

## How to Make the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice in Your Food Pantry with Nudges

### Strategic placement of Foods to Encourage

- Place produce in a prominent location where it can be easily reached and seen.
- Place Foods to Encourage (F2E) near the front of the distribution line or at the entrance to your pantry so that they are front and center.
- Place F2E at the beginning and at the end of your distribution line or at the entrance and the exit of your pantry.
- Place produce in an attractive bowl, basket, or crate.

### Appearance of abundance of Foods to Encourage

- Use containers that make it appear there is plentiful supply of the item.
- Have shelves? Keep F2Es fully stocked or stock F2Es near the front of the shelf to appear abundant.

### Signage (priming, social norms)

- Place posters with educational messaging and appealing pictures of produce and healthy options in hallways, waiting areas, or places where clients commonly wait in line.
- Place shelf tags with health and nutrition messaging to direct individuals towards F2Es. Note: Make sure images, messaging, and formatting are appealing and positive.
- Use floor arrows to direct clients to F2Es.
- Place signs that communicate a social norm with positive messaging (e.g. thumbs up, smiley face), such as “At this pantry, most people choose at least 5 produce items.” Place next to an associated F2E or, if your distribution utilizes shopping carts, place inside the shopping cart facing the client. This positive messaging can help to normalize taking more F2Es.

### Recipe card placement near Foods to Encourage

- Place simple recipes near a F2E to increase client confidence in their ability to prepare an item. This is especially helpful for often unfamiliar produce items.

### Pairing or Bundle Foods to Encourage Items

- This could be as simple as creating a display that shows how clients could combine multiple items from your distribution. Use signage, a healthy recipe, or volunteer support to share how the items can be made into a healthy meal or dish.

#### Nudges are:

- subtle environmental cues in a food distribution setting designed to make the healthy choice the easy choice
- an indirect nutrition education strategy that includes anything from adding signage highlighting healthier options to strategic item placement and pantry design

#### What to nudge:

Foods to Encourage

Check out the Toolkit in the Nudge Resources section.

- If you prepare bags or boxes, pair pantry items and include a healthy recipe to share how the items can be made into a healthy meal or dish.

### Effectiveness of Select Nudge Strategies:

#### Display Change

**42%** Increase in likelihood that a client took cabbage

**56%** Increase in the average amount of cabbage taken by any given client

#### Multiple Exposures

**90%** Increase in the likelihood that a client took at least one loaf

#### Signage (shelf tags)

**202%** Increase in the likelihood that a client took oatmeal

#### Convenience

**27%** Increase in the likelihood clients took at least one cabbage

**60%** Increase in the amount of cabbages distributed to each client

### References:

Feeding America and Cornell University. *The Power of Nudges: Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice in Food Pantries*.

Rivera C. *Nudges 101 – The Power of Nudges: Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice for Everyone*, 2016.

Rivera C. *Nudges 102 – Together We Can Solve Hunger*, 2016.

#### Nudge Resources:

Feeding America Nudges: <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/explore-our-work/nutrition-education-initiatives/strategies/nudges/>

*Nudges: Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice* (Toolkit):

<https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/resource/a-how-to-guide-nudges/>

*The Power of Nudges: Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice in Food Pantries* (Learn about nudge research in food pantries): <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/resource/the-power-of-nudges-making-the-healthy-choice-the-easy-choice-in-food-pantries/>

*The Power of Nudges: Peer Insights and Perspectives*:

<https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/resource/nutrition-nudge-cross-site-summary/>

Learn about the role of nudges as a nutrition education strategy:

<https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/explore-our-work/nutrition-education-initiatives/strategies/>