

Research Rundown

Article:

The New School Food Standards and Nutrition of School Children: Direct and Indirect Analysis

What did this study examine?

This study examined if school nutrition policies impacted by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 altered diet quality or food intake using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES).

Key findings:

The HHFKA policies resulted in school children consuming an overall higher amount of healthy foods and an overall lower number of total calories per day.

Diet Quality

- 1 Significant improvement in diet quality after the changes were implemented
- 2 As school nutrition quality increased, diet quality at home decreased
- 3 The largest improvements in diet quality occurred within the grade 6-12 category who were in the higher income classification

Calorie Intake

- 1 A slight reduction in the average daily calories consumed
- 2 The greatest decrease in calorie intake was seen in the grade 6-12 category who were in the higher income classification

Put it into practice!

- Provide opportunities for students to learn more about nutrition to encourage them to make nutritious food choices when they are not at school (e.g. at home, at a restaurant, etc.)
- Continue to find ways to improve the nutritional standards of the meals you serve in your programs above and beyond the minimum requirements (e.g. offer a wider variety of fruits and vegetables, offer 100% whole grain-rich items, a variety of meat/meat alternates, etc.)

Reference:

Valizadeh, P., & Ng, S.W. (2020). The New school food standards and nutrition of school children: Direct and Indirect Effect Analysis. *Economics and human biology*, 39, 100918. <https://doi.org.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/10.1016/j.ehb.2020.100918>.



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