Breakfast Clubs: More than just a meal
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Background and Aims

- Amidst a growing body of research that has investigated the impact of school breakfast club attendance on cognitive processes, nutrition, overall health; attendance (see Murphy 2007), the specific question of whether breakfast club attendance facilitates children’s social relationships at school has received little attention (Defeyter, 2009).
- Recent research has suggested that the quality of friendship is an important predictor of overall emotional well-being and loneliness & young children’s early school adjustment (Ladd, Kochenderfer, & Coleman, 1996).
- The present study investigated whether attending a school breakfast club had any impact on:
  1. attendees social relationship with other pupils
  2. attendees relationship’s with their primary school teacher.

Design & Method

- 16 Attendees (mean age = 9:3, range 5:3 -11:4 years)
- Completed a Friendship Questionnaire and a Teacher Relationship Questionnaire (adapted from Bukowski et al., 1994) at the start of breakfast club attendance and then 6 months later.
- Their performance was compared to a group of non-attendees matched for age and SES (N =12).
- Friendship Questionnaire consists of five dimensions of friendship: companionship, conflict, help, closeness and security.
- Teacher Relationship Questionnaire consists of five dimensions: conflict, help, security, approachableness, communication.

Results: Pupil Friendship Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Time 1</th>
<th>Test Time 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendees</td>
<td>4.06 (0.19)</td>
<td>4.08 (0.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-attendees</td>
<td>4.16 (0.23)</td>
<td>3.66 (0.25)</td>
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Results: Teacher Relationship Questionnaire

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Time 1</th>
<th>Test Time 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendees</td>
<td>3.47 (0.36)</td>
<td>3.90 (0.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-attendees</td>
<td>3.79 (0.34)</td>
<td>3.25 (0.24)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendees</td>
<td>3.65 (0.18)</td>
<td>4.21 (0.20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-attendees</td>
<td>3.50 (0.35)</td>
<td>3.38 (0.21)</td>
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(\(t\) (26) = 2.56; \(p < 0.05\))

Results: Teacher Relationship Questionnaire

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(\(t\) (26) = 2.24; \(p < 0.05\)).

Discussion

- Analysis of the Friendship Questionnaire revealed no significant differences between attendees and non-attendees in terms of conflict, help, security or closeness. However, there was a significant difference between groups in terms of companionship.
- Analysis of the Teacher Relationship Questionnaire revealed no significant differences for conflict and communication but significant differences between attendees and non-attendees for help, security, and approachableness.

References: