for your cafeteria that are positively stated. Staff should also give examples and non-examples of what the behaviors look like in different settings. This can be accomplished through a "behavioral matrix" that provides expectations and examples. The matrix should then be hung on the wall within the cafeteria. Once the lunch staff team has collaborated together and hung the expectations in the cafeteria, they should also provide reinforcements for positive behavior. By utilizing this handbook, cafeteria staff can effectively reinforce positive lunchtime behavior and proactively diminish maladaptive behaviors for all children. Also provided in this book are ideas lunch staff can implement along with activity handouts and additional useful online resources.

Assessment: This resource is credible because research from the National Technical Assistance Center on PBIS has supported the book's main concepts (i.e. implementing 3-5 behavioral expectations).

Implications: Occupational therapists and other school personnel can utilize this book by providing it to lunch staff as an educational training tool. Occupational therapists should also collaborate with lunch and other school staff when implementing these positive interventions and strategies within the cafeteria.

- Story, M., Nannery, M. S., & Schwartz, M. B. (2009). Schools and obesity prevention: Creating school environments and policies to promote healthy eating and physical activity. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 87, 71-100.

Type of Resource: Journal Article

Type of Study: Mixed-methods study

Summary: Much of the current research indicates that children in the U.S. are not consuming diets that meet the recommendations or reach adequate levels of daily physical activity. Due to this, many children are overweight more than ever. Many schools are now offering strategies to overcome obesity among children by adjusting environments so they can eat healthier and engage in more physical activity. This article discusses several areas in which schools can address these issues, which consist of school food environment and policies, school physical activity environment and policies, school body mass index measurements and wellness policies.

School food environments are important because lunch is between 19% and 50% of children's total daily calories at school. There are two school food categories, which consist of federal school lunch and breakfast programs and food sold outside these formal programs (i.e. vending machines, snack bars). The food sold outside of the programs is considered competitive food because they compete with the regulated lunch and breakfast program foods. An increase in obesity can be associated with these competitive foods because many of these foods are high in fat and sugar. Many initiatives have been made to decrease the availability of these types of food, but more needs to be done. Many schools worry about cutting out competitive foods and how it will decrease revenue. When schools are able to replace these competitive foods with healthier options, revenue is not affected. It was also found that when school competitive foods are limited, students buy more school lunches, which make up for the revenue loss in snacks. Although this is the case, federal policies made by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans standards found that school lunches do not apply to food sold outside the cafeteria. But many states are able to implement policies that set restrictions on competitive food sold outside of school lunches.

Recent research has also found that many regulations across the states vary widely, emphasizing the need for a more uniform national policy for food and beverage standards. The National School Lunch Act (NSLA) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) now offer free or lower price school meals for low-income families. These free or reduced priced meals can have a large impact on children's nutrition. The meals provided by the NSLA and SBP meet federal standards, but stronger efforts are needed to make meals more nutritional. Another barrier to offering more nutritional lunches for children are financial issues. Many schools providing free lunches are not able to provide adequate nutrition and often do not receive appropriate reimbursement. Government funds supporting school lunch programs have also been significantly cut, thus causing cheaper, less nutrition competitive foods to be purchased. Therefore, school professionals should consider increasing reimbursement rates for school meals and advocating for local policies.

Along with addressing the barriers faced within the cafeteria environment, school professionals must also address the nutrition education curriculum standards. Eating patterns are more likely to change when the changes made in the school environment are integrated in classroom nutrition education. Although this is the case, the education taught is often limited. Many teachers identified nutrition and dietary behavior as an area

that they wanted more training in. Other initiatives to increase nutritional lunches include farm-to-school programs, school-garden programs and federal fruit and vegetable programs, but they are often more costly and/or have not yet been evaluated for effectiveness.

In order to increase physical activity, a review of studies concluded that an hour of physical activity programs could be added to the school curriculum by taking time from other subjects without affecting educational outcomes. The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) has supported efforts to develop standards for quality physical education through funding and supported research. Other supports for schools include the Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) which helps evaluate curricula based on NASPE standards. Federally, there are no policies requiring schools to provide physical education programs nor are there incentives in doing so, but federal law requires public schools to provide equal athletic opportunities to all students. Despite this, there is a program offered through the Department of Education called the Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) that awards grants and contracts to expand and improve PE programs K-12. At a state level, schools can set general or minimum requirements, but many delegate responsibility at a local level. Many states do not have physical education mandates and provide different policies based on school level (i.e. elementary, middle and high school). Efforts have been made by a few states to increase time spent on physical education and activity, address the quality of time spent in PE classes, and mandate PE credits for high school graduation. Another area of concern is that only 12 % of states require elementary schools to provide recess. Few states have made efforts to address this, such as denying recess as a punishment for bad behavior and encouraging walking and biking to school. Other efforts include requiring higher training for PE teachers and fitness testing.

One way to prevent obesity is to measure body mass index (BMI) and report findings to parents. There are two types of ways schools can do this, which include surveillance and screening. Although this is the case, few studies have examined the effectiveness of BMI measurement programs. If a BMI program is implemented, important concerns such as financial support, staff training and privacy laws must be considered.

Federal laws require all local education agencies (LEA) participating in federally funded school meal programs to create a school wellness policy (SWP). These policies must include five different features to promote wellness, which address nutrition education and physical activity, nutrition guidelines, a plan for measuring implementation and involvement of the entire community. The SWP guidelines are left up to local school districts and no national requirements are set. This has both negative and positive aspects. Research has found that stronger policies are found in larger school districts and in districts with greater number of students eligible for free or reduced price lunches. In order to address weaker local policies, model programs have been developed by the Center for Ecoliteracy, National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity, Action for Healthy Kids, and USDA Team Nutrition. Some states have also created their own model program as well. Although these programs are helpful for

implementing standards, local school districts must adapt them appropriately. In conclusion, obesity prevention efforts need to be addressed early, focusing on children, families, and their environments through stronger policies at federal, state, and local levels.

Assessment: This article is useful because it highlights the lack of policies that exist for school food nutrition, physical education, and activity and wellness programs in the prevention of obesity. Although the studies show that schools have been making some progress in improving school food and physical activity environments, much more work is needed. In order to address obesity head on, healthier school meals need to be provided along with an increase in the frequency, duration, and intensity of physical activity at school. This requires advocacy on not only a federal and state level, but from a community stand point as well. This includes involvement of parents, students, the school board, school administration, and the public.

Implications: This article highlights the need for a more collaborative effort to address overall wellness, nutrition, and physical activity within the school setting. Occupational therapists can take an active role by advocating the need for better school policies for food nutrition and physical activity. Also, Occupational therapist's unique expertise on environmental analysis, modification, and adaptation make them key players in making a healthy change in school food and physical activity environments at a more local level.

Tier 3 ~ Cafeteria Interventions for Children with Identified Disabilities

- Abourezk, K. (July 5, 2012). Study: Disabled students more likely to bully, be bullied. In *JournalStar.com*. Retrieved from http://journalstar.com/news/local/education/study-disabled-students-more-likely-to-bully-be-bullied/article_7a77b191-f58a-50b4-b168-b5081ebf58f6.html

Type of Resource: Online Newspaper Article

Summary: This article discusses a study examining lunch bunch groups and their ability to prevent bullying. The lunch bunch group allows a chance for students to share and respect similarities and differences. These shared moments allow the students to develop relationships outside of the group into other contexts. A recent study, highlighted within the article, discusses that students with behavioral disorders and other disabilities are more likely to be bullied and be bullies than their peers without disabilities. Susan Swearer, professor of school psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln highlights the study's findings published in the *Journal of School Psychology*, "These results paint a very bleak picture for students with disabilities in terms of bullying, victimization and disciplinary actions". More than a third of the study's participants stated that they had bullied other students, with another 67% stating they

had been victims of bullying. The study also found that students with disabilities were at risk for bullying, being bullied, being referred to the principal's office for discipline problems and more likely to engage in antisocial behavior. The study's authors suggest the implementation of anti-bullying interventions emphasizing positive behavior. General education students can act as role models and administration should make sure that students with special needs are integrated into the general classroom in order to prevent bullying. Peer-mediated groups, such as a lunch bunch or circle of friends are great strategies that can support all students in an effort to prevent bullying. Swearer ends with, "To fight it [bullying] requires a communitywide effort, it's not something that school really can do alone".

Assessment: This article references an evidenced-based article supporting the notion that lunch bunch groups and other peer-mediated interventions are successful in preventing bullying among students with and without disabilities. This can support the effectiveness of peer-mediated programs being utilized by occupational therapists, teachers, and other school personnel, while highlighting the need to implement more programs of its nature.

Implications: This article supports the use of peer-mediated programs to prevent bullying of children with disabilities.

- Barnes, K., Vogel, K. & Beck, A. (2011). Occupational therapy for children with severe emotional disturbances in alternative educational settings. In S. Bazyk, *Mental Health Promotion, Prevention, and Intervention With Children and Youth: A Guiding Framework for Occupational Therapy* (pp. 119-139). Bethesda, MD: AOTA Press.

Type of Resource: Book Chapter

Summary: This source discusses the role occupational therapists in providing services for children/youth with severe emotional disturbances (SED). Interventions that focus on mental health, overall well-being, and symptom reduction can be utilized to improve function for this population. Children who have SED often have behaviors that are highly disruptive, dangerous and prevent learning. Many of the characteristics found in children who have SED are impaired self-esteem, attention deficit and hyperactivity, difficulty with peer relationships, and classroom disruptiveness, which lead to poor academic performance. They are more commonly placed in residential, hospital, and foster care settings compared to other children with disabilities. Children who have SED are also often taught in alternative educational settings, away from the regular education classroom. School staff working in these settings must have specialized skills and work together in order to address severe behavior problems. Some strategies include occupation-based group interventions, behavioral approaches, strategies for promoting social participation, and sensory-based approaches. Occupation-based group interventions are task-oriented groups that encourage engagement in meaningful occupations and develop psychosocial and life skills (i.e. cooking, budgeting, hobbies and leisure activities). They also help foster social, emotional, and cognitive skills.

Behavioral approaches are the most common strategies used with this population. These strategies include a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and the development of behavior strategies, which is called a behavioral intervention plan (BIP). Under behavioral approaches, the occupational therapist identifies the behavior needing change, determines aspects that contribute to the behavior, identifies consequences that reinforce the behavior, and then adjust the antecedent circumstances that influence the behavior. Some strategies for increasing social participation for children who have SED include social skills training (SST) and social and emotional learning (SEL). SEL differs from SST in that it focuses on becoming aware of and thinking about how feelings influence behavior. Lastly, sensory-based approaches focus on addressing how children who have SED negatively respond to ordinary sensory input. Occupational therapists can help children, families and professionals understand sensory processing in order to understand certain behaviors and learn how to modify environments to adapt behavior. Some examples of sensory-based approaches include The Alert Program and the use of sensory rooms. In conclusion, children who have SED have severe behavioral problems that interfere with school participation. They are often placed in alternative educational settings that require a collaborative approach, including occupational therapists. Occupational therapists can provide several different interventions aimed at reducing problem behaviors and the development of competencies.

Assessment: Although this book chapter does not directly deal with the cafeteria environment, the ideas and concepts can be useful when dealing with children who have SED within the lunchroom. The practical implications provided are essential to reference when to helping children who have SED.

Implications: Occupational therapists can use the approaches mentioned in this resource in the promotion of mental health and in the reduction of behaviors in children who have SED within the cafeteria environment. These include developing lunch bunch groups that provide intensive interventions such as occupation-based, behavioral, and sensory-based interventions aimed at decreasing problem behaviors while increasing social participation during lunch.

- Cuccaro, C., & Geitner, G. (2007). Lunch and recess: The “eye of the storm”: Using targeted interventions for students with behavioral problems. *TEACHING Exceptional Children Plus*, 3, Article 2.

Type of Resource: Journal Article

Type of Study: Action Research Study

Summary: The cafeteria and playground are common places where children often misbehave. Many schools often deal with this through lunch detentions or even suspensions. Despite these discipline efforts, students continue to misbehave, suggesting that these efforts are not offering any long-term behavioral modifications.



The authors of this study implemented Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) at their school due to all of the above problems. This program consisted of the four school wide expectations (Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be a Problem Solver, and Be Safe), a behavior matrix to highlight expectations in each setting, teaching expectations, a system to reinforce positive behavior and office discipline referral data to decide on behavioral interventions. They also implemented the three-tiered-model approach using universal, targeted, and intensive interventions. Through their office discipline referral data, they found that a small group of student's behavior was not being positively affected by the universal approach methods. They then developed a targeted group intervention to address these behaviors. The main objective of this study was to measure the impact of direct social skill instruction on a targeted group of students with behaviors problems within the cafeteria and playground. The program developed for this group was called "Alternative to Lunch Program for Students (ALPS), which was a two week program consisting of 11 fifth grade students, that took place during their 40 minute lunch and recess break. Students observed and participated in a social skills group focusing on accepting consequences, using self-control, making a complaint, and avoiding trouble. When student arrived, they were given 10-15 minutes to eat their lunch, and 20-25 minutes to practice role-playing. Each social skill was taught by defining the skill, modeling the skill, establishing student skill need, selecting the role player, setting up the role player, conducting role playing, and providing performance feedback. Students were also given copies of skills cards to take with them, highlighting what they learned about each skill. Pre and post data were collected and consisted of discipline referrals and surveys completed by teachers, lunch staff, and students. Results indicated teachers, lunch staff, and students felt behaviors improved after the group intervention and discipline referrals dropped as well. Although this was the case, a majority of office referrals after ALPS were generated from the students who had participated in ALPS, indicating that some students may need additional "Intensive Interventions". Overall, the authors were pleased with the positive response of students and staff to the program and will look forward to examining the programs long-term effects.

Assessment: This study highlights the use of universal, targeted, and intensive behavior interventions for lunch and recess in order to promote positive behavior and decrease behavioral office referrals.

Implications: Although a school psychologist and school social worker implemented the ALPS program, occupational therapists can also be leaders for developing interventions that are more intensive. Occupational therapists and other school staff have a responsibility to identify students who may need additional resources and interventions to make sure they are as functional in school as possible.

- Heyne, L., Wilkins, V. & Anderson, L. (2012). Social inclusion in the lunchroom and on the playground at school. *Social Advocacy and Systems Change Journal*. 3, 54-68.



Type of Resource: Journal Article

Type of Study: Discussion of an innovative cafeteria program

Summary: The school is an ideal setting where social skills and emotional well being can be cultivated. This article focuses on two inclusive recreation program models that can be adopted by schools in order to address social outcomes. The first describes a “lunch bunch” program for students with and without disabilities, while the second describes a playground inclusion program. For the purposes of this specific bibliography, only the “lunch program” will be described in detail. For a detailed description of the playground inclusion program, please see the full article.

It has been found that positive social interaction promotes communication and relationship skills, friendship development, and feelings of community belonging. Learning to engage socially for young children is important and even more important for children with disabilities. Children who have disabilities are more likely to face social exclusion, be bullied, be less involved in extracurricular activities, and have fewer friends. Research has found a proactive approach to education can lead the development of positive school environments, such as using the lunchroom to promote social-emotional learning. Social emotional development has been proven to lead to better academic performance. Inclusive programs have been found to be a great way to develop social skills and social-emotional learning for students with disabilities.

