

BROWN BAGGING FOR CALGARY'S KIDS



BB4CK SUMMER CAMP PROGRAM

Report Back 2024



BROWN BAGGING FOR
Calgary's Kids

Acknowledgements

We wanted to thank staff and kids from the City of Calgary and YMCA summer camps for taking the time to provide us with feedback about the 2024 BB4CK Summer Camp Program.



We wanted to recognize the generous contributions from our donors who made this program possible including the **Trevor and Amy Cooper Family Legacy Fund at Calgary Foundation, TC Energy**, and everyone who supported BB4CK's mission across Calgary.



Executive Summary

The BB4CK Summer Camp Program is an ongoing annual program in collaboration with 30 summer camps and social service organizations across Calgary to ensure kids have access to nutritious and appropriate lunches. The 2024 iteration is the third year BB4CK carried out this program which helped provide over 34,000 lunches and snacks to kids between July and August 2024.

This year, we offered fully prepared lunches that included a selection of eight sandwich varieties, a snack, and fruits/veggies. BB4CK also supported other camps through funding and snack provisions.

We evaluated the program using surveys delivered to camps to gather perspectives from kids and a focus group with a set of City of Calgary Camp Counselors. Findings from the survey indicated receiving a BB4CK lunch led to improvements in kid morale and they generally perceived them as tasty and filling. Camp counselors echoed these sentiments commenting on how kids enjoyed having access to lunch and snacks throughout the day to keep them energized. We also learned that kids enjoyed customizing their own sandwiches, and this became a moment of socialization between kids and staff.

Findings from this evaluation revealed areas of growth for the program such as maintaining greater consistency in production and exploring new types of lunch options to meet the preferences of kids.



Understanding the BB4CK Summer Camp Program

The BB4CK Summer Camp Program involved the collaboration with 30 summer camp programs across the city including the YMCA, City of Calgary, TRICO, The Education Immigrant Society, Patch Programs, YES camps, and other community organizations.

In partnership with day camps throughout the City of Calgary, BB4CK provided appropriate lunches to thousands of kids through the Summer months of July and August to ensure they were nourished while active at camp.

- Four programs received grocery cards to purchase food items for kids.
- 19 camps were provided with prepared BB4CK lunches including a snack (such as scones or energy balls), fruits/veggies, and a sandwich option including:
 - Egg Salad
 - Tuna Salad
 - Turkey
 - Pea Butter and Jam (Peanut-free)
 - Ham
 - Halal Roast Beef
 - Chickpea Pita
 - Cheese
 - Gluten-free variants were also available
- Seven camps were just provided with snacks

17,000+

Lunches prepared by BB4CK, representing an over 100% increased compared to 2023.

9000+

Snacks provided to summer camps.

\$15,000+

In funding for summer camp lunch programs

34,000+

Total lunches and snacks provided to summer camp kids through BB4CK support



How we evaluated the BB4CK Summer Camp Program

To evaluate this program, we provided physical surveys with 10 questions to all YMCA and City of Calgary summer camps at the start of their programs alongside the first distribution of lunches. Summer camps were encouraged to provide the surveys to kids throughout the summer camp period. We primarily received one set of responses from summer camps and decided to consider them in a single data set.

Camp Counselors were provided instructions on how to teach kids to complete the surveys. The surveys consisted of a variety of question designs with visuals including ranking, choice, and written options

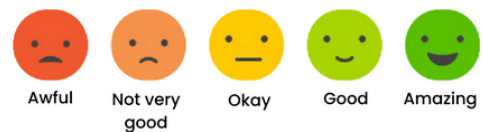
We also conducted a focus group session with counselors from the City of Calgary Summer Camps to understand their perspectives about the lunch program.

This virtual session lasted one-hour and featured the perspectives of five City of Calgary Camp counselors across various locations. We asked counselors seven questions relating to the design of summer camp lunch periods, impacts on kids, feedback from staff, and perspectives on experiences of food insecurity.

The Summer Camp Kid Survey

- Three ranking questions using five faces from “Awful” to “Amazing” describing the feelings of kids.
- Three choice-based questions including with three choices (yes/no/I don't know).
- One question asking what type of lunch they ate including pictures of the eight varieties.
- Two scale-based ranking questions using a fill-up meter were used for kids to rank their opinions of the lunch quality.
- One written question regarding anything they viewed could make the lunch better.

