FDA’s Oral Culture Learner Project: Helping Employees Understand the Importance of Food Safety

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Objectives

• Describe the differences between oral and print culture learners

• Apply oral culture learning concepts and materials to training programs

• Describe the role of oral culture learning materials in creating a food safety culture
The Faces and Families Behind the Statistics
(Source: http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org)
“A Family Tragedy that Could Have Been Prevented: The Story of Zella Ploghoft (Part 2)” (5:40)
Selected Research Supporting Innovative Approaches to Food Safety Education and Training
Factors Affecting the Ability of Food Workers to Prepare Food Safely

- Time Pressure
- Structural environments, equipment, and resources
- Management and coworker emphasis on food safety
- Worker characteristics
- Negative consequences for those who do not prepare food safely
- Food safety education and training
- Restaurant procedures
- Glove and sanitizer use

(Green and Selman, 2005)
Food Workers’ Perspectives on Handwashing Behaviors and Barriers in the Restaurant Environment

Barriers to Handwashing:

• Time Pressure
• Inadequate facilities and supplies
• Lack of accountability
• Lack of involvement of managers and coworkers
• Organizations that were not supportive of handwashing

(Pragle, Harding, and Mack, 2007)
Food Workers’ Perspectives on Handwashing Behaviors and Barriers in the Restaurant Environment

Recommendations:

• Hands-on training program that orients new employees to correct handwashing practice and more advanced education about foodborne illness

• Involvement of both managers and coworkers in the training

(Pragle, Harding, and Mack, 2007)
Food Workers’ Perspectives on Handwashing Behaviors and Barriers in the Restaurant Environment

Recommendations:

• Easily accessible handwashing facilities stocked with necessary supplies

• Continued handwashing training and support involving the food service industry, managers, and coworkers

(Pragle, Harding, and Mack, 2007)
Food Workers’ Perspectives on Handwashing Behaviors and Barriers in the Restaurant Environment

Recommendations:

• Involvement of health departments and inspectors in providing managers and food workers with advice and consultation on improvement of handwashing practice

(Pragle, Harding, and Mack, 2007)
Other Research

- Food workers view their business as low risk (Clayton et al., 2002)

- Behavior is motivated by values and interpretations of situations and events (Burke, 1990)

- Workers are more likely to implement safe practices if they understand the importance of implementing those practices (Clayton et al., 2002)
Other Research

• Change efforts based on incentive and threat rarely succeed in the long run (Rock & Schwartz, 2006)
Oral versus Print Culture Learners

• Dr. Donna Beegle

• 2004 Oregon Environmental Health Specialist Network (EHS-Net) Communication Study

• Study conclusion:
  – Food employees = oral culture learners
  – Regulators = print culture learners
Oral versus Print Culture Communication: How we receive, process, & retain information

- Oral
- Print
Most Food Safety Training Today

- Presented in print or verbally in unfamiliar abstract language

- Presented by someone of power and/or someone who does not understand what it is like to work in a foodservice establishment

- Good behavior is often not modeled or made a priority in restaurant environment (i.e. lack of food safety culture)

(Beegle, 2004)
Most Food Safety Training Today

• Often describes "how" but not "why"

• If provided, the "why" is often presented:
  – In a language that is not familiar (too technical)
  – In a way that does not relate to food employees’ personal experiences

(Beegle, 2004)
Print or Oral Culture?

NOTICE

Employees must wash hands before returning to work
Print or Oral Culture?

Lavado de manos para empleados de alimentos

¿CUÁNDO?
- Justo antes de tocar alimentos
- Después de:
  - entrar al baño
  - toser, estornudar o usar el pañuelo
  - tocar carnes, aves, huevos, pescados o mariscos crudos
  - hablar por teléfono
  - tocarse, peinarse o rascarse la nariz o el cuerpo
  - comer
  - fumar
  - tocar utensilios sucios
  - hacer tareas de limpieza

¿CÓMO?
1. Usar agua tibia y jabón de un dispensador.
2. Frotar vigorosamente hasta el codo por 15 segundos. Limpiar debajo de las uñas, entre los dedos, braza y prótesis.
3. Enjuagar con agua corriente, limpia y tibia.
4. Secar con papel toalla o 30 segundos de aire caliente.
5. Cerrar el grifo con el papel toalla.
Recommendations for Communicating Food Concepts to Oral Culture Learners

