

EAT

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Ask the children to examine the MyPyramid poster in the cafeteria. Tell them to look for at least one healthy food or beverage on the poster that they might enjoy for breakfast either at home or in school. Discuss their observations and ideas when the students return back from lunch and have had an opportunity to review the poster.

LEARN

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Objective

Students will explain why breakfast is important.

10 Minute Lesson

Students will listen to a short story about Sydney C. Learn’s morning routine that did not include eating breakfast before school. They will hear that Sydney experienced unpleasant symptoms commonly associated with breakfast skipping. Through teacher-guided discussion, children will identify that the unpleasant symptoms were likely a direct result of not eating a morning meal. Students will discuss other consequences of breakfast skipping to gain understanding that eating breakfast will help them feel and learn their best.

LIVE

HOME ACTIVITY

Instruct the children to discuss why it’s important to eat breakfast every day with an adult at home. Students can “quiz” the adult to see if they know about the benefits of eating morning meals. If the school has a breakfast program, the children can also quiz the adult to see if they know about the program. When discussing breakfast at home, instruct the children to ask each adult if they eat breakfast every day. Report back the next day which adults eat breakfast and which do not.

Teacher's Notes

Background

Research shows that students who do not eat breakfast may experience:

- Increased depression and anxiety
- Increased fatigue, restlessness and sleepiness
- Increased hyperactivity
- Decreased attention span
- Decreased class participation
- Decreased time spent on task
- Increased need for discipline
- Increased visits to school nurse: headaches, stomach aches
- Increased absenteeism
- Overall poorer grades, in particular in arithmetic
- Decreased ability to distinguish between similar images
- Slower memory recall

LEARN 10 Minute Lesson

Read this short story to the students: *One day, Sydney C. Learn woke up a little later than usual. He looked at the clock and said, "Uh-oh- I'd better hurry up or I will be late for school!" As fast as he could, he got dressed, washed his face, and brushed his teeth. He packed his backpack, put on his coat, kissed his mom good-bye, and rushed out the door. He got to school just in time for the bell! Later that morning, Sydney didn't feel very well. His stomach hurt a little and he felt like he had no energy. "What's going on?" thought Sydney, "I felt OK when I woke up, but now's a different story." Sydney's teacher noticed Sydney just wasn't himself. Usually he is the first one to raise his hand when she asks the class a question, but today it seems like it is hard for Sydney to pay attention.*

Lead a discussion:

Ask the students: *Why do you think Sidney didn't feel well when he got to school? Did he forget to do something important?*

Answer: *Sidney didn't feel well because he didn't eat breakfast.*

Ask the students: *What else might happen to Sidney because he didn't have breakfast?*

Answers: *Sidney might get a headache, he might not do his best in class, he might feel sleepy, and he might be grumpy.*

Explain: *When you wake up in the morning you've gone all night without food. That is a very long time. Your stomach will be empty. If you don't eat breakfast, there will be no food to give your body energy. You need energy from food to feel good and learn your best!*

Ask the students: *If Sidney skipped breakfast on the weekend, do you think he'd have lots of energy to play in the morning?*

Answer: *No- without food in his belly, Sidney might not have very much energy. Breakfast fuels your brain and your muscles, too!*

Introduce and explain the EAT Cafeteria Connection and LEARN Home Activity to the students.

Optional Enrichment Ideas

Ask the librarian at your school or local public library to suggest another breakfast-themed story you could read to the class. Or, provide children with a blank sheet of paper. Have them copy the words "I Eat Breakfast Every Day" on the top of their papers. Instruct them to draw a picture of themselves eating a healthy breakfast. Display the pictures in the classroom or in the school cafeteria.