

California Project LEAN

**Creating School
Environments that
Support Healthy Eating**



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The Problem

- 📄 **About 1/4 of what adolescents eat is “junk food.”**
- 📄 **26.5% of California’s school-aged children are overweight.**
- 📄 **Soft drink consumption is up among youth—135% between 1997 and 2001.**

School Fast Food Survey

1999 Survey of California school districts with at least one high school

- Twenty-four percent (24%) of all respondents indicated that they had contracted promotion rights to a fast food or beverage company.

- 95% of responding school districts report selling fast foods. The most common items were:
 - Pizza (87%)
 - Cookies (86%)
 - Chips (84%)

Question

How do we deal with school environments that discourage healthy eating?

Solution:

Develop and enact policy strategies that support healthy eating

This involves:

1. Refocusing strategies from traditional information dissemination to environmental/policy change.
2. Assisting community groups to advocate for improved nutrition options in schools.
3. Instituting school policies that support healthy eating and physical activity.

Successful Students Campaign

A Partnership Between:

- *California Project LEAN*
- *CA School Boards Association*
- *University of South Florida*
- *Project LEAN Regional Coordinators*

Successful Students Campaign

Goals:

- ***Educate School Board members about the importance of nutrition policies***
- ***Increase the number of district policies that support healthy eating***

Knowing the Audience

Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods Used to Better Understand:

- *Factors that motivate/deter healthy food policies*
- *Effective communication channels and spokespersons*
- *Effective strategies and messages*

Successful Students Campaign

- ***Message: Successful Students Through Healthy Food Policies: Act Now for Academic Excellence***
- ***Activities:***
 - ***Ads & Articles***
 - ***Trainings***
 - ***Local Mobilization***
 - ***Healthy Food Policy Resource Guide***

Results

Evaluation Components:

- *Surveys of school board members that received the guide and attended the trainings*
- *Key Informant Interviews*
- *Post Survey of School Board members*

Results

- *Guide was useful*
- *Workshop ratings were very high*
- *Survey Showed statistically significant increases in:*
 - *community activity around nutrition policy*
 - *Support for banning certain foods from schools*
- *Policy Tracking: Helped create policies in 40 school districts; impacting 1 million of California's 6 million students*

Additional Outcomes

- *Influenced state legislative activity: CSBA sponsoring a Bill to limit junk food*
- *New Grant to update the Guide and conduct more trainings*
- *Received Innovation in Prevention Award*

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