Kid Feeling Scale



Opinion Choice Scale



Lunch Choice Scale

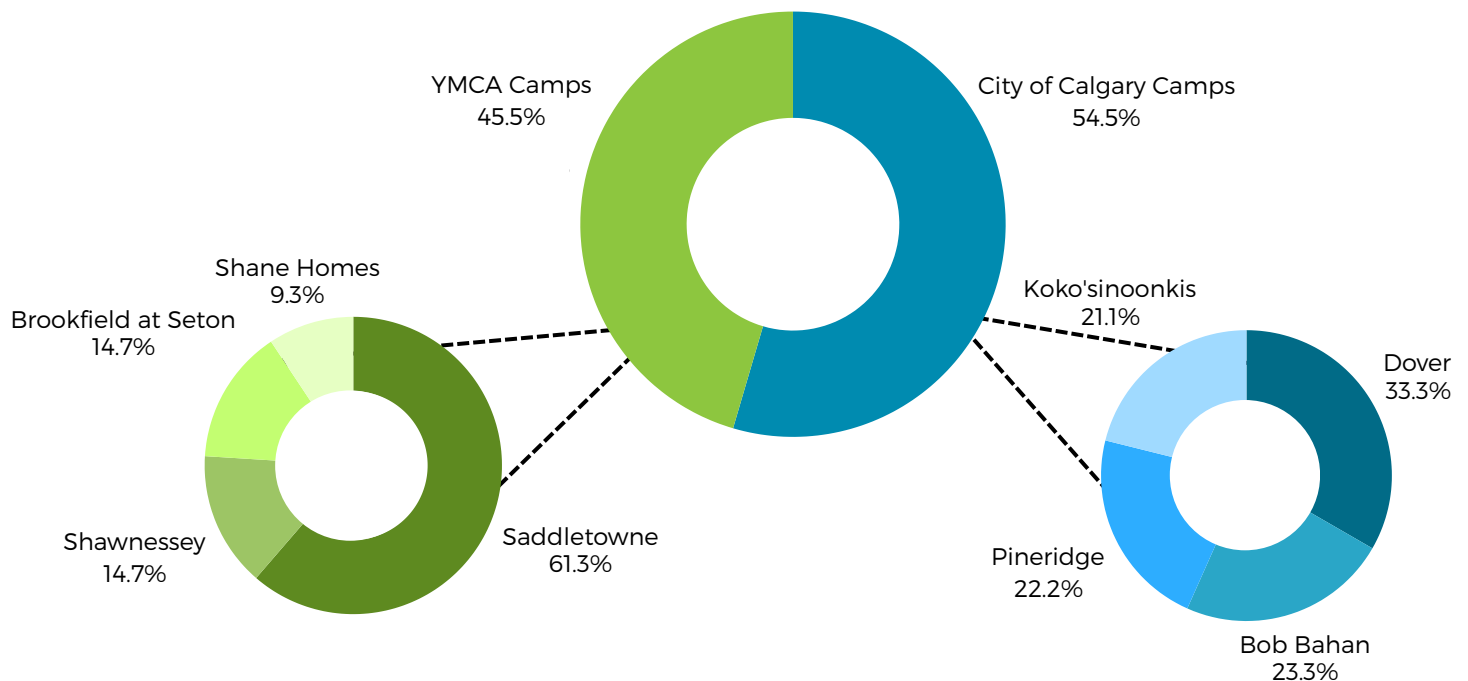


Score “Fill-up Bar”



BB4CK Summer Camp Program – By the numbers

Where did we receive responses from?



We collected 165 responses total from eight different summer camps across Calgary including four locations from both the YMCA and the City of Calgary.

