



A parent's success story: Jenna Pepper

Jenna Pepper blogs at [Food with Kid Appeal](#), a guide to growing good eaters. She believes that when parents and schools consistently offer whole, real food to kids, it eventually goes down the hatch. Jenna says, "A child can learn to read and write. A child can learn to ride a bike. Unless his community doesn't believe in him, there's no reason why a child can't develop a palate that is literate to a multitude of whole, unprocessed foods." By connecting real, whole foods to brain power, Jenna is teaching Spring Branch ISD (Texas) students what food their brains need for success in school. Thus far she has educated students on the benefits of low sugar breakfast cereal and unflavored milks, as well as the [fresh fruits and vegetables](#) served in the school lunches. Jenna's success with her breakfast pilot, described below, is a perfect example of how one inspired parent can start making real positive change in her own child's school.

NEWS RELEASE: SHERWOOD ELEMENTARY TAKES BOLD STEP TO HELP STUDENTS ADOPT HEALTHY EATING HABITS SCHOOL UNDERTAKES TWO SCHOOL FOOD PILOTS TO REDUCE SUGAR

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Sherwood Elementary School students had an opportunity to develop a taste for unsweetened menu items at breakfast and lunch during a two week pilot program. The pilot removed popular sugared cereals, Cinnamon Toast Crunch (20g sugar per 2 oz), Raisin Bran Crunch (30g sugar per 2 oz) giving students a choice between Plain Cheerios (2g sugar per 2oz) and the hot meal. At lunch, student-favored chocolate milk was offered just 2 days a week, giving students a chance to develop a taste for unsweetened white milk three days a week.

The breakfast pilot has been successful. Participation did not decrease during the breakfast period even though student's favorite breakfast cereals were not offered. Spring Branch ISD Child Nutritional Services is considering offering only healthier low sugar breakfast cereal options district wide.

The milk pilot demonstrated that when students are given an opportunity to adopt healthier eating habits, some students' choices do change. Typically, around 80 percent of students going through the lunch line at the 405 student school choose chocolate milk. The lunch pilot eliminated chocolate milk for two days. According to preliminary pilot data, after chocolate milk was again made available, the number of students who chose white milk increased by 32 percent.

Joseph Bolduc, a Sherwood first grader and usual chocolate milk drinker reported proudly to his mother during the pilot, "I drank plain milk because it is healthier." German Amaya a Sherwood fifth grader usually drinks only chocolate milk at lunch. Referring to the two pilot days where chocolate milk was unavailable Amaya said, "I like chocolate milk. I drank white milk because I was thirsty. If water was free I would drink that."

Special thanks to: **Spring Branch Independent School District Child Nutritional Services; Sherwood Principal, cafeteria and teaching staff, students and volunteers and Sherwood's Healthy Lifestyles Committee** for their efforts during the pilot.

Link: to SBISD menu including hot breakfast choices and daily lunch options.

<http://cms.springbranchisd.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=BzYSCMQAby4%3d&tabid=9818>

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