Students who often need assistance when eating often have the presence of aids at lunch, which can decrease their social interaction opportunities. The creation of a lunch bunch program allows them the opportunity to experience an increased social interaction among peers and to develop social-emotional learning. This article examines a lunch bunch program that was developed to explore the nature of friendships among students with and without disabilities, to explore what prevented friendships from developing, and what helped sustained them. Groups of five or four students were developed, including one student with a disability. The lunch bunch met regularly once a week for 45 minutes and was facilitated by a graduate assistant working with the grant project. The group began with students sharing conversation over boxed lunches they had brought from home, followed by a recreational activity. The group facilitator decided on activities for younger children, while older students choose their own activities. Examples of activities included making cookies, smoothies, gardening, and arts and crafts. There are many different activities that can be chosen, such as hobbies, art, music, sports, nature, board games, physical exercise, meditation and yoga. When pondering social interaction, group size, setting, interests of the participants, abilities and personalities of participants, and group dynamics should be considered. Below is a list of guidelines on how to develop friendship and positive social interaction during lunch bunch:

- Develop a lesson plan: In order to structure time appropriately. Make sure to have a back-up of activities to keep children interested and engaged.
- Select an appropriate setting and room arrangement: small intimate places allow to sit close together, which is good for conversation, interaction and playing games. Have students sit in a circle or at a round table to allow for optimal socialization.

- Set the tone for positive conduct: Set rules from the onset to ensure safety, but make sure to emphasize having fun and making friends.
- Select activities that encourage cooperation: This will encourage teamwork, and give everyone an important role (i.e. baking, gardening, making a fort). Recommendation for structuring cooperative play include:
 - Provide frequent and consistent opportunities to get acquainted.
 - Maintain equal status.
 - Set mutual goals.
 - Support cooperation and interdependence.
 - Provide accurate information about the participant with a disability.
 - Create fair and tolerate norms.
- Equalize interactions among the children: Treating all participants equally allows members to relate to one another better. Let children direct their own conversations, and prevent students from dominating the group and allow all children to play an active role.
- Convert object oriented activities to people oriented activities: Object oriented activities can distract students away from person-to-person communication. Have members greet each other, take turns, share materials, and offer encouragement.
- Adapt activities to meet individual abilities: Provide accommodations to facilitate maximum participation from all members. (i.e. adaptive equipment, rules simplified, environments modified)
- Keep the activity child-focused: Have children select their own activities, give input on rules, and resolve their own conflicts. Facilitators should intervene only as needed.
- Establish continuity between sessions: longevity allows children to get to know each other over time. Involve children in activities that involve several sessions to be completed to keep cohesiveness.

In conclusion, by implementing these guidelines within a lunch bunch group, students can foster socialization and increase the likelihood that friendship will develop. Results from this case study example showed that students with disabilities no longer sat alone at lunch, accurate information about students with disabilities was conveyed, mutual respect was developed, advocacy by students without disabilities was developed for students with disabilities, and friendship developed outside of lunch.

Assessment: This source is extremely useful for those aiming to develop a lunch bunch program for students with and without disabilities. The guidelines from this source highlight steps school professionals can take to create the most successful lunch bunch group in order to foster friendships during lunch for students with disabilities.

Implications: Occupational therapists and other school staff can use these guidelines when developing lunch bunch programs for students with disabilities. It should be noted that the guidelines from this source focus on developing friendships.

- PBIS Illinois Network. (n.d.). *5-point scale: Fact Sheet*. Link: http://autism.pbisillinois.org/pdfs/facts_sheets/Incredible%205%20Point%20Scale%20Fact%20Sheet%20rev.pdf

Type of Resource: Fact Sheet

Summary: Kari Dunn Buron who has taught K-12 for students on the autism spectrum for over thirty years developed The Incredible 5 Point Scale. It was originally developed to teach social and emotional concepts to individuals on the autism spectrum. The scale is used to help students become aware of their emotions and the stage or level of their emotions. The scale can be used with all students, but is particularly helpful for students on the spectrum. The student will rate their emotions (1-5). Once this is accomplished, the student can then provide information to the school staff on how they are feeling, become more effective in managing their thinking, and then implement the desired behavior. This fact sheet also provides steps to implement the 5-point scale and also a brief description of how anxiety can influence behavior.

Assessment: This fact sheet is useful because it provides a quick and easy explanation of what The Incredible 5-point scale is and how it can be implemented. It is useful for those who may have limited time to research it on their own. The Incredible 5-point scale can also be a useful tool for noise control within the cafeteria.

Implications: This is a useful resource that can be used by occupational therapists on their own or can be utilized as a training tool to educate other school staff on how to manage noise and behavior within any school setting.

Useful Resources

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. (2013). Handouts and Tip sheets. In *Eat Right*. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Retrieved from <http://www.eatright.org/nnm/handoutsandtipsheets/#.UeSMqhYVyll>.

Type of Resource: Website.

Summary: This website was developed by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. This link was developed specifically for the National Nutrition Month in March of each year. This promotional month is designed to focus on the importance of making informed food choices and making sound eating and physical activity habits. Provided on this link are various downloadable handouts and tip sheets on nutrition. Activity sheets include Sudoku, word searches, and coloring sheets. Some tip sheets include healthy eating tips for children, teens, and adults. Other additional resources are provided.

Assessment: This link is useful for teachers, parents, and other school professionals looking to promote healthy eating habits within the cafeteria. These resources are also very convenient for individuals on the run and are easily accessible.

Implications for Occupational Therapy: Occupational therapists can use this link for lower and upper elementary students to teach healthy eating habits. The activity worksheet can more specifically be utilized for younger children, while the tips sheets are more appropriate for adolescents. Occupational therapists can also provide these worksheets to teachers and/or school staff looking to focus on nutrition.

- Bowen-Irish, T. (n.d.). Drive Thru Menus by Tere Bowen-Irish, OTR/L. In *Therapro*. Retrieved from <http://www.therapro.com/Drive-Thru-Menus-by-Tere-Bowen-Irish-OTRL-C307796.aspx>.

Type of Resource: Description of Drive Thru Menu Exercise program

Summary: Occupational Therapist, Tere Bowen-Irish developed The Drive Thru Menus Exercise program and has over 27 years of experience with mental health and children. These programs are used to provide meaningful and engaging exercises for children when time is limited. Each program has two large, child-friendly posters showing a 'menu' of 10 different exercises, along with a Leader's Manual. The manual provides all the information needed to implement a Drive Thru Menu program. There are two different programs consisting of Attention and Strength and Relaxation and Stress. The Attention and Strength Menu is used for elementary students to help receive sensory input needed to accomplish daily school tasks. More specifically, the attention menu helps students who have a hard time concentrating, while the strength menu helps with pencil grip and tool use. The Relaxation and Stress Menus are used for a variety of ages to teach coping skills when time is limited. These menus utilize visualization, meditation, and active exercise movements to relieve stress. The Relaxation and Stress Drive Thru Menu is a great way to teach management of emotions. Also available for purchase are Drive Thru Menu DVD's, laminated poster cards, and card decks.

Assessment: These programs are useful because therapists, educators, and parents can utilize them with a variety of different aged children. They are easy to implement, fun for children, and focus on motor development, strength, and attention through sensory input. It is also a great tool to teach children how to self-reflect in order self regulate during the school day.