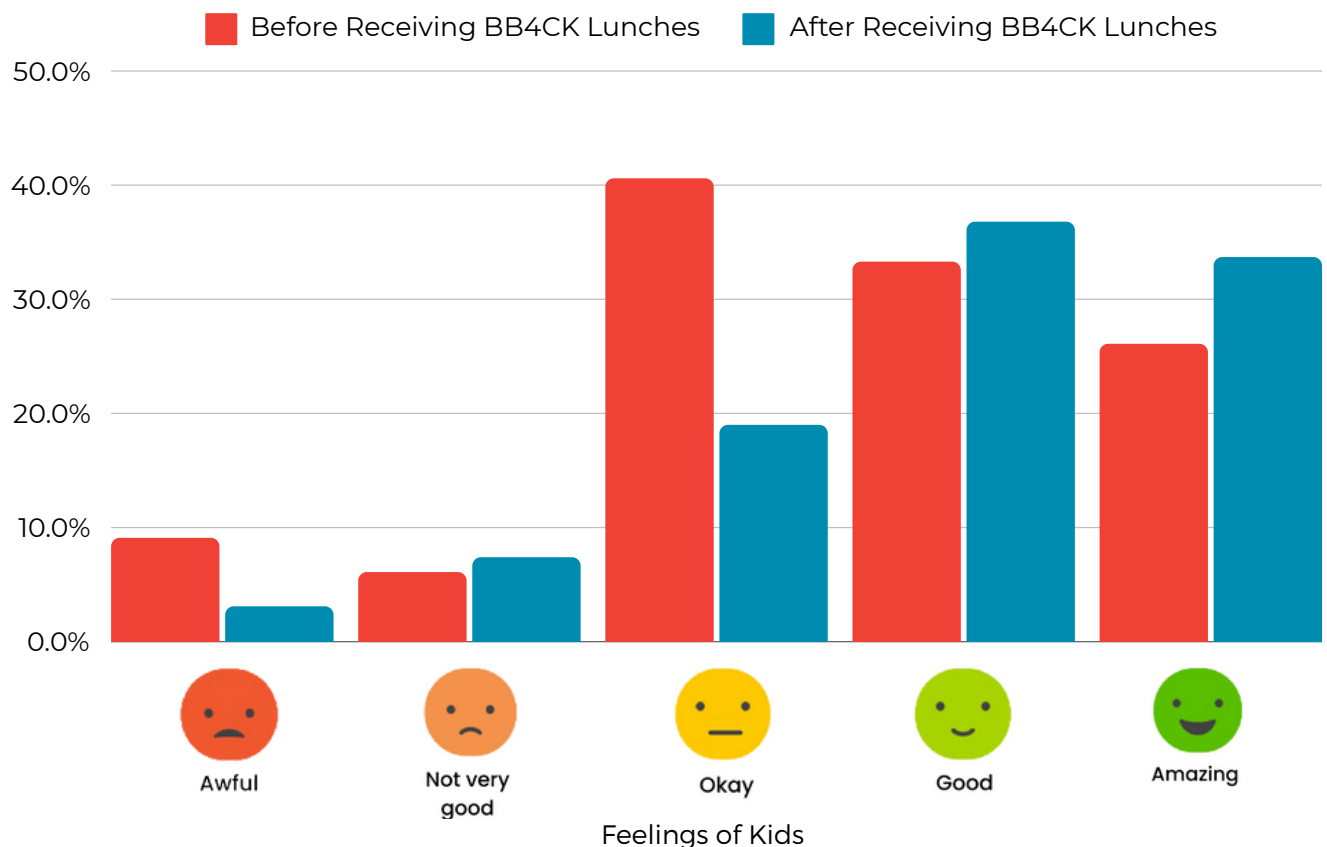
There was a nearly even distribution of the responses between the camps with 55% of responses from the City of Calgary Camps, with the highest proportion coming from the Dover camp (33%). The remaining surveys (45%) were from various YMCA camps with a largest representation from the Saddletowne kids (61%).



Impact of BB4CK lunches on kids

To understand the impact of BB4CK lunches for the kids' emotional state, we asked kids to rank how they felt before and after receiving the BB4CK Lunch to identify any changes.

