

Evaluation of school menus: Comparing public, private and charter schools [Evaluación de menús ofertados en comedores escolares: Comparación entre colegios públicos, privados y concertados]

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Objective To evaluate menus offered in public, private and charter schools in the city of Seville (Spain) for different groups of school children. **Methods** A total of 86 schools were evaluated, including public, private and charter schools, which represented every district of the city. Four schools possessed their own kitchen, while the others had hired a catering service. The menus were aimed at school children aged between 3 and 16 years. The adequacy of menus regarding the monthly frequency of the different food groups, recipe repetition, variability of cooking techniques and nutritional balance were evaluated according to the recommendations. Statistica 7 software was used for statistical analysis. **Results** In most school cafeterias fruits, vegetables and legumes supply was deficient compared to dairy desserts, meats and potatoes. Significant differences regarding the monthly food frequency were observed between the three types of school, being the public schools the ones the most followed the recommendations. Most school cafeterias evaluated did not provide sufficiently detailed menus and a lack of variety of culinary techniques was observed. The calories offered did not meet the needs of all age groups and macronutrient distribution was only adequate in 50% of the evaluated menus. **Conclusion** Although there has been a favourable evolution of menus from previous studies, further work is needed to increase the offer of fruits and vegetables, to reduce the intake from lipids and protein, as well as to adapt the calories of the menus to the different age groups.

Energy intake

Health promotion

Macronutrients

Menu planning

School feeding