Breakfast and Snack Choices of Freshmen Dorm Residents
Marie Frieje, HNES Student, Kjersten Lemke, DEP Student, Phil Shermoen, DEP Student, Ardith Brunt, PhD, RD
North Dakota State University

Abstract

Freshmen year is a time of great change. It brings about new responsibilities and time constraints that can make choosing a healthy lifestyle more difficult. When selecting food, new students often choose what tastes the best, not necessarily what's most healthy. Assessment of a group of freshmen students found that although healthy breakfasts and snacks are available, they are not always chosen. The purpose of this intervention was to increase participants' knowledge of healthy breakfast and snack options by presenting foods that are available on campus. The Theory of Planned Behavior guided our program objectives. The intervention focused on comparing healthy to less healthy breakfasts and snacks. We also provided information about why they should choose healthier options. We also included a short demonstration on portion sizes. A short post-intervention quiz asked participants to identify healthy breakfasts and snacks, and list a better option that they would actually eat. 100% of participants were able to identify healthy options and provide examples of things they could implement in their own diet. In summary, providing nutrition education can empower college students to make informed nutritional choices on a tight time schedule.

Context

Our pre-intervention survey revealed that college freshmen living in Seim Hall consumed sugary cereals for breakfast daily, as well as high calorie, low nutrient snacks.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this intervention is to inform freshmen living in Seim Hall why and how to choose healthier breakfasts and snacks.

Participants

• College freshmen living on the 9th floor of Seim Hall at North Dakota State University who are taking a full credit load (12+ credits) and have a meal plan for the dining centers

Experimental Measure

• Pre-intervention participant survey
• Pre-intervention game
• Post-intervention participant quiz

The main nutrition problem of freshmen living in Seim Hall is the frequent consumption of sugary cereals and snacks.

Causes for the nutrition problem:
• Lack of nutrition knowledge.
• Lack of time
• Continuation of old habits
• Unawareness of the availability of healthy options.

Outcome Objectives

1. After the intervention, given a list of 10 breakfast options, 80% of participants will be able to identify three of the more healthful options.
2. After the intervention, given a list of 10 snack options, 80% of participants will be able to identify three of the more healthful options.

Assessment

Participants successfully identified healthy breakfasts and snacks, with 10 out of 10 participants getting 100% on this portion of the post-intervention survey.

• Nutrition education can inform and empower freshmen to make healthy food choices.
• Portion size education can make students more conscious of calorie consumption.
• Participants gained knowledge about healthy breakfast and snack options.
• Participants expressed ideas for better breakfast and snacks.
• Participants intended on applying new-found knowledge in everyday life.

Intervention

• Community Intervention
• Started with a breakfast game to get an idea of their knowledge followed by discussion
• Presented handout for healthy breakfasts available in the dining centers.
• Snack game & discussion
• Portion size demonstration with volunteers
• Gave samples of granola to group
• Post-Intervention Quiz

Results

1. From the following 10 breakfast options, check at least 3 of the 5 that would be considered healthy.
   - Pop Tarts
   - Cocoa Puffs
   - Whole Wheat Toast w/ Peanut Butter and a glass of milk
   - Rice Crispy’s w/ added sugar
   - Oatmeal w/ Fruit
   - Eggs
   - White Bagel with Cream Cheese
   - Toaster Strudels
   - Yogurt & Fruit
   - Whole-Wheat Breakfast Wrap

2. From the following 10 snack options, check at least 3 of the 5 that would be considered healthy.
   - Celery sticks and peanut butter
   - Edamame (soybeans)
   - 1 oz. low fat cheese
   - Oreo Mini’s
   - Giff bar
   - Greek yogurt
   - Rice crackers
   - Kettle corn
   - Dry-popped popcorn
   - Yogurt-covered pretzels

Conclusions

• Participants gained knowledge about healthy breakfast and snack options.
• Participants expressed ideas for better breakfast and snacks.
• Participants intended on applying new-found knowledge in everyday life.

Implications

• Nutrition education can inform and empower freshmen to make healthy food choices.
• Portion size education can make students more conscious of calorie consumption.