

# Perceptions of Child Nutrition Programs



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Perceptions of Child Nutrition Programs Among Students  
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# Perceptions of Child Nutrition Programs among students

- Why the interest in this topic?
- Questionnaire development
- Student questions and responses
- Northern CA Child Nutrition Director (CND) questions and responses
- Has student perception changed from the last questionnaire?





## Why the interest???

- Mentor Julie Dutcher at San Jose State University
- Little interest from nutrition and dietetic students
  - Need for qualified people to replace retiring CND's
- *Student perceptions*
- *Child Nutrition Directors strategies for increasing student interest*



# Questionnaires

- *Five questions for students*
  - 58 participated from 2 food management classes (Sophomore, Junior, Senior)
- *Two questions for CND's*
  - From Northern California region
  - 7 participated



# What is your option?

- *General Dietetics – 29*
- *Nutrition Management – 13*
- *Nutrition Communication – 7*



# Why did you choose nutrition and dietetics as a major ?

- Interested in nutrition
- Food and how it affects health
- Science of nutrition
- Help people live healthy lives
- Preventative medicine
- Help the community



# What is your perception of school foodservice programs?

- *Four main areas:*
  - Healthfulness of meals
  - Positive perceptions
  - Negative perceptions
  - Unfamiliar with field



# What is your perception of employment in school foodservice?

- *Three main areas:*
  - Positive perceptions
  - Negative perceptions
  - Unfamiliar

## EMPLOYEE TRIFECTA







# Were you aware that there were career opportunities in school foodservice?

- *50 answered yes*
- *7 answered no*
  - Learned about opportunities through school (majority)
  - Center for Healthy Communities (on CSU Chico campus)
  - Family members





# Have you considered a career as a child nutrition director?

- *24 answered yes*

- Establish good meals for children
- Enjoy working with children
- Wants a management position in foodservice
- Enjoyable and interesting

- *30 answered no*

- Not an area of interest
- Private counseling
- Wants to work with individual clients
- Does not want to work with children
- Public policy related to school foodservice

## However

- Over half of the students wanted more information about careers in school foodservice



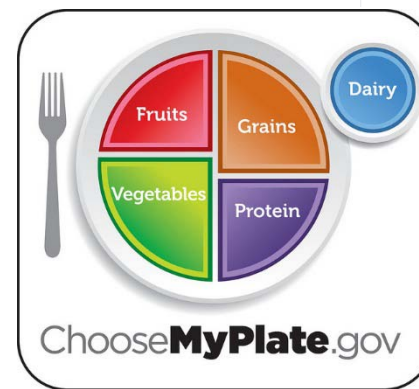
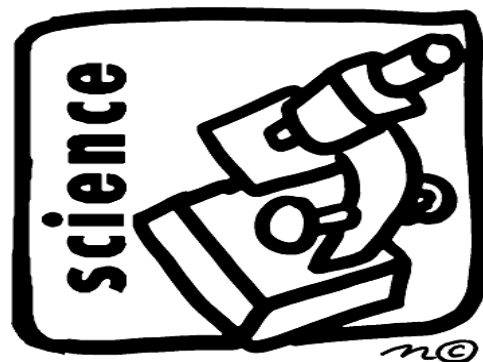
# So, how far have we come with student perceptions?!

- Not as far as one would hope!
- Student results from 2003 are very similar to 2015





# Why they chose major?





# Perceptions of school foodservice

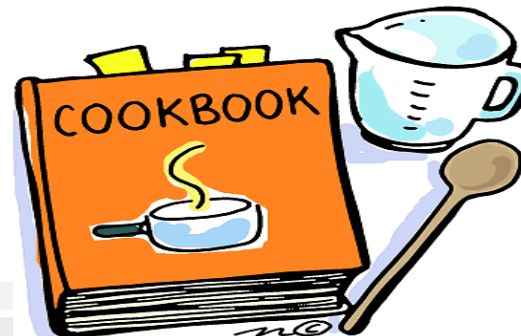




# Perception of employment in school foodservice

Unqualified workers

Boring work





## What, or whom, inspired you to become a CND?

- Worked with mom in school foodservice; then went to training for the NSLP and loved putting the pieces together
- Inspired by Dietetic Internship and CND







## What, or whom, inspired you to become a CND?

- Was working as a cook and my Director trained and mentored me; saw something in me
- Took someone I admired to believe in me and mentor me
- Interned at FitKids, provided nutrition education to children which motivated me to go into the field
- Exposed to school foodservice from college professor and loved it; CND taught her the world of school foodservice
- Encouraged to go back to school and get their degree

# What strategies can be used to promote the child nutrition profession among students?

- The more they are taught the more they become inspired
- College counseling offices
- Skills they learn in school are vital to the profession; easier to create compliant meals
- Shadowing a professional



# What strategies can be used to promote the child nutrition profession among students?

- “Real-life” experiences
- Classroom visits, tours, conferences
- Great websites to use for training
- Talking and connecting with students



# What strategies can be used to promote the child nutrition profession among students?

- Work currently being done with interns and externs
- Providing services to small districts
- Use of programs relevant to school foodservice
- Promote professional image of the industry
  - ServSafe, credential, certification
- Students are a “goldmine”



# What strategies can be used to promote the child nutrition profession among students?

- Present a “day in the life” of a CND
- Develop a CN college course
- CND’s write articles geared to students
- Promote benefits of the industry
- Student involvement in school foodservice mandatory





## So, what's going on with students???



- Dietetic profession
- “Fresh” foods
- Some do not believe they have management skills, nor want the skills, nor see the need for the skills
- Want to help people, but as clients
- Fear of math
- Maturity



Any Questions?

