



ShowCase

Successful Students Through Healthy Food Policies

Topic: Nutrition

Organisation: California Project LEAN

Location: California (USA)

Dates: 2000 to 2004

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Overview

California Project LEAN's (CPL) 'Successful Students Through Healthy Food Policies' programme used a social marketing approach to move local school board members to establish and enforce school nutrition policies.

Working with the California School Board Association, CPL embarked on a programme to motivate policymakers to address and enact local school district policies that support healthy eating. This programme provided school board members with printed guides on policy and nutrition, training at conferences and professional workshops, and fact sheets for board members and parents of students.

Successful Students Through Healthy Food Policies was awarded the Innovation in Prevention Award by the Department of Health and Human Services in 2004.

Results (2004):

- Approximately 10 per cent of school districts had at least 1 high school that had developed or was developing a healthier nutrition policy
- The programme helped create nutrition policies to increase the availability of healthy foods to 1 million of California's 6.3 million students
- Policies were introduced to set standards for fundraising activities, classroom celebrations and the ban of soft drinks

1. BEHAVIOUR

- For school districts to enact healthy eating school policies
- Increase inclusion of nutrition-related policy issues on school board meeting agendas

2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- Literature review – To assess school nutritional policies, existing soda contracts, newspaper coverage, California High School Fast Food Survey, obesity data
- Interviews and focus groups with school board members
- Strategy sessions and survey of California school board members
- Concept testing with 25 school board members

3. THEORY

- **Logic Model:** Postulates that it is still individuals who make policy, even though they may reside within organisations – Empower individuals to facilitate policy change

4. INSIGHT

- School board members motivated by overall wellbeing of youth and have desire to give back to community
- Healthy food issues are not brought to their attention
- Many school board members do not believe their school districts are doing everything to promote healthy eating among students, nor do they feel adequately prepared to develop nutrition-related policies
- Board support for nutrition-based policies on school campuses
- Need for increased understanding by parents of how school board operates

5. EXCHANGE

- **Barriers:** Nutrition not a priority; Lack of knowledge of link between diet and educational attainment; Inadequate education and preparation in developing nutrition-related school policies; Budget concerns ; Lack of support, time and/or personal interest
- **Responses:** Educated parents, students and community members about importance of good nutrition to student academic performance and behaviour; Training for school board members to develop nutrition-related school policies; Highlighted how to generate support and revenue without sale of unhealthy foods (with case studies)

6. COMPETITION

- Cost of implementing policy changes
- Lobbying and marketing power of fast food and soda companies
- Competing school board policy priorities
- Student and parent attitudes towards healthy eating
- **Response:** Media advocacy campaign called for schools to be more adequately funded so they no longer had to rely on sale of unhealthy foods

7. SEGMENTATION

- School board members – Serving rural and urban high school districts in which at least 50 per cent or more students are eligible for free and/or reduced price meals
- Socioeconomic segmentation: Focus on California school districts with high schools in low-income communities

8. METHODS MIX

- Healthy Food Policy Resource Guide
- Sample board policies and administrative regulations
- Fact sheets for board members and parents
- Advertisements
- Articles, case studies and resources
- Conferences, workshops and training for school board members – On how to develop sound nutrition-related policies
- Community mobilisation