Implication: The Drive Thru Menus are a great tool occupational therapists can use to teach all children how to self regulate in pull out or push in settings. Occupational therapists can also use these programs as a consultation/education tool for educators and parents.

- Center for Ecoliteracy. (2010). *Rethinking school lunch guide (second edition)*. Retrieved from:



http://www.ecoliteracy.org/sites/default/files/uploads/rethinking_school_lunch_guide.pdf

Type of Resource: Resource Guide (72 pp.) from the Center for Ecoliteracy

Summary: This is a very informative guide about school lunches. 5,500,000,000 school lunches are served annually in the U.S. National School Lunch Program; 35 million children are served per day through the Lunch Program; 11 million children are served per day through the Breakfast program. The goal of this source is to: “To improve school food, teach nutrition, support sustainable food systems, and create an education program focused on understanding the relationships between food, culture, health, and the environment”. Currently, there is a crisis in diet-related illnesses, poor diet, and physical inactivity. These factors are responsible for as many premature deaths as tobacco. This is a public health issue and schools need to be key stakeholders in preventing childhood obesity. Research connects healthy eating to better academic performance and increased cognitive function, attention, and memory. School food is very important to low-income families and for millions of families school lunch may be the only opportunity a child has in the day to receive a healthy meal.

One main feature of the Rethinking School Lunch framework is the farm-to-school approach and another is integrating students’ experience in the lunchroom with gardening and cooking. For the section on the dining experience, the Rethinking School Lunch framework’s goal is: “To create an inviting dining ambience that encourages healthy interaction and healthy eating—a place that students enjoy, that makes the lunch period a time they look forward to, and that helps them feel safe and valued at mealtime”. There was a 30% reduction in plate waste when elementary students at one school that received recess before lunch. One key point in this area is how the dining experience is about more than food. The school surroundings as well as the meals should promote healthy eating and good behavior. Another key point is that the dining experience can promote healthy socialization. Eating together, clearing the table, waiting for others to be served and sit down can all promote positive social skills. The next key point is student participation invites students to eat lunch as school. Students can be involved in menu planning, serving food, and choosing their own toppings and portion sizes. Another key point is the dining experience should welcome all students. Students who receive free or reduced lunch may skip lunch in the cafeteria so they will not be singled out. Having something in place to prevent this such as swipe cards or a keypad/PIN system is essential in protecting student confidentiality. Some questions to consider when contemplating how to create a less noisy cafeteria: What is the ideal school dining environment? What are the students’ ideas for improving the dining experience? Are there any changes that would help create a more relaxing dining experience? How might the dining experience be more inviting for the senses? An alternative to lunch lines can be providing family-style dining at lunch tables.

Assessment: This source is extremely useful because the Rethinking School Lunch framework takes a holistic approach when considering how school lunches can be improved. It has ideas and resources on all facets of school lunch including promoting healthy eating, wellness policy, teaching and learning, the dining experience, procurement, facilities, finances, waste management, professional development, and marketing and communications. It discusses schools that have had success at creating

a positive school cafeteria environment and addresses obstacles that may be faced when doing this.

Implications: This source, especially the suggestions and recommendations on the dining experience, will be very valuable for occupational therapists when trying to implement and advocate for a positive lunch time environment within their school.

- Cleaver, S. (2010). *Change the menu*.

Retrieved from:

<http://www.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3755256>



Type of Resource: Website Article

Summary: This source is about promoting healthy food in cafeterias. It says that 30.6 million students eat lunch under the National School Lunch program and more often than not, they are served pizza, chicken nuggets, or cheeseburgers even though childhood obesity rates have tripled in the last three decades. There has been more of a focus on the nutritional needs of children and education leaders are taking a closer look at school lunches. There are still the challenges of tight budgets and picky eaters and schools need to find a balance. In New Orleans, a chef was determined to make lunchtime a more enjoyable experience. She started making more meals from scratch while still staying within the budget. She worked with others to make the cafeteria a more enjoyable place by replacing disposable dishes with sturdy plates and silverware, increasing lunch to 25 minutes and staggering class arrival times to decrease lines, she taught kids how to talk to one another and put freshly picked flowers on lunch tables. In Colorado, a manager of nutrition services went to a School Chef Culinary Boot Camp and learned the basics of culinary math, including how to handle raw meat. She learned how to work as a professional in the kitchen and the importance of lunch teachers as educators. She is now buying raw materials and making food from scratch. In New Jersey, a chef was hired at a school and works with kids to create menus for the school. They also started a salad bar at the high school. In Minnesota, a school collaborated with local farmers and changed the menu to accommodate the growing seasons. There was no change in cost to start farm-to-school. In Texas, a school provides universal breakfast for students in elementary in middle school because it was found that almost 80% of students who receive free or reduced lunches don't eat breakfast. They say the keys to making a universal breakfast program work are communication, streamlining the process meaning all students get the same breakfast components, and using breakfast as a teachable moment.

Assessment: This source is useful because it offers information on how to provide healthy lunches for all children. It gives examples of several schools that implemented programs to make lunchtimes healthier and more enjoyable for students. There are a lot of useful ideas in this source that may be used in implementing a program such as the *Comfortable Cafeteria*. It also highlights making lunchtimes healthier and more

enjoyable is a realistic goal and schools can change their lunchtime routines for the better and still stay within budget.

Implications: A healthy cafeteria environment needs both a calm and relaxed environment along with healthy food options to work. This source is a useful tool occupational therapists can provide to school administrators to highlight the importance of lunchtime experiences, and also provides an avenue to highlight how such programs can be cost effective and overall beneficial for students. It is also a good source to use when trying to involve school administration in the implementation of a program such as the *Comfortable Cafeteria*.

- Connecticut State Department of Education. (2009). Policy component: Other school-based activities to promote student wellness. Retrieved from <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=322436>

Type of Resource: Guidebook

Summary: This source is what the Connecticut State Department of Education recommends for school cafeterias to promote a pleasant environment and encourage healthy eating. They state cafeterias should be clean, safe, allow students to have an adequate amount of time to eat. Food service staff should be trained on how to provide cost-effective healthy meals to students. They also state adults should be role models for students and should be encouraged to eat healthy and be a part of wellness programs. This source provides recommendations on how to follow each policy and how to implement them. The first policy is “surroundings for eating”. They recommend the cafeteria should be a relaxed, enjoyable place where students have plenty of time and space to eat. They should have access to hand washing facilities and/or hand sanitizers before and after meals.

Creative methods should be implemented to keep noise levels down. The next policy is “time for and scheduling of meals”. It is recommended that all full day students be provided with at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch, (between 11am-1pm), after sitting down to eat. Other activities should not be planned during meals. They recommend that for the “free and reduced meals” policy, schools should strive to prevent overt identification of the students eligible for this program to avoid social stigma. The “summer food service program” policy states that more than half the students are eligible for free and reduced meals, and schools should sponsor the summer food service program at least 6 weeks between the last day of school and the first day of the following school year. The “financial operation of child nutrition program” policy recommends the program be self-supporting, however, if additional funds are needed they should not be for foods that have little or no nutritional value.

The “qualifications of food service staff members” policy recommends qualified nutrition professionals administer school meals and all staff should be adequately trained and provided with continued education. The “training for food service staff members” policy has similar recommendations and says all food service personnel should be trained in food service operations and other appropriate topics. The “food

safety” policy recommends all food should comply with state and local food safety regulations. For the “food rewards and punishment” policy, it is recommended food not be used as a reward or punishment for academic performance or good behavior unless this practice is allowed by the student’s IEP. For the “sharing of foods” policy, it recommends students not share food due to food student restrictions or allergies. Finally, it is recommended for the “staff wellness” policy that the district implement activities that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Assessment: This is a useful source. It outlines policies schools can implement to improve the cafeteria setting and encourage healthy eating. It offers recommendations for each policy and implementation guidelines, and extra resources for each policy. This source is a great guide for schools to create policies to develop their cafeteria environments into pleasant and healthy places for students.

