What’s in Your Breakfast Bag?

An activity demonstrating what students eat or don’t eat prior to the start of the school day.

Materials:
- Small paper bags. One per participant
- Food Models/pictures: Both healthy and junk foods

Preparation
Calculate quantities of Healthy, Junk and No breakfast based on your state, county or district hunger statistics.
Print food pictures
Distribute food pictures into participant bags

SAMPLE (This sample is based on 100 participants)

36.3% Ohio teens report eating breakfast everyday
- 32 bags – No Breakfast Today card
- 32 bags – Junk Food or partial meal
- 36 bags – Full healthy meal (fits USDA School Meal requirements)

Procedure:
- Tell the group before they sit down to wait until prompted to open.
- Discuss the statistics with the group then ask them all to open the bags.
- After they open their bag, ask them questions about what happened.
- Discuss with the group the variety of reasons people doesn’t access healthy foods, no matter their socioeconomic status

Discussion Questions:
- Are you surprised at the statistics? 36.3% students eat breakfast?
- Did you all get the same amount of food? Why do you think this would happen?
- How did you feel when you saw your breakfast or realized that you wouldn’t have breakfast?
- Consider this common myth: “Only the needy population needs breakfast at school”
- What are some of the other reasons students don’t eat breakfast?
- Who would you rather sit next to in class, someone who ate or someone who didn’t?
NO BREAKFAST TODAY

“It’s too early to eat”
“I don’t have time to eat!”
“I’m not hungry”
There was no food for breakfast.”

“Nothing sounds good, I’m not into breakfast.”

“Skipped meals equals calories avoided!”
“I woke up too late.”
“The bus was late, breakfast was over.”
“I have sports practice during breakfast.”
We can’t make kids smarter, but with improved nutrition and physical activity

WE CAN PUT A BETTER STUDENT IN THE CHAIR.

Robert Murray, MD, Professor of Nutrition, Department of Human Sciences, College of Education & Human Ecology, The Ohio State University

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