



5 A Day and School-Age Children

Pricing to Promote 5 A Day

Pricing strategies work! A study was conducted in 1997 to examine the effects of lower prices on the sale of fruits and vegetables in an adolescent population. Results show lower prices are consistently associated with higher consumption of targeted items. If you want to increase fruit and vegetable consumption in your schools, consider some of the things learned from this study.

Methods

- Apples, bananas, oranges and lettuce salad were already offered as part of the usual meal plan and as a la carte options.
- Baby carrots were introduced for the first time during the study, three weeks before prices were lowered.
- Prices were lowered by approximately 50 percent and signs promoting the half price sale were placed near the items being sold.
- Public address announcements were made during the first week of the low-price period which lasted for three weeks.
- NO nutrition education intervention took place, only prices were changed.

Results and Discussion

- Fruit sales increased by about fourfold during the low-price period.
- Carrot sales increased by about twofold during the low-price period.
- No measurable changes occurred in the overall a la carte sales revenue or the number of reimbursable school meals. This means that increased purchases of more healthful foods does NOT reduce sales revenues for school food service programs.
- Two previous studies (on adults) found that fruit and vegetable sales returned to baseline levels when original prices were reinstated.