Implications: This source provides a way schools can change their cafeteria environments for the better. This will be a useful source for occupational therapists to educate school personnel and administration on how to realistically implement strategies to improve cafeteria environments.

- Durand, V.M., & Crimmins, D.B. (1988). *The Motivation Assessment Scale*. Topeka: Monaca & Associates.

Type of Resource: The Motivation Assessment Scale (MAS)

To purchase, please click link: <http://store.monacoassociates.com>

Summary: The Durand & Crimmins Motivation Assessment Scale (published in 1988) is suitable for students with developmental disabilities to assess the function or motivations of problem behaviors. According to the authors, there are four main motivations for behavior; these include social attention, tangibles, escape, and sensory input. The assessment is used to determine which is causing a behavior. It consists of sixteen questions, which describe situations in which behaviors might occur. The examiner circles how often the behavior occurs (never to always) in different situations. Once all questions are answered, scores are totaled using a scoring sheet. The results on the scoring sheet suggest what functions of the behavior are sensory, tangible, escape or attention. From here, strategies can then be developed to best address the problem behavior appropriately.

Assessment: This assessment is useful for occupational therapists when a child is displaying an inappropriate behavior that needs to be addressed. It helps by identifying whether the behavior helps the child avoid something, get something tangible, get attention, or seek/ avoid sensory input. This is important to consider when discussing what strategies to use to correct the behavior. For example, a strategy used for addressing behaviors to get attention will be different than one that address sensory input. All members that are part of the child’s educational team should be included when

discussing appropriate strategies, such as the parents/guardian and teachers.

Implications: This assessment can be used by occupational therapists and other school staff to determine why an inappropriate behavior is occurring. It can be used for all children, including those with identified disabilities to children at risk.

- Dzimiera, J., Eidel, S., Griffith, B., & Grutzmacher, S. (2010). *Project refresh toolkit*.



Type of Resource: Toolkit

Summary: The Project Refresh Cafeteria Toolkit was created to help school food service staff, teachers, and parents to use as a support for children's healthy eating. Refresh teams developed plans aiming to improve structuring of choices in the cafeteria environment; marketing of school meals to students, parents, and teachers; promotion of healthy foods in the cafeteria; interactions between cafeteria staff and students; nutrition education offered in the cafeteria; and student decision making in the cafeteria. The Refresh teams also implemented nutrition education in 4th and 5th grade classrooms. Food environments and how they are structured can encourage students to eat healthier. Some ways to change the environment with the facilities and processes include lighting, line layout of food, displays of healthy foods, signage on walls or tables promoting healthy foods, service methods (e.g., serving desserts by request only), and environment (e.g., having preferred seating for a week's worth of healthy choices). Ways to improve healthy eating with food include colors, textures and shapes, fun food facts, food specials, and fun, descriptive names. Some other strategies to encourage healthy eating include scripts and prompting, service methods (e.g., guest chef, guest server in cafeteria), appearances, attitudes and attention, send home messages and reinforcements, and promoting nutrition throughout school. Incentives that could be utilized include non-monetary incentives like a healthy foods passport, price incentives (lower priced healthy food), and payment strategies (cash only for unhealthy items). This source provides checklists and worksheets to get started on a plan. It also provides suggestions for evaluating the cafeteria, a student survey of what kids like to eat, a food service staff survey about food, promotion resources, equipment resources, and food display resources.

Assessment: This is a useful source in providing information on how to encourage students to eat healthier during lunchtime at school. Healthy eating is a big part in promoting the overall health in children, and this should be included in a positive cafeteria environment.

Implications: Eating healthy plays a large part in children's overall health and well being and should be considered when occupational therapist are developing a plan for creating a more pleasant lunchtime experiences and environments. Occupational therapists can also provide this source to food service staff to provide ideas on how to encourage healthy eating in the cafeteria.

- EducationWorld. (n.d.). Order in the cafeteria: Tips for improving behavior and supervision. Retrieved from http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin493.shtml

Type of Resource: Online Technical Assistance Center

Summary: This source provides tips on training cafeteria monitors, improving behaviors of students and planning trouble-free recess time. At one school in Missouri, the principal says they send one class at a time to the cafeteria in 5-minute intervals and have a 10-minute interval half way through in case they need to catch up. The classes sit at the same tables everyday with plenty of space to walk through and establish seating and dismissal times. In a high school, the principal says one of the best things they did scheduling wise was to move from 3 lunches to 4 resulting in less physical altercations than before. At one elementary school, the round tables were switched with individual stools and implemented a rule that students could only speak to others at their table, significantly reducing noise. At another elementary school, each class has an assigned table and is responsible for wiping off the table and sweeping underneath so the next class has a clean space. Another school developed rules that were posted in the cafeteria and the rules are reviewed and practiced as needed. Another elementary school posted rules visible to students and also an indoor recess schedule, clearly marking where students are to go on those days. Another school gives rewards for following the rules and good behavior daily, weekly, and monthly. One strategy a school used was to have the teachers eat with their students the first 15 minutes of lunch to get them settled. This helped keep the students remain calmer during lunch. The principal ate with one class a day.

One school served 550 students at once and asked parents to volunteer at lunch. Some teachers volunteered to take students back to their classroom to eat. A principal at an elementary school does a school-wide assembly at the beginning of the year going over cafeteria rules and appoints a student table monitor to each table at lunch. The table monitor reports if someone was misbehaving and that student has to sit at the wall for 3-5 minutes depending on their grade level. One school found that having centers at indoor recess helped decrease problems. They also meet monthly with their cafeteria monitors to brainstorm solutions to any problems.

One principal found rewards work well with her students in the cafeteria, including first-in-line privileges, tokens to shop in the school store, recognitions posted in the hallway or given out at school-wide award ceremonies, end-of-the-semester lunches with the principal, and drawings for a bicycle. A school bought board games and cards students can earn to play at their table for good behavior. Some schools found recess before lunch to calm the students down, one school did not see a difference, while another school used a different approach. That school eliminated lunch recess and instead had morning and afternoon recess. There is a school that does not have a cafeteria in the school and students eat lunch in the classroom with their teacher.

Assessment: This source is useful because it gives opinions of various principals about what they implement during lunch at their school and what has worked for them. This source can be used to generate ideas on how a school could create a more positive environment during lunchtime. It shows how different approaches may work for varying school cultures and environments and individualized plans should be developed appropriately.

Implications: This source will assist occupational therapists to develop appropriate recommendations for school staff on how to create more positive lunchtime environments. It also provides useful information that can be developed into guidelines for principals and/or teachers on how to modify their cafeteria environment appropriately.

- FoodPlay Productions. (2008). *How to build a healthy school environment!*

Link:

http://foodplay.com/oldsite/downloads/FreeMaterials/healthy_school_environment.pdf

Type of Resource: How-to Guide handout

Summary: FoodPlay Productions visits thousands of schools each year to put on live nutrition theater shows to provide audiences with various resources. This source lists 30 ideas schools can use to create healthy school environments. FoodPlay Productions say, “It does take a healthy village to raise a healthy child...” Some of the ideas listed include: think of a fun way to introduce food service staff at the beginning of the school year; take a survey or designate taste tester students to determine what students want to eat; provide teachers with nutritional education information to get them excited about it and include it in their lesson plans; advertise menus in advance highlighting healthy options; try new innovative fundraising ideas like a healthy bake sale; provide grab and go breakfast or breakfast carts filled with healthy foods; turn cafeteria into a learning laboratory by having students create posters promoting healthy eating/activity; celebrate diversity by having ethnic meals; fill vending machines with healthy options, and invite students, teachers and parents to help create the menu.

