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School

Solutions & Strategies
for K-12 Foodservice

Nutrition



School Lunch Finding Favor

If recent statistics are any indication, the days of kids complaining about their school lunch might soon be a distant memory. According to a study done this year by research and consulting firm Y-Pulse, LLC, the percentage of students who report enjoying school lunches is up to 36%, an increase from 22% in 2010, while 7% said they “love” eating in the school cafeteria. On the other end of the spectrum, the numbers of students who “hate” school food dropped to a mere 7%, significantly down from 23% three years ago.

“These findings reinforce a trend we’ve been following since 2006,” says Y-Pulse co-founder Sharon Olson. “Year after year, we’ve seen the percentage of kids who like school lunches increasing. School foodservice directors who have been leading the way toward serving a greater variety of healthful, great-tasting meals that kids love can take heart in knowing their efforts are paying off.”

It’s probably no big surprise that 8- to 10-year-old tweens are more likely than teenagers to report liking school lunch, nor will it be shocking to hear that the overwhelming favorite school lunch is pizza- 58% of students report enjoying a slice at school. Other favorites include chicken, chicken nuggets, salads, sandwiches, burgers and tacos.

However, the study—which focused on identifying the top dining venues preferred by kids and included cafeterias, sit-down restaurants and chain restaurants—found that they most appreciate eating at home. Cited reasons include “Mom is a great cook,” “I like sitting down with my family” and “[The food] is always fresh.” To view the study presentation, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ypulsesurvey>.