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Agency Capacity, Programs & Nutrition

Feeding America Learning Conference 2014
The Power of Nudges: Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

Christine Rivera RD, Community Health and Nutrition Manager, Feeding America

Jennifer Edger, Community Programs Manager, Food Bank of the Southern Tier

Lyndsey Lyman, Agency Outreach Coordinator, Food Bank of the Southern Tier
The Power of Nudges: Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

1. **Identify if you currently are utilizing** the nudge strategy, and think of ways in which you can **measure the impact** of that intervention.

2. Consider **implementing a nudge intervention** at your food bank or food pantry.

3. **Check out the Hub** and its resources to implement nudge interventions.

4. Stay tuned in for **grant opportunities in 2015**!
Video
Factors such as signage, colors, packaging, and product placement can influence our choices as consumers.
Intervention:
Pairing F2E items to create a package meal idea or bundling food items

• Display # 3

• Result:
  – When foods are bundled together for convenience, up to 18% more will take the bundled food – even if the bundled food is relatively more healthy. This can also result in up to a 25% reduction in consumption of unbundles less healthy items (Hanks et al.). this is true even when there is no price advantage for the bundled foods. Consumers view this bundling as a social norm and thus value the bundled food more than they would if the foods were not bundled together (Sharpe and Staelin). More than 40% of supermarket shoppers would like to be given healthy recipes in the store (FMI).


Intervention: Front & center product placement, along with signage

- Display # 6

- Results:
  - Placing produce in a prominent location where it is easily reached and seen can increase the selection of produce by more than 100% (Just and Wansink). This has been confirmed in multiple settings including grocery stores, bodegas and convenience stores. Just placing an item first in a line can increase takings by more than 11% relative to other places in the line. Finding a way to make healthy foods more prominent and attractive, for example, by placing produce in an attractive bowl or basket, goes a long way toward reminding clients of just how good that orange or apple can be. Placing a fruit item on two separate locations on the line can increase takings in some cases by more than 300%. The first time a fruit appears it may trigger a latent desire to eat the fruit, but by the time the individual realizes the desire they may have passed the item. But they will be ready the second time.


Intervention:
Recipe card placement near F2E items

• Display # 1

• Results:
  – Having recipes that include fresh produce leads low-income mothers to serve more fresh fruits and vegetables (Birmingham, Schulz and Edlefsen). This is because having access to the recipe leads them to be more confident that they will be able to use the produce. More than 40% of supermarket shoppers would like to be given healthy recipes in the store (FMI).

Intervention: Cooking Demo’s on site showing easy “how to” techniques in preparing F2E

• Display # 4

• Results:
  – Cooking demonstrations are an effective way to improve client’s perception of how easy or desirable it is to cook (Levy and Auld).

  – Moreover, cooking demonstrations provide an engaging and interactive way to bring clients into your food pantry. Providing such demonstrations was the biggest factor in the growth of Indiana farmers markets in a recent study (Hofman, Dennis and Marshall 2009).

  – Low-income parents cite cooking demonstrations frequently when asked about what sorts of education would be of most interest in regard to nourishing their families. Participating in cooking demonstrations increases the chance a child will eat a food by more than 100% (Just, Wansink and Hanks; Just, Hanks and Wansink).
References from Cooking Demo Intervention


Intervention:
Tasting sessions of F2E to help increase acceptability and distribution of F2E items

- Display # 5

- Results:
  - Several studies have found that individuals grow in their preference for a food the more they are exposed to it (Pliner et al.).
  - This is true both with adults and with children (Pliner et al., Sullivan and Birch). Much of taste is suggestible. For example, when food is given an attractive name, they will rate it as tasting better and report that they are more likely to try it again (Wansink, Payne and North).
  - One way to suggest a better taste is through taste demonstrations. Such demonstrations can suggest a higher quality taste to the clients by placing signals that the food is of a high quality. This can include using high quality plates (Wansink, Payne and Painter), having a chef present (Just, Wansink and Hanks), or simply making the presentation of the food more attractive.
References from Tasting Session Intervention


Intervention: Suggesting an amount to help normalize a behavior of taking more F2E

• Display # 2

• Results:
  – Signs that inform clients that average family takes 5 produce items increases produce takings by more than 10%. Signs were placed inside of shopping carts facing the client. Signs included some positive imaging (a happy face, with a thumbs up sign). By indicating how much others take, the signs create a social norm. Individuals who take less feel they should increase their takings. However, we must also worry about people who already choose more than 5 choosing less. This can be avoided by including positive reinforcement regarding the decision to choose more. In this case, we have included the thumbs up sign, associating the choice of produce with something positive.

Strategies and Resources

• Resources
  – **Nudge video on the Hub**
  – Produce Nudge Webinar
  – Future Nudge grants and research to evaluate specific interventions
  – **Healthy Food Bank Hub video**
About the Food Bank of the Southern Tier

- In operation since 1981, the FBST proudly serves the six counties of Broome, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga and Tompkins.

- The FBST’s network includes over 160 hunger-relief agencies.

- The FBST is in the Apricot/Mango EPG
Cornell University’s “Nudge” Research

- Cornell University – located in Ithaca, NY

- David Just, Professor at Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University

- Behavioral Economics
Food Bank involvement with Nudges at Food Pantries
Tier 1: Some Food Bank Involvement

• Front & center product placement of F2Es

• Providing recipes that include two or more F2Es (placed next to specific products)
  – Pantry-created or outside organization
  – “Meal in a Bag”
Tier 2: More Food Bank Involvement

- Cooking demonstrations
- Taste testing with simple recipes
- Suggesting an amount to normalize selections
Resources:

Feeding America’s Healthy Food Bank Hub
http://healthyfoodbankhub.feedingamerica.org

MyPlate
http://ChooseMyPlate.gov

Nutritional information through local/state health organizations

Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness
By Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein
Discussion

Based on what you heard here today, what are some nudges you and/or your Food Bank can do to “nudge” pantries in a healthier direction?
Questions?

Christine Rivera RD
Community Health and Nutrition Manager, Network Engagement
chrivera@feedingamerica.org
Feeding America National Office

Jennifer Edger
Community Programs Manager
jedger@feedingamerica.org
Food Bank of the Southern Tier

Lyndsey Lyman
Agency Outreach Coordinator
llyman@feedingamerica.org
Food Bank of the Southern Tier
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Thank you!