

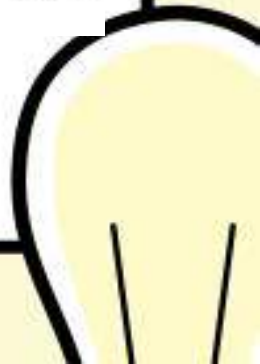
# Behavioral Economics & Smarter Lunchrooms

Small Changes that Make Big Difference



# Choice Architecture

- Choice architecture
  - **Designing the choice** to **lead** an individual to a particular outcome **without forcing** them
  - Uses the **tools of psychology** to access economic decision-making
- Generally, adjusting the choice architecture is *cheap*
  - **Big bang for the buck**



# How Behavioral Economics Helps: Economics & Psychology

## ○ **Reactance**

- Rebelling against a threat to freedom
- Limits on ketchup
- “Don’t press this button”

## ○ **Attribution**

- It was my choice, I will repeat it in the future
- Choosing between celery and carrots



# Hot vs. Cold Decisions

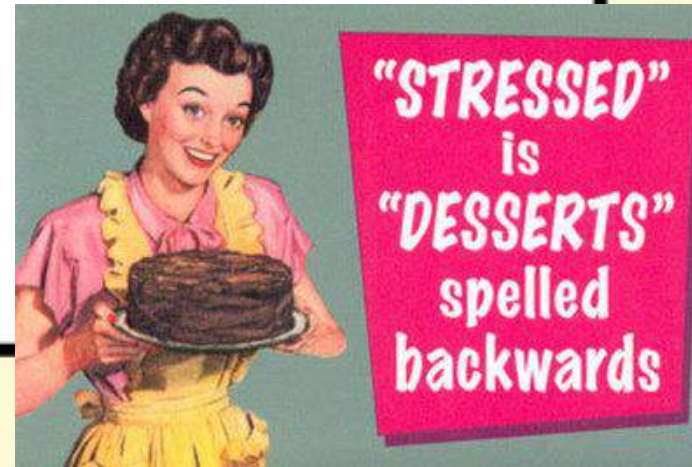


## Cold State

- We consider
  - Prices
  - Health information
  - Logic
- We buy
  - Smaller portions
  - Moderate foods

## Hot State

- We eat for
  - Taste
  - Convenience
  - Size
  - Visual effect
  - “This decision is an exception”
- We buy
  - Bigger
  - More hedonistic



## 6 Basic Principles to Consider

The following principles are based on research concerning various environmental cues that influence eating behavior. They are true in school lunchrooms as well as in restaurants, food courts, and even in your home kitchen!

Manage  
Portion  
Sizes

Increase  
Convenience

Improve  
Visibility

Enhance  
Taste  
Expectations

Utilize  
Suggestive  
Selling

Set Smart  
Pricing  
Strategies

Let's look at each principle separately...





**Manage Portion Sizes**

Increase Convenience

Improve Visibility

Enhance Taste Expectations

Utilize Suggestive Selling

Set Smart Pricing Strategies

Use smaller containers, plates, and serving utensils for foods you wish to limit

Large portions = eating more



Pay attention to the number of servings *per container!*

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size	4 cookies (30g)
Servings Per Container	4
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	220
Calories from Fat	110
	% Daily Value*
<b>Total Fat</b>	12g 18%
Saturated Fat	6g 30%
Trans Fat	0.5g
<b>Cholesterol</b>	10mg 2%
<b>Sodium</b>	70mg 4%
<b>Total Carbohydrates</b>	25g 8%
Dietary Fiber	1g 4%
Sugars	20g
<b>Protein</b>	3g

Small portions = eating less



## Manage Portion Sizes

Increase Convenience

Improve Visibility

Enhance Taste Expectations

Utilize Suggestive Selling

Set Smart Pricing Strategies

Serve Smart: Serve yourself only what you want to eat – then put the rest away and out of sight.

Why it works: People will “clean their plate” even after they are full... even when they don't like what they are eating!

### Fun science:

“Crouton Salads”  
& Unlimited Dressing

&

Stale Popcorn Giveaway



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# Make healthy foods more convenient.

- \* The easier it is to eat a food, the more likely we are to eat it!
- \* Make healthy foods easy to get to by putting them on the middle shelves of the pantry and refrigerator, in front.
- \* Put indulgent treats at the very top or bottom shelves, in the back.







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Rearrange Your Space: Place foods that you wish to eat more of in easy to see and reach locations! In school studies simply rearranging the milk cooler increased sales of white milk by 46%

Why it works: If it takes more time or effort we don't complete it



**Fun science:**

**The Secretaries'  
Sweet Tooth**

**&**

**Chocolate Milk  
Hide-and-Seek**



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# Out of sight, out of mind.

- \* Simply *seeing* a brownie or other high-calorie food can lead to unplanned consumption – we crave it and eat it before we think twice.
- \* Conversely, the image or presence of a healthy food option can lead to consumption of healthier foods. In one school, simply moving a salad bar 3 feet to the center of the serving area *tripled* salad sales!