• Share stories, sayings, vivid examples of outbreaks

  – http://www.outbreakdatabase.com/
  – http://www.foodpoisonjournal.com/
  – http://www.safetables.org/
  – http://www.marlerblog.com
  – http://www.barfblog.com
  – http://www.foodsafetyinfosheets.org
  – http://www.fda.gov/foodemployeetraining

(Beegle, 2004)
Recommendations for Communicating Food Concepts to Oral Culture Learners (cont’d)

• Stress the importance of role modeling

• Have information presented by someone they trust

• Use simple words or examples food workers can relate to

• Present information verbally and often

(Beegle, 2004)
Recommendations for Communicating Food Concepts to Oral Culture Learners (cont’d)

• Minimize power dynamic (with exception, use eye contact)
• Focus on the big picture, not the gory details
• Be interactive

(Beegle, 2004)
Innovative Approaches to Food Safety Education and Training Addressing the “Why” to Food Safety
Food Safety Infosheets - North Carolina State University (Dr. Ben Chapman)  
http://www.foodsafetyinfosheets.org

Emotion-generating factors used:

- **Storytelling**: To focus on the cases/outcomes of individual incidents
- **Dialogue**: Generate dialogue within the food service kitchen/system
Emotion-generating factors used:

• Information: Written with surprise, sometimes humorous graphic images, and data

• Context: Put food safety into context for food handlers by providing prescriptive information
Oregon’s Handwashing Legends Project

• 2002 Statewide Foodborne Illness Risk Factor Study
  – Finding: Handwashing #1 out of compliance foodborne illness risk factor

• Involves two storyboards to help food workers understand the consequences for not washing hands (funded by CDC EHS-Net program grant)

• [http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/FoodSafety/Pages/hlp.aspx](http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/FoodSafety/Pages/hlp.aspx)
Oregon’s Handwashing Legends Project

20 SECONDS COULD SAVE A LIFE... A TRUE STORY

Poor hand washing can kill.
Unfortunately, I know that better than anyone else...

One day, I went to work with diarrhea and upset stomach. I made the big mistake of not taking the time to wash my hands thoroughly.

I was in and out of the bathroom all day, but I continued to prepare the food.

Whether it was the chicken or the black beans I handled... I’m not sure. But my germs got into many of the dishes.

What happened next was unimaginable...

Over 221 people got incredibly sick with diarrhea and cramps.

Some were taken to the hospital.

The county shut down the restaurant.

But the saddest thing of all was that a 52-year-old woman died due to an infection caused by my germs. I will never forgive myself for that. Don’t make the same mistake I did. Just 20 seconds of hand washing can get rid of deadly germs. And save a life.
FDA’s Oral Culture Learner Project
(2008 – Present)

- History
  - 2008 FDA National Retail Steering Committee Strategic Planning Session
  - 2008 Atlanta Federal Executive Board Leadership Government Program Project Team
  - FDA Industry Outreach Working Group
FDA’s Oral Culture Learner Project

- **Materials**
  - Focus on the consequences of not following the food safety practice
  - Are designed to enhance, not replace, existing training materials
Posters and Storyboards

- Risk factors addressed
  - Handwashing
  - Employee health
  - No bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food
  - Cross-contamination
  - Hot holding
  - Cooling
  - Cold holding*
  - Date marking*
  - Cooking*

*Under Development – Available Soon!
Posters and Storyboards

- Step 1: Preliminary development by project team
- Step 2: Field testing with food employees (oral culture learners)
- Step 3: Review by Stakeholder Group (print culture learners)
- Step 4: Final revision and translation
- Step 5: Develop 508 text equivalent captions and post to web
2015 – 2016 Stakeholder Group

- Oregon Health Authority
- WA Dept of Health
- Alameda Co., CA Environmental Health
- San Diego County
- New Jersey Dept. of Health
- Univ. of Minnesota Extension

- Food Marketing Institute
- National Restaurant Association
- FL Restaurant & Lodging Association
- Bojangles
- Kroger
- Ecolab
2015 – 2016 Stakeholder Group

- Univ. of Minnesota Extension
- Johnson and Wales
- UGA, Center for Food Safety
- MI State University
- Wegmans
- Food Handler
- El Pollo Loco
- CKE Restaurants
- Yum! Brands
- Chick-fil-A
- Sodexo
- Steritech
- Big Y Foods
- Compass Group
- Darden
- RaceTrac
- Google
http://www.fda.gov/foodemployeetraining

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Posters and Storyboards

• May be modified by industry or regulatory authorities
  – Adobe InDesign® file format
  – Add your own logo
  – Switch out the photos for your own
  – Change background color

• May be ordered free of charge
  – 8.5" x 11" picture posters available in 8 languages each with English on the reverse
FDA Oral Culture Learner Project - Educational Materials for Retail Food Employees

FDA’s Oral Culture Learner Project provides materials and methods to help food employees understand the reasons why following proper food safety practices is important to prevent illnesses, deaths, and loss of income and reputation resulting from food-related outbreaks. The materials have been designed for oral culture learners, which research has shown most food employees to be.