More ideas include: using holidays to celebrate foods from different cultures; teaching students about healthy food in the classroom before introducing it in the lunchroom; encouraging classes to visit MyPyramid website to analyze their diets and nutritional needs; creating a fun nutrition resource cart with DVDs, books, and other materials; having teachers incorporate what options are healthiest from convenient stores; taking a field trip to a local farm or farmers market to teach students where food comes from; starting a school garden and involve students in all aspects; making teachers’ and nurses’ rooms healthy and stress-free environments; and encouraging teachers to reward students’ success with rewards other than treats or unhealthy food.

Ideas that promote physical activity include: enlisting the principal to be the “health leader” where he/she leads walks out of the classroom or makes announcements for taking an active break; creating a walking or biking club for kids to walk or bike to school; creating walking maps for classes to take interesting walks

around the school; providing students and teachers with resources about yoga, tai chi, or activity breaks; inviting art teachers to have student paint murals of their favorite physical activities; having students think of after school activities like swing dancing; incorporating physical activity into fundraising like walk-a-thons; encouraging teachers to start class or take breaks with stretching or jumping jacks; sponsoring a “health and fitness day” for students to learn about healthy behaviors; encouraging students, teachers, and parents to be involved in school-wide events; and triggering school-wide excitement by bringing innovative programs to the school.

Assessment: This source is useful because it provides various ideas on how schools can create a healthy environment for their students. It promotes linking positive activities with food and teaching children healthy options when eating. FoodPlay Productions also offers in-house programs for schools to teach nutrition. This source also provides a school wellness resource list that may be useful to occupational therapists and other school professionals.

Implications: This offers occupational therapists and other school personnel additional ideas to provide schools on how to create more positive cafeteria environments. It also provides ways to encourage collaboration through teacher involvement in order to promote healthy eating throughout school curriculums.

- Montana Office of Public Instruction. (2011). Montana Team Nutrition. In *Creating pleasant and positive mealtimes*. Retrieved from

http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/MTTeam.html#gpm1_7



Type of Resource: Online Technical Assistance Center; free webinars

Summary: This website with resources was created by the Montana Office of Public Instruction that provides resources school administrators, food service delivery professionals, paraprofessionals, teachers and parents can utilize in order to create pleasant and positive mealtime experiences for all students. It describes why schools meals are so important to students. School meals are important because they shape students’ future relationship with food, develop competent eaters, and are essential to the healthy growth. Creating a positive mealtime experience for students is also important because it allows time for students to socialize and relax, develop healthy eating habits and demonstrate positive behavior. The authors state how the cafeteria can sometimes be uninviting; such as students being pressured to eat and supervising adults not being properly trained. Some of the training materials included through this resource are videos, posters for school cafeterias, handouts, PowerPoint presentations, and Webinar recordings to help create a positive and pleasant mealtime for all students.

Assessment: This source is one of the most beneficial sources, because it not only provides a basis for how to provide healthy lunches for children, but also provides

strategies for creating pleasant and positive mealtimes experiences for all children gathered from current literature. It should also be noted this source among others in this bibliography provided the basis of our guiding philosophy for the cafeteria toolkit.

Implications: This website provides valuable information and guidelines on how schools can provide pleasant and positive mealtimes so students will enjoy eating food and socializing with peers and adults. This source is also useful of for occupational therapists, because it provides PowerPoint handout and other resources, which can be provided to teachers, parents, and students to support the implementation of a more positive cafeteria environment.

- Northeast Foundation for Children. (2013). Resources for Educators. In *Responsive Classroom*. Retrieved from <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/resources-educators>



Type of Resource: Online Technical Assistance Center → search ‘lunch’ to access cafeteria resources

Summary: This website is dedicated to an research and evidenced-based teaching approach called “Responsive Classroom” aimed at improving students’ social and academic skills while improving teacher instruction quality. This teaching approach consists of a set of practices teachers can use throughout the day to create a positive school culture and environment. Research indicates the “Responsive Classroom” teaching approach increases student’s engagement, improves academic achievement, and decreases discipline problems. The main goal is “Educators creating safe, challenging, and joyful elementary schools”. Specific to lunchroom environments are several articles/resources within the “Resources for Educators” tab. These include “Let’s do Lunch!” by Marlynn K. Clayton, “Lunch Staff Learn Communication Techniques to Help Children Improve Behavior” a case study, and “Lunch Before Recess” a blog post. To find additional resources that will help promote a positive lunchtime experience in your school, use ‘lunch’ as a keyword search under the “Resources for Educators” tab.

Assessment: This website is full of useful resources for school professionals. The "Educators" tab can be utilized by teachers and by other school staff to help build social-emotional competencies to not only improve social skills needed for a positive lunchroom environment, but for academic skills needed in the classroom. Resources used for the lunchroom can also be extended into other environments as well, such as recess and the classroom. This source is also highly credible due to its national recognition and research and evidenced-based approach.

Implications: All school personnel need to advocate for positive lunchtime environments in order to build social competencies. Occupational therapists not only use the resources provided on the website, but also implement the “Responsive Classroom” approach within the lunchroom. Occupational therapist's expertise and knowledge on environmental adaptations make them key players in implementing an

approach such as the “Responsive Classroom” with the lunchroom. The occupational therapist, teacher, and other school professionals need to collaborate together in order to make this approach effective for all children.

- Ohio Department of Education. (2006). Guideline 9: Schools provide a positive dining environment that encourages a pleasant eating experience. In *Healthier schools: A brighter tomorrow. Evidence-based practices to jump start Ohio school wellness plans* (pp. 75-82).

Type of Resource: Guidebook

Summary: This source states how schools should provide a positive eating environment similar to that of eating at a nice restaurant where students can socialize in a clean, pleasant environment and eat healthy food. To provide this, schools can make meals long enough for students to eat and socialize, provide adequate serving areas and lines so students don't have to wait long in line, schedule recess before lunch in elementary schools, practice food preparation safety techniques, and designate hand washing areas so students can wash hands before and after meals. This source reviews six schools and their plans for creating a positive eating environment. The Action for Healthy Kids in Idaho recommends surveying students for their opinions on menu items, having nutrition information on the back of menus, have 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch, design the cafeteria to minimize time waiting in line, and providing adult role models to encourage healthy eating. In Minnesota, a study surveyed high school students regarding menu items, cafeteria environment, and overall experience with school lunch programs and found students from six out of eight of the schools were dissatisfied. The results of the study found students wanted a less crowded cafeteria environment, flexible table configurations (round vs. rectangle), a relaxing, comfortable appealing environment, improve the attitude of kitchen workers, and provide natural lighting. The Loveland City School District implemented various techniques to encourage healthy eating such as working with a nutrition advisory council, talking with students about what they wanted, having a self-service fruit and vegetable bar in every cafeteria, having cafeteria provide food on time, replacing white bread with whole wheat, and offering fat-free or 1% milk. Mix It Up at Lunch Day in Oregon happens annually and encourages students to swap seats and sit with a group they wouldn't normally sit with. In England, the cafeteria was becoming chaotic and noisy. One of the teachers opened “Ed's Place” which is a healthy, café-style space where students can order healthy foods in a quieter environment while they study. It was so successful the school officials are planning on building a new, larger Ed's Place to accommodate more students. The Parkway School District in Missouri is adopting the USDA's Dietary Guidelines for Americans as the district's nutritional standards. Some guidelines include providing students with adequate time and space at lunch to create a pleasant environment and encourage positive eating behaviors.