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Snack Smart: Keep healthy foods where you'll see them – at eye level in the pantry and refrigerator – and more indulgent foods in the back and out of sight. Use opaque storage containers for indulgent foods and clear storage containers for healthy snacks.

Why it works: It's easier to avoid temptation when you desire healthy foods instead. Make healthy foods easy to spot!

**Fun science:**

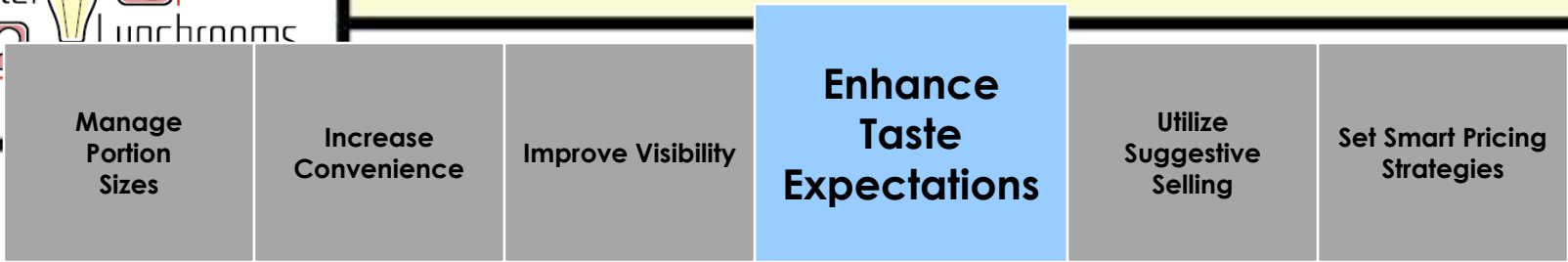
**the Fabulous Fruit Bowl**

**&**

**First Foods Are  
Favorite Foods**







If it *looks* delicious and *sounds* delicious... it must **be** delicious!

- \* Food tastes how we **expect** it to taste – which is why it's such a shame that people are taught to think healthy foods are yucky!
- \* Name, appearance, and reputation create our expectations.



Manage Portion Sizes	Increase Convenience	Improve Visibility	<b>Enhance Taste Expectations</b>	Utilize Suggestive Selling	Set Smart Pricing Strategies
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Talk It Up to Spice It Up!: Get kids excited about healthy foods by creating fun, imaginative names such as “X-ray Vision Carrots.” Increase the allure of adult foods by adding appealing details: “tangy smoothie,” “Texas barbecue,” or “crisp garden salad.”

Why it works: It's (almost) all in your head!

**Fun science:**

**A Wine (or Burrito) by Any Other Name**





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# Say what??

- \* Attitudes are contagious! We are influenced by people around us.
- \* Signs and verbal prompts influence us to see and desire products.



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Make Peer Pressure a Positive Force!: Encouraging others to eat healthy foods will help you reach your own nutritional goals. Order first at restaurants. Don't be afraid to be a leader!

Why it works: Birds of a feather flock together! People often follow the example of those near them, so start a healthy trend!

**Fun science:**

**I'll have What She's  
Having...**

**&**

**Supermarket  
Smart Carts**





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# Money Talks.

\* People like to save money, but it can backfire... many examples of “bundling” result in eating LOTS of unplanned, unnecessary, and even *unwanted* calories.

\* Nutritionally speaking, a Value Meal is a really *bad* deal!





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Make a Bundle with Healthy Bundling: Encourage lunchrooms and restaurants to offer healthy food “bundles” for a discounted price: for example, a salad or sandwich + water + fruit instead of a soda and fries, or one cookie + milk instead of three cookies.

Why it works: A way to save money and feel better? Two, please!

**Fun science:**

**Cash for Cookies**



+



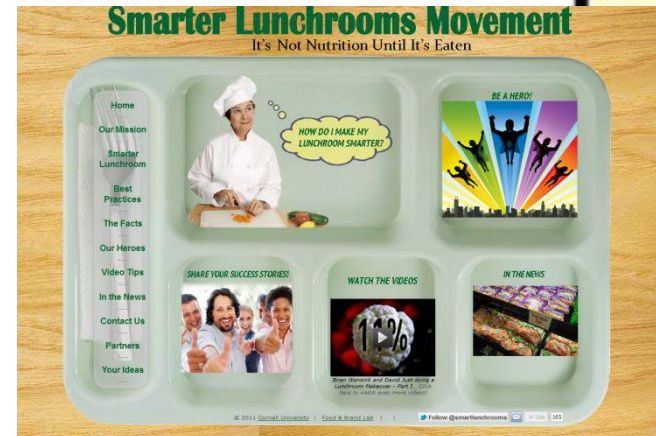
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- Follow and Friend us to get the latest in School Nutrition news!
- Already have a Smarter Lunchroom?  
Share your Success Story to win a feature on the SLM website!

@SmartLunchrooms



[www.smarterlunchrooms.org](http://www.smarterlunchrooms.org)



Smarter Lunchroom Movement



# THANK YOU!

## The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement and the BEN Center

- [www.SmarterLunchrooms.org](http://www.SmarterLunchrooms.org)
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