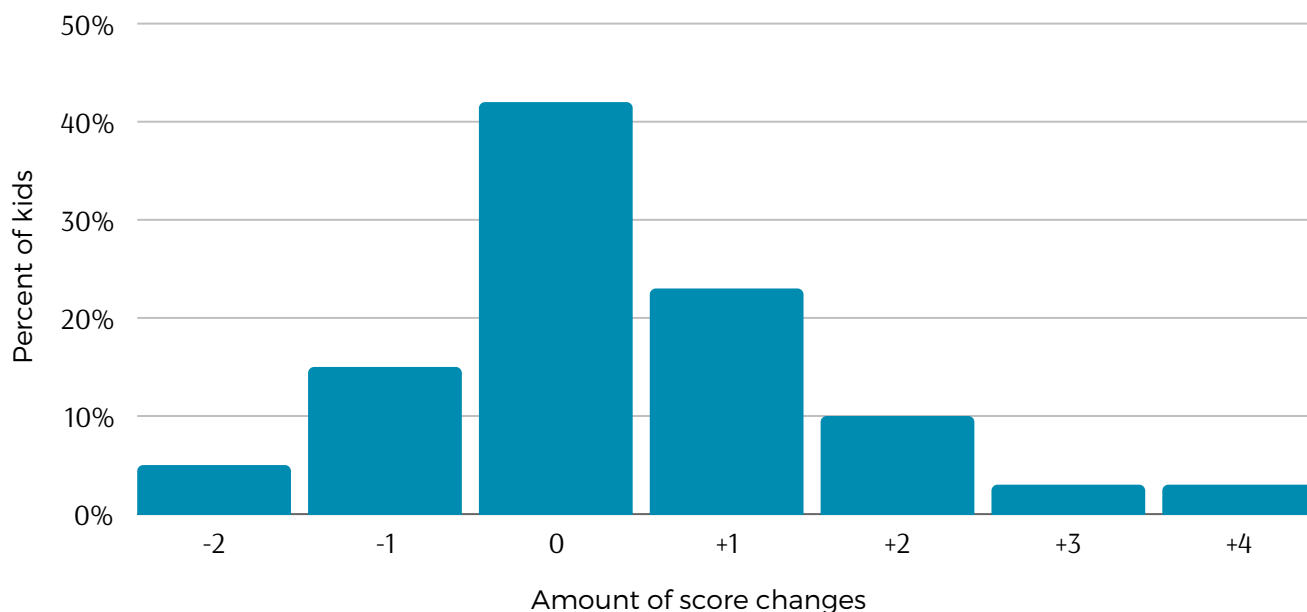
How Kids felt before and after receiving the BB4CK Lunch



We observed a significant positive shift in the proportion of kids with positive feelings after receiving the BB4CK Lunch. This was mainly seen with a drop in kids feeling “Okay” and a transition to feeling “Good” - “Amazing”. We also did not identify any significant difference in the median feeling score values before and after receiving the BB4CK Lunches between the YMCA and City of Calgary camps.



Changes in kid feeling scores before and after receiving the BB4CK Lunch



These scores were highly correlated, with 42% of kids feeling the same before and after receiving the lunch and 23% improving by one rank.

- Kids who tended to feel better before lunch were also more likely to score higher after the lunch.

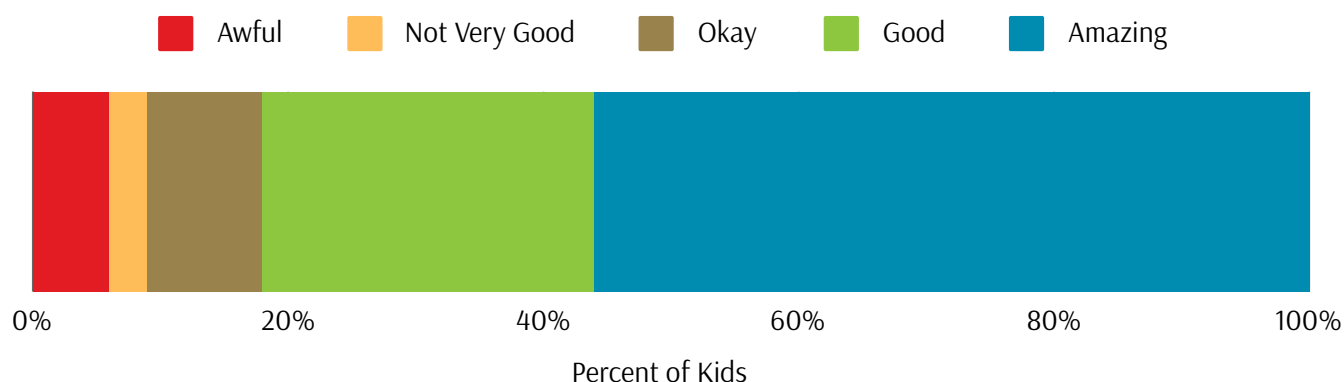
There is also a high degree of correlation between lunch quality (taste and fullness) and feelings which limits insight gained from the lunch impact. However, we did identify notable findings.

- The change in feeling was predicted by the taste score of the lunch with kids who rated the lunch tasting 5/5 having a three times greater probability of increasing their feeling score compared to those who ranked it 1/5.
- We did not observe the change in child emotion was influenced significantly by the type of lunch or whether they ate lunches like it at home.