Assessment: This source is useful in that it provides a glimpse into various school programs that have had success with creating positive eating environments. In addition,

extra resources provide more ideas on how to implement programs similar to the ones highlighted in this source.

Implications: This source provides evidence-based research on the success of creating a positive cafeteria environment. Occupational therapists can use this source in providing schools staff and administration case study examples in the beginning stages of implementing a program such as the *Comfortable Cafeteria* in order to highlight the success that other schools have had after creating a more positive cafeteria environment.

- Oliver Foundation. (n.d.). *Oliver kids team members and roles*. Website: <http://www.oliverfoundation.org/>

Type of Resource: Online Technical Assistance Center

Summary: This source goes over various team members and their role in encouraging childrens' healthy choices. The principal can act as a role model and mentor for staff and students. The principal can set goals for the whole school and creating health policies. To support a healthy environment, the principal can encourage teachers to include healthy eating/exercise in the classroom, schedule campus meetings to discuss healthy events, begin the day with exercise during morning announcements, participate in healthy activities and campus events, establish guidelines for healthy snacks, implement breakfast in the classroom, visit the cafeteria and acknowledge healthy breakfast and lunch choices, encourage parents to attend healthy events, have a water bottle instead of sugary beverage on the desk, create a staff wellness program, give rewards that allow students to be active, and organize a healthy field day. The next team members are classroom teachers, which have the biggest influence on children because they spend the most time with them. The teacher can also be a role model by eating healthy snacks and discuss with students the benefits of eating healthy. The teacher can also drink water instead of sugary beverages, be enthusiastic about morning exercises, and discuss the teacher's favorite way to stay healthy. The Oliver Foundation provides healthy lesson plans the teacher can use. Teachers can create healthy snack charts where students receive stickers for bringing a healthy snack and then at the end of the month are rewarded for eating healthy. Art teachers can use art techniques to promote healthy messages, have the students draw fruits and vegetables and show them at an art gallery, serving fruits and vegetables. The music teacher can incorporate healthy messages into the yearly student performances. The physical education teacher can provide physical activity and promote students to choose healthy foods. The librarian can have students look up books on topics such as the food pyramid, physical activity, look up nutrition websites, or have a scavenger hunt on questions about healthy topics. Another team member is the cafeteria manager. To encourage students to eat a balance meal, cafeteria managers can have visual displays of healthy meals and have contests and rewards for healthy eating. The cafeteria manager can promote certain foods weekly and send home educational materials on the health benefits of the food being promoted. Nurses also play a role on the team in

implementing a successful healthy program. The nurse can refer students to a physician, counselor, or registered dietitian if needed. The PTO/PTA is another part of the team that can help by keeping in mind healthy messages when thinking of fundraising ideas (e.g., walk-a-thon). The PTO/PTA can provide healthy snacks and beverages at meetings.

Assessment: This source is another one that focuses on nutrition. It is important for students to have healthy choices and this source educates cafeteria workers or others interested in how to promote healthy eating school-wide. The important message from this source is that making a program successful requires a school-wide initiative including all team members working together.

Implication: Although this is a great source, it may not be as useful as other sources in implementing a more positive cafeteria environment. Occupational therapists can use this source on healthy eating education if needed. Occupational therapists may also use some of the ideas on what specific team members can do within a program such as the *Comfortable Cafeteria*, in order to create a more collaborative approach.

- S'cool Moves. (2013). Classroom Collaboration (Grades K-5). In *S'cool Moves, Inc.*, Retrieved from <https://www.schoolmoves.com/index.cfm/category/8/classroom-collaboration-grades-k-5.cfm>

Type of Resource: Debra Em Wilson's 'Minute Moves' Collaboration Kit.

Summary: S'cool moves is a family owned company started by Debra Em Wilson's vision to provide foundation skills for students with limited financial resources. The S'cool Move activities can be conducted in the classroom, clinic, and home. The Classroom Collaboration 'Minute Moves' program is specifically for grades K-5 and is a seven-week lesson plan that enhances collaboration between teachers and support staff. It enhances academics, provides self-regulation activities, integrates mind, body, and heart, encourages independence, and supports struggling learners. This program includes the Minute Moves Collaboration Kit (Lesson Plan Book, Minute Move DVD, Heavy Work Blending Bands, and Supplemental Posters). It is a hands-on program that uses a variety of movements for self-regulation. Each week teaches students specific movements and routines to increase attention and self-regulation. Included are 10, 8x11 posters with specific Minute Move routines and exercises that can be hung around the classroom to reinforce learned skills. These include Minute Moves Speech & Reading, Minute Moves Yawn Buster, Minute Moves for Writing Posture, Band Moves for Academics, Minute Moves for Vision, Minute Moves for Calming, Minute Moves for Fine Motor, Minute Moves for Auditory Sequencing, Minute Moves for Focus, and Minute Moves Recess Refocusing Routines.

Assessment: The Minute Moves program is useful because therapists, educators, and parents can utilize them with a variety of different aged children. They are easy to implement, fun for children, and focus on classroom management through self-

regulation and sensory input.

Implications: The Minute Moves program is a great tool occupational therapists can use to teach all children how to self regulate in pull out or push in settings. OT's can also use this program as a consultation/education tool for educators and parents.

- Shellenberger, S. & Williams M.S. (2013). Published by Therapy Works Inc. In *The Alert Program*. Retrieved from <http://www.alertprogram.com/index.php>.

Type of Resource: Website.

Summary: The Alert Program was developed by two occupational therapists who specialize in school-based practice. The Alert Program allows teachers, parents and therapists to follow an easy step-by-step protocol for teaching self-regulation awareness. The Alert Program manual describes the program in detail and provides appropriate strategies to change or maintain states of alertness. Students learn what they can do before a test or homework to attain optimal states of alertness. This program was originally developed for children with attention and learning difficulties, but was later adopted for preschool to adults for a variety of disabilities. The Alert Program website more specifically offers in-depth knowledge regarding self-regulation for those who are new to the program, and offers many other resources including: conference registration, alert program products, learning modules, other free resources, and continued research areas.

Assessment: This website is a great tool for teachers, parents, and therapists who want to learn more about self-regulation and what it can offer for their students and children. It's thoroughness, attention to detail, and user-friendly approach makes it easy for anyone new to teaching self-regulation awareness. The Alert Program is also a highly recognizable, evidence-based, and reliable approach that has been used for almost 20 years.

Implications: Occupational therapists can use this resource with a variety of students within a school setting. It can specifically be used for children with attention and learning difficulties. In addition, it can also be adopted as a universal approach for all students, to increase self-regulation awareness in order to increase academic performance.

- Suncastle Technology. (2012). *Lunchroom social story*. Retrieved from <http://www.suncastletech.com/Free%20Files/Lunchroom%20Social%20Story.pdf>



Type of Resource: Social Story for Lunchroom Behaviors
Click here for other free social stories
<http://www.suncastletech.com/freestuff.html#Socialstories>

Summary: Social stories are meant to prepare children for new experiences by letting them know what to expect in a way they can understand by using pictures. They have been used with children with Autism, Asperger's, ADD, ADHD, but can also be used

with any child. This specific social story discusses the lunchroom, including what to expect (i.e. standing in line, noise), what to do (i.e. stand in line, talk to friends, eat lunch), who can help (i.e. adults in the lunchroom), and rules (i.e. throwing away trash, staying seated). This resource was made by Picture It, which is a software that makes materials for students who achieve better success when pictures are paired with print.

