FoodCorps Healthy School Toolkit

Overview

The FoodCorps Healthy School Toolkit is a PSE change intervention designed to improve school food environments over time. The Toolkit includes a research-backed assessment tool that is used by school teams to assess healthy school food environment activities. The Toolkit also includes the Action Plan, a tool that guides school teams in setting goals and vision to improve school food environments. The Healthy School Progress Report was developed through an evaluation partnership with Columbia University’s Teachers College. It assesses the school food environment across sixteen indicator areas known to contribute to healthy eating behaviors in children, spanning hands-on nutrition education, school gardening, and food preparation experience to the culture of healthy eating in the cafeteria and throughout the school’s practices. It is expected that schools actively using these tools and seeking to implement activities that support a healthy school food environment will make incremental progress on an annual basis. **Target Behavior:** Healthy Eating  **Intervention Type:** PSE Change

Intervention Reach and Adoption

FoodCorps Healthy School Toolkit is designed for implementation in K-8 schools. Schools are a primary driver in young people’s knowledge of, attitudes about, and access to food. By creating healthy food environments, schools can start all students on a healthy path to success. The FoodCorps Healthy School Toolkit can be used by school teams in any school setting across diverse communities and geographies to create a customized vision and action plan. The Toolkit was developed, piloted, revised, and implemented through thoughtful engagement with and feedback from our service members and partners in the field. **Setting:** School (Learn)  **Target Audience:** Elementary School, Middle School  **Race/Ethnicity:** All

Intervention Components

The FoodCorps Healthy School Toolkit includes the Healthy School Progress Report and Action Plan. These intervention components provide an
Intervention Materials

The FoodCorps Healthy School Toolkit is a set of resources designed to take a snapshot of your current school food environment, guide your school community in creating a vision for the future, document your action plan for working toward that vision, and evaluate and celebrate your school community’s history and progress over time. Included within the Toolkit are the:

- Healthy School Progress Report (a research-backed assessment tool)
- Action Plan
- School & Community Guide, and related resources.

Click the links below to download the FoodCorps Healthy School Toolkit:


Intervention Costs

Materials available at no cost.

Evidence Summary

When the FoodCorps developed the Healthy School Progress Report, they tested it with FoodCorps service members who were piloting the tool in schools. They continue to collect feedback from FoodCorps service members on an annual basis on all the tools used in the field including the FoodCorps Healthy School Toolkit along with all the components included in it such as the Healthy School Progress Report. FoodCorps partnered with evaluators from Columbia University to conduct an evaluation on its programming, for which one of the key goals was to revise the Healthy School Progress Report and test its validity as an evaluative tool used in schools. The results from the development of the Healthy School Progress Reports were:

- The Progress Report is an evidence-informed tool
- It has content validity. It was reviewed by experts who work in school-based nutrition education and gardening
- It is sensitive to change.
- It can be used by schools as a menu of options for programming ideas that support healthy school food environments.

Background research conducted for the Healthy School Progress Report showed that there is evidence to support the following:

- Ongoing cooking, tasting, and garden-based lessons
- Field trips and farmer/chef visits
- School garden development and maintenance
- Salad bar and meal line design
- Taste tests
- Cafeteria role modelling
- Local sourcing and recipe development
- School-wide healthy food promotion
- Celebration, events, rewards, and snacks
- Family, staff, and community education

**Evidence-based Approach:** Practice-tested

**Evaluation Indicators**

Based on the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, the following outcome indicators can be used to evaluate intervention progress and success.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors of Influence</th>
<th>Readiness and Capacity – Short Term (ST)</th>
<th>Changes – Medium Term (MT)</th>
<th>Effectiveness and Maintenance – Long Term (LT)</th>
<th>Population Results (R)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
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<td>Environmental Settings</td>
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**MT5: Nutrition Supports**

- **MT5a:** In the FoodCorps 2018-2019 program year, 73% of schools (203 of 278) improved their school food environment by implementing research-backed strategies in the Toolkit. Focus areas for making progress towards a better food environment in schools include:
  - Knowledge (nutrition education)
  - Engagement (school gardens)
  - Access (school meals)
  - School community (school culture)

**Evaluation Materials**

The primary performance measurement and outcome evaluation tool for the Toolkit is the Healthy School Progress Report. Healthy School Progress Report guides and measures changes in the physical and cultural practices.
that are shown to influence what kids eat within in the school environment. The Healthy School Progress Report is included in the Healthy School Toolkit.

**Additional Information**

**Website:** The FoodCorps Healthy School Toolkit website, [www.foodcorps.org](http://www.foodcorps.org), includes program resources and materials as well as more about the impact and vision of the intervention.  

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