Using the following link, scroll to the “Industry and Regulators” section to place an order for the posters/storyboards:

Publication Request Form

Available Materials
- Posters
- Videos

Educational Posters for Retail Food Employees

These posters/storyboards are designed to enhance food safety training efforts at the retail level by helping food...
Would you want these people in your kitchen?

Diarrhea

Vomiting

Diarrhea

Vomiting

Sore Throat with Fever

Yellow Skin / Eyes (Jaundice)

Then why would you go to work sick?

Protect People Everywhere...
Stay Home When You Are Sick.
Bare Hands Could Have Germs on Them That Could Make Someone Sick

Protect People Everywhere. You Don’t Want to Make Anyone Sick: Always Wear Gloves or Use Utensils When Handling Ready-to-Eat Foods

FDA
Why It’s Important to Keep Hot Foods Hot...

Ground beef is 90°F (32°C)

DANGER!

Always Maintain Hot Food at 135°F (57°C) or Above!

Remember:
Keep Foods out of the Temperature Danger Zone 41°F – 135°F (5°C – 57°C)!

Protect People Everywhere.
Always Maintain Hot Food at 135°F or Above.
I Should Have Stayed Home

I woke up feeling awful. I had diarrhea and was sick at the same time.

All I wanted to do was go back to bed, but with bills piling up, I couldn’t afford to stay home.

I got to work and punched in. I am sure I looked as bad as I felt. I knew I shouldn’t be here.

Orders were stacking up, so I immediately began to prepare burgers.

Carlos was having a great time with his family. This was his favorite restaurant.

When the food came, he dug right in and finished his burger and part of his sister’s.

That night, Carlos doubled over with a stomach ache. He was so sick. He ended up being taken to the emergency room.

I found out 33 other people got ill from me handling their food when I was sick. The Health Department closed the restaurant.

I should have done what I knew was right and stayed home. I could have prevented all of this. Because the restaurant was closed for awhile, I lost income. I was also embarrassed.

Protect People Everywhere. Stay home if you are sick.
Why It’s Important to Cool Food Properly

Covered/stacked pans of food are still 78°F after 24 hours.

Proper cooling methods include:

- Placing food in shallow, metal pans, in ice baths, under refrigeration
- Separating food into smaller containers under refrigeration
- Using rapid cooling equipment
- Stirring the food in a container placed in an ice water bath
- Other effective methods

Protect People Everywhere. Cool Food Properly.
Don’t Let What Happened to Me, Happen to You

My name is David. One day, while at work, I started feeling sick and ran for the bathroom.

I felt better, so I returned to finish my shift. I needed the money. An order came in for a salad. I forgot to wash my hands or wear gloves.

I did not know I had germs on my hands. I passed my germs to the tomatoes…

…and to the cucumbers…

…and to the entire salad…

…and to a little girl named Ashlynn who ate the salad that I prepared.

The next day, Ashlynn got so sick with stomach cramps and vomiting. In fact, dozens of people got sick because I continued to prepare food that day.

I could have prevented this from happening.

Protect People Everywhere: Wash Your Hands, Use Gloves or Utensils, and Never Work When You Are Sick.
Foodborne Illness Victim Video Testimonials

- Available for download and viewing
- Spanish and English closed captioning
Foodborne Illness Victim Video Testimonials

- Available for download and viewing
- Spanish and English closed captioning
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http://www.fda.gov/foodemployeetraining
http://www.fda.gov/foodemployeetraining
FDA Oral Culture Learner Project – Current and Future Activities

• Additional Posters and Storyboards will be posted soon!

• DVDs of videos and posters are available!

• Consultation with Stakeholder Group to improve marketing

• More foodborne illness victim video testimonials are being produced
Using the Oral Culture Learner Materials to Instill a Food Safety Culture

• Incorporate as part of food handler training
• In service training
• Team discussions during shift changes
• Posting as conversation pieces in break rooms/back of the house gathering spots
• Other ideas how these materials can be used to instill a food safety culture?
Poster Activity
Facilitated Questions

• What food safety messages were communicated in the poster/video?

• How did the poster/video make you feel?

• Did the poster make you change your behavior? How so?