



What Kids Crave



Making it easy for elementary students to make healthful choices in the average 23 minutes most students have for lunch is no easy task for schools. Philadelphia-based Aramark Corp.'s Cool*Caf program, introduced at 50 schools last month, targets this challenge. Its lessons are valuable for any foodservice operator looking

to capture more family-oriented business.

- **Choice equals power.** Being able to make decisions about what to eat heightens kids' enthusiasm about eating healthfully, says Aramark Assistant Vice President of Marketing Michael Pursell. Cool*Caf's fruit-and-vegetable bar provides five to 10 preportioned selections, such as broccoli florets, apple slices and cherry tomatoes. Dipping options include low-fat caramel sauce and poppyseed dressing.
- **Good things come in packages.** Kids love meals assembled in boxes or in bags just for them—witness the perpetual popularity of Oak Brook, Ill.-based McDonald's Happy Meals, Pursell notes—so Cool*Caf also offers Sack Lunches. The ready-to-go meals feature hot or cold main courses such as broccoli macaroni and cheese or turkey club sandwiches.
- **Time really does matter.** Young diners won't always go for chips or candy if they can get more-healthful options just as quickly. Express lines for Cool*Caf's fruit-and-vegetable bar, Sack Lunches and milk coolers allow time-pressed students to get full meals and those who bring lunch from home to grab snacks easily.