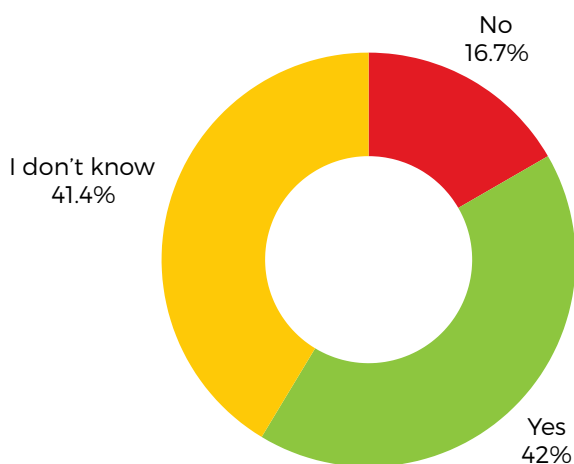
It was also important for us to understand the impact of a summer camp lunch on kid socialization. This helps us recognize the impact of regular lunches on community belonging among kids and contributions to social wellbeing.

How kids felt after eating BB4CK Lunches with their friends

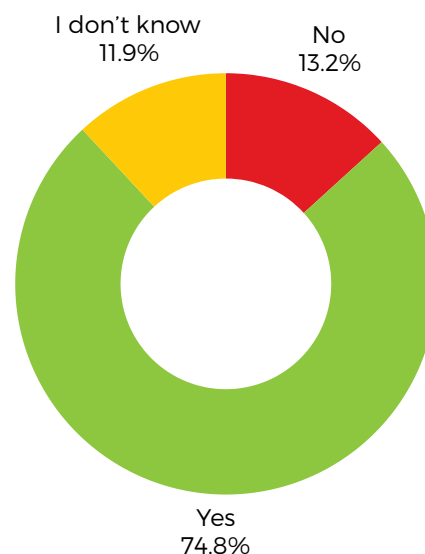


The median score was 5/5, indicating most kids had positive experiences eating their BB4CK Lunch with their friends.

Did the BB4CK Lunch help you play with your friends?



Did you have enough time to eat your lunch?



We observed median scores of feelings of eating the BB4CK with friends were significantly lower among kids indicating the BB4CK lunch did not help them play with their friends (4/5) compared to those who said “yes” (5/5). We also observed that three quarters of kids indicated they had enough time to eat their lunch.