Assessment: This source is a great tool that can be used for children who learn better using pictures and print together. This is a free resource that can either be printed off or uploaded on most handheld devices (i.e. smart phones, iPads, Nook and Kindle). Also available on the Slater Software website are other free downloaded social stories and resources using Picture It. (See link above under “Type of Resource”)

Implications: Occupational Therapists can use this resource for children who have difficulties learning through print alone. This may include students with Autism, Asperger's, ADD, and ADHD. It can help by explaining a new situation using pictures and print together. Occupational therapists may also suggest the use of social stories to parents and teachers as well.

- Stewart. J. (December 5, 2012a). Targeting Social Skills Across the School Day: Lunch Bunch & Beyond [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3DVy5odnOM>
For the PowerPoint slides see Stewart.Dec.2012b resource.

Type of Resource: Online Webinar

Summary: This online webinar is a PowerPoint presentation presented by Julie Stewart of the KY Autism Training Center and discusses lunch bunches for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This 60 minute presentation first discusses why addressing social skills is important for students with ASD, followed by a description of what lunch bunch is. It then discusses the process needed in order to set-up a lunch bunch group within your school and how to implement the lunch bunch group (i.e. selecting a meeting area, gathering materials, developing a plan). The bottom line for lunch bunch groups is that the facilitator should be in charge; this includes student selection, planned instruction, implementation of instruction, provision of reinforcement, monitoring progress, and making changes accordingly and of course making it fun. Also included are other ways to embed social skills in other settings within the school and throughout the day.

Assessment: This online webinar is a great way to encourage peer-mediated support for children with ASD and other disabilities. Peer-mediated support strategies, such as a lunch bunch group, have been proven to increase generalization of social skills outside of the group compared to other strategies, such as one on one specific skill training intervention. This resource is also useful for those who do not have experience with running and developing lunch bunch groups. It offers guidelines for developing, implementing and monitoring lunch bunch groups specific to each student's needs.

Implications: Occupational therapists can use this resource to become more familiar with how to run a successful lunch bunch group. Occupational therapists can also use

this as a consultation tool to educate other school staff that may need to run a group such as this (i.e. teachers, other therapists, and lunch staff).

- Stewart, J. (August, 2012). Teach Social Skills in School Using Lunch Bunch. In *University of Louisville*. Retrieved from http://louisville.edu/education/kyautismtraining/search_cache?UE=http%3A//louisville.edu/education/kyautismtraining/about/newsletters/teaching-social-skills-using-lunch-bunch&path=louisville.edu/education/kyautismtraining&SearchableText=&CID=lwaP-JpdzY4J

Type of Resource: Handout for Webinar

Summary: This article discusses some the challenges that face student's with ASD, such as social skills deficits. Although this is a major area for concern, it often is not addressed as thoroughly as it should be. Stewart suggests embedding social skills training into the classroom and throughout the school day. Teachers should try to embed these skills into natural social environments, such as the cafeteria. This can be accomplished through lunch bunch groups. When developing these groups one should consider: "Selecting target peers to participate, Selecting skills to target for the student with ASD participating, Selecting a location (separate table in the lunchroom, classroom, library, etc.), Facilitating instruction on the targeted goals through purposeful inclusion of student(s) with ASD in conversation during lunchtime, Making sure to take data and provide reinforcement for target behaviors, and include facilitation of a game with students". These types of groups should be offered a few times a week with a variety of different children across the school year for best success.

Assessment: This highlights the importance of trying to embed social skills training into more natural environments for students with not only ASD but other disabilities as well. This can be accomplished in peer-mediated supports, such as lunch bunch groups. It also highlights the need for educators to consider multiple school environments that promote social interaction and social skills among peers with and without disabilities, such the cafeteria, recess, and extra-curricular activities.

Implications: This article highlights the need for occupational therapists to consider students that might be at-risk for friendship issues or may have social skill deficits. They should consider creating a peer-mediated group during lunch for these students in order to promote social interaction and social skill development. Occupational therapists can also encourage other school staff to develop these types of groups as well.

View Webinar:

Targeting Social Skills Across the School Day: Lunch Bunch & Beyond

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3DVy5odnOM>

- Students Taking Charge. (n.d.). *Promoting school breakfast*.
Retrieve from: <http://www.atchison.ksu.edu/doc41424.ashx>

Type of Resource: Guidebook

Summary: This source is a guide for students to take charge and create ways to promote a healthy breakfast in their school. Some ideas are to use TV promotions, school announcements, posters, texts, social media, prizes, and fun events. This source states to investigate why students may not be eating breakfast and tries to address the barriers they may be facing in getting to breakfast. It also states to promote appealing foods, make the cafeteria more fun, and promote those challenges to students. It gives suggestions on ways to get started such as having school breakfast to analyze what's going on, investigating the school by surveying students, interviewing cafeteria managers and middle schools or high schools, brainstorming goals for the group, getting school groups, parents, and school staff to speak out why breakfast is important, and presenting findings to the principal, school board, or parent-teacher-student associations. Decide on what your ultimate goals are like increasing the number of students who eat breakfast. This source provides a timeline of about how long everything should take to implement a project like this. It provides how much it may cost, extra resources, and websites that may be useful.

Assessment: This source is another that focuses on nutrition. It specifically looks at breakfast and the importance of it. This source is unique in that it provides a guide for students to create a project to promote breakfast in their schools. This may be useful to promote creating positive cafeteria environments by getting students involved.

Implications: Even though this source is mainly focused on nutrition, it is still a good idea to get students involved in the process. It may be useful to have occupational therapists working with older students to get them interested in marketing and creating health promotion materials around the school. The students may also have ideas of what they think could be done to create a more positive environment. The Students Taking Charge website may have other resources besides breakfast promotion that may be useful for occupational therapists to use to promote nutritional eating.

- USDA. (n.d.). *Meal appeal*. (manual)
Website: http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/meal_appeal.pdf



Type of Resource: Online Technical Assistance Center with *Meal Appeal* manual.

Summary: This source provides information on presenting foods to students, providing customer service, and promoting school meals with emphasis on fruits and vegetables. One tip this source gives is to visit restaurants students like and figure out what attracts them to it so you can mimic some of the strategies they may use in the cafeteria. Good food presentation increases eye appeal, stimulates the appetite, and takes food to the

customers. To do this, use track lighting over food, use fruits and veggies to paint an appetizing picture, garnish the food, add interest by adding shapes that are simple and clean, add height to food by adding other ingredients, and make packaging appealing. Stimulate all the senses by seeing (beautifully presented food), smelling, tasting, feeling (a variety of textures), and hearing (crispy, crunchy). Specialty bars like salad bars or kiosks featuring fruits and vegetables can be used. Other ideas are to create a walk-up café, courtyard café, or refrigerated vending machines with healthy items. Providing good customer service and getting customers involved are more ideas that can be used in the cafeteria. The cafeteria can be decorated to look like a café, have popular cartoons on the wall, or pictures of fruits and vegetables. Making menus more fun with creative designs and nutrition facts may make students more interested in healthy eating. Students can be involved by doing taste tests of different foods. Teachers can be involved by linking the classroom and cafeteria. Teachers can teach about nutrition in class and use the cafeteria as a “learning lab”. Teachers can have students work in the school garden as part of an educational experience.

Assessment: This source has a lot of the same ideas on promoting healthy eating as some of the other sources presented here. This source is a great reference for those wanting to promote healthy eating in the cafeteria and does provide some ideas on how to make the cafeteria a more positive environment as well. The appendixes provide valuable handouts and worksheets for promoting healthy eating.

Implications: Some ideas, such as decorating the cafeteria per students opinions and getting them involved in the process may be good concepts for occupational therapists to utilize in creating a more positive cafeteria environment within their school.