



Chartwells School Dining Services and Cornell Release “Smarter Lunchrooms” Research Results

Findings help schools get “smart” about upcoming regulation changes; encourage healthy eating behaviors at school

ELMHURST, IL- May 27, 2014 – The final phase of nutrition regulations in the [Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act](#) will go into place this July, requiring school districts to offer more whole grains, fruits, and vegetables both in school meals and outside the meal program. With more than 31 million students receiving school meals each day, ensuring access to healthy food choices at school can have a powerful impact on students' overall health. Recognizing this, in 2012 Chartwells School Dining Services partnered with the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs (B.E.N. Center) to study the impacts of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act and how principles from the nationwide [Smarter Lunchrooms](#) initiative can help students embrace nutritious foods.

“The results from our partnership with Cornell are very exciting for us at Chartwells and for the entire child nutrition industry,” explained Rhonna Cass, President of Chartwells School Dining Services. “We value our partnership with Cornell and look forward to our future work together.” Our key findings include:

- **Serving in Multiple Locations:** Offering fruits and vegetables in more than one area of the café resulted in higher fruit and vegetable selection and consumption. Hot vegetables were selected 27 percent more and cold vegetables were selected 48 percent more when offered in multiple locations. In addition, fruit offered in more than one location resulted in less fresh fruit waste.
- **Naming Vegetables:** Adding fun descriptors like “Lean Mean Green Beans” and “Bring It On Broccoli” increased overall vegetable consumption by 18 percent, driven by a 50 percent increase in consumption of salad and cold vegetables specifically.
- **Nutrition Labels:** Displaying simple nutrition information for vegetables, including calories, fat, protein, and carbohydrate content, resulted in a 30 percent decrease in overall vegetable waste, which translated to a 35 percent increase in vegetable consumption among students who selected vegetables.

“We are encouraged about these results because it helps us and hopefully other school foodservice providers and districts to find innovative ways to encourage healthy eating behaviors in our students,” said Margie Saidel, MPH, RD, Vice President of Nutrition and Sustainability. “Schools are the change agents in guiding students to make smarter food choices and these behavioral economic techniques will make change easier.”

The Smarter Lunchroom Movement uses evidence based, low cost, no cost techniques to help schools improve how and what their students are eating. For more information, visit SmarterLunchrooms.org.

About Chartwells School Dining Services

Chartwells, a division of Charlotte, NC-based Compass Group, provides dining services for over 575 public school districts and private schools, comprising of approximately 4,000 separate elementary, middle and high schools nationwide. For more information about Chartwells School Dining Services, visit www.eatlearnlive.com and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).