P213 WISE in the Head Start Classroom: Impacts on Educator Behaviors

Taren Swindle, PhD, MS, tswindle@uams.edu, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, 521 Jack Stephens Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205; L. Whiteside-Mansell, EdD

Objective: Together, We Inspire Smart Eating (WISE) was designed to leverage the early childhood educator (ECE) as a key healthy role model for children. This study aims to assess the impact of WISE on early childhood educator behaviors in food situations.

Design, Setting and Participants: WISE is a classroom curriculum that provides structured food experiences on a weekly basis around 8 target foods. WISE was implemented in 10 classrooms in 2012-2013. ECEs received an initial 6-hour training as well as ongoing technical assistance. A time series design was implemented to assess pre to post changes in ECEs. Trained observers rated ECEs on use of best practices and behaviors counter to promotion of a healthy environment during food experiences and mealtimes.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: T-test mean comparisons were conducted to determine if the frequency of key ECE behaviors changed from pre to post intervention.

Results: Comparison of mean-level observations from the baseline to post-test indicate lead teachers significantly decreased commands and pressure to eat (e.g., clean your plate; ($t = -9.17$, $p < .001$)), punishment and discouragement of manipulation of food (e.g., stop playing with your food; ($t = -5.45$, $p < .001$)), and hurrying children to finish eating ($t = -3.20$, $p = .004$). Assistant teachers showed a significant decrease in pressure to eat ($t = -3.88$, $p = .001$) and discouragement of food manipulation ($t = -4.73$, $p < .001$).

Conclusions and Implications: These findings suggest WISE has a positive impact on ECEs' food-related behaviors that may be associated with increased fruit/vegetable intake for young children.

Funding: NIFA.

P214 Which Health Messages Work Best? Experts Prefer Fear- or Loss-Related Messages, but the Public Follows Positive, Gain-Related Messages

Brian Wansink, PhD, foodandbrandlab@cornell.edu, Cornell University, 475 Warren Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853; L. E. Smith; L. Pope, PhD, RD, University of Vermont

Objective: Is it more effective to be positive or negative? Many of the most vivid public health appeals have been negative – “Smoking Kills” or “Drive, Drive, and Die” – but are these negative messages effective when it comes to nutrition and changing eating behavior?

Design, Setting and Participants: In this quantitative meta-analysis of 43 published studies involving either fear appeals or negative, loss-related messages or positive, gain-related messages. In contrast past research, a wide range of over 1000 participants were coded, segmented, and analyzed based on audience characteristics.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: The main dependent variable of interest was how effective a nutrition-related message was on changing behavioral intentions or actual behavior. Messages were coded as effective or ineffective and a logistic regression was conducted against the characteristics of message (positive versus negative) and four characteristics of the target group of the message.

Results: Negative, fear- or loss-related messages tended to work best with people who were highly involved with the issue, highly knowledgeable about the issue and who had a low preference for risk, and a piecemeal style of processing messages (vs wholistic or “big picture”).

Conclusions and Implications: Experts – including health and nutrition professionals – tend to prefer negative messages (“Candy will make you fat”) whereas much of the general public tend to respond best to positive message (“Fruit will make you slim”). The reason that negative, loss-related messages are so common may be because they are designed by experts.

Funding: Cornell Food and Brand Lab.

P215 Can Workplace Wellness be Reliably Scored and Quantified to Become Slim by Design?

Brian Wansink, PhD, foodandbrandlab@cornell.edu, Cornell University, 475 Warren Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853; S. Wendel, PhD, HelloWallet; G. Gabrielyan, PhD, Cornell University

Objective: Is your workplace making you heavy or healthy? Using principles of behavioral economics and psychology, 100 changes were identified as actions that workplaces could take to make it easier for workers to eat better, exercise more, and experience less stress. This research examines if a scorecard containing such actions could be reliably used to rate whether a workplace is making its workers healthy or heavy.

Design, Setting and Participants: Twelve coders were given both 10-point and 100-point scorecards and asked to score a large white-collar employer. Half of them had received 15 minutes of training on how to use the scorecard and half did not.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Inner-rater reliability of those who had seen training compared to those who had not.

Results: When coders had received training, the reliability of using the Slim by Design scorecard was high ($\alpha = .93$ vs. $.82$). The source of inconsistencies among the untrained group was because there were multiple cafeterias and breakrooms at the workplace and people often rated different ones.

Conclusions and Implications: Workplace wellness scorecards can reliably quantify workplace wellness efforts. A person with no training can confidently use such scorecards to rate their employer to see how it compares with others. Because of this reliability, it can also be useful in suggesting what the employer could do to improve wellness.

Funding: Cornell Food and Brand Lab.