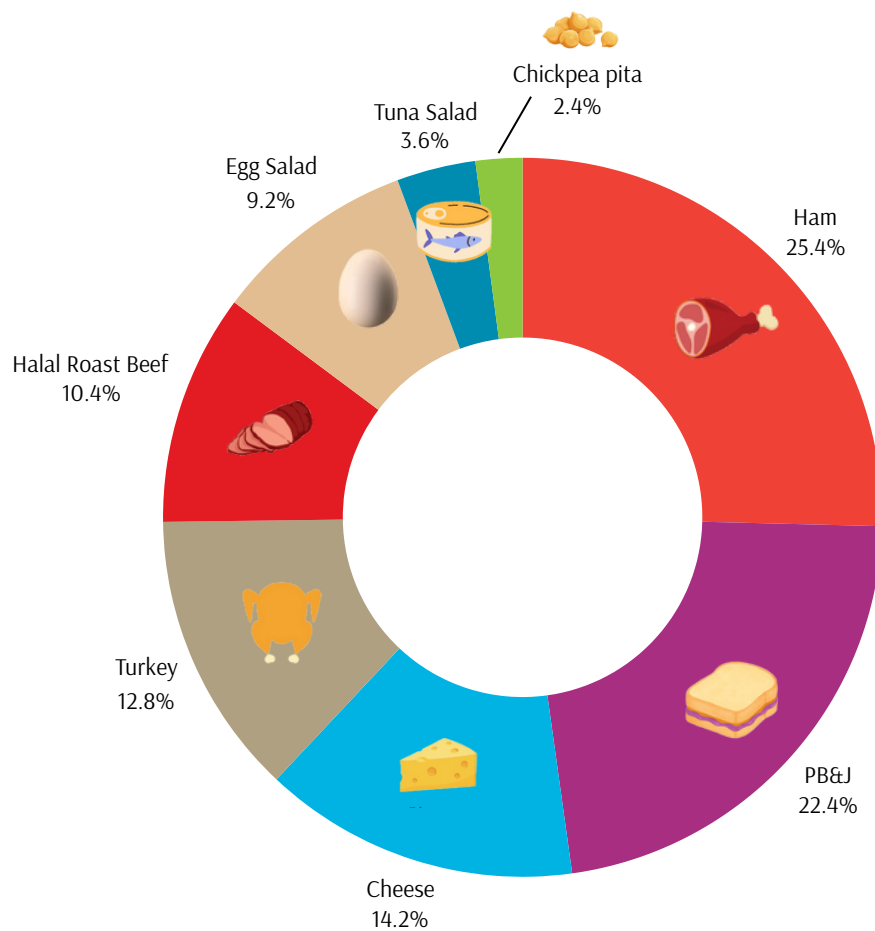


Thoughts on the BB4CK Lunches

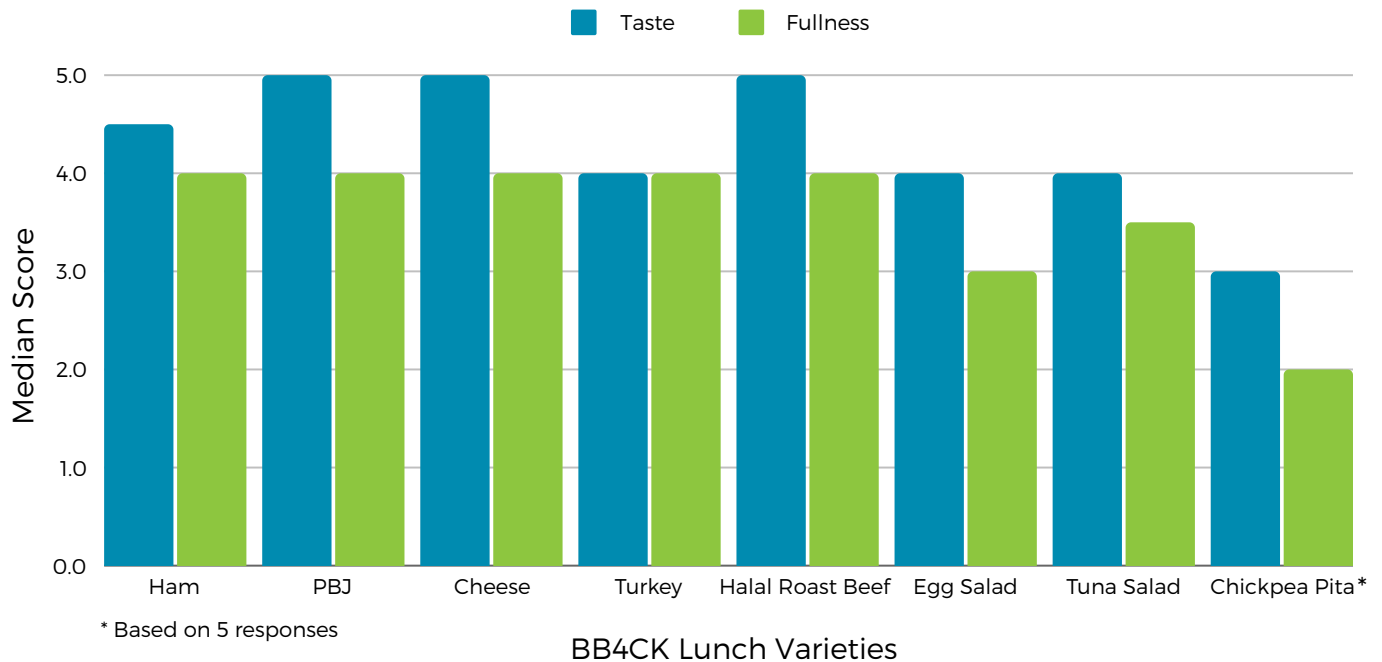
The BB4CK Summer Camp Program offers a unique opportunity to hear directly from kids about their thoughts on the lunches. We used this opportunity to ask kids what kind of sandwich they had and how they would rank their qualities. We also included a chance for them to indicate what they believe could make their lunch better in the future.

The common type of sandwich eaten by kids at Summer Camps were the Ham (25%), PB&J (22%), and Cheese (14%). We also found that 16% of kids ate more than one lunch.

What lunches did kids eat?



Median taste and fullness scores of BB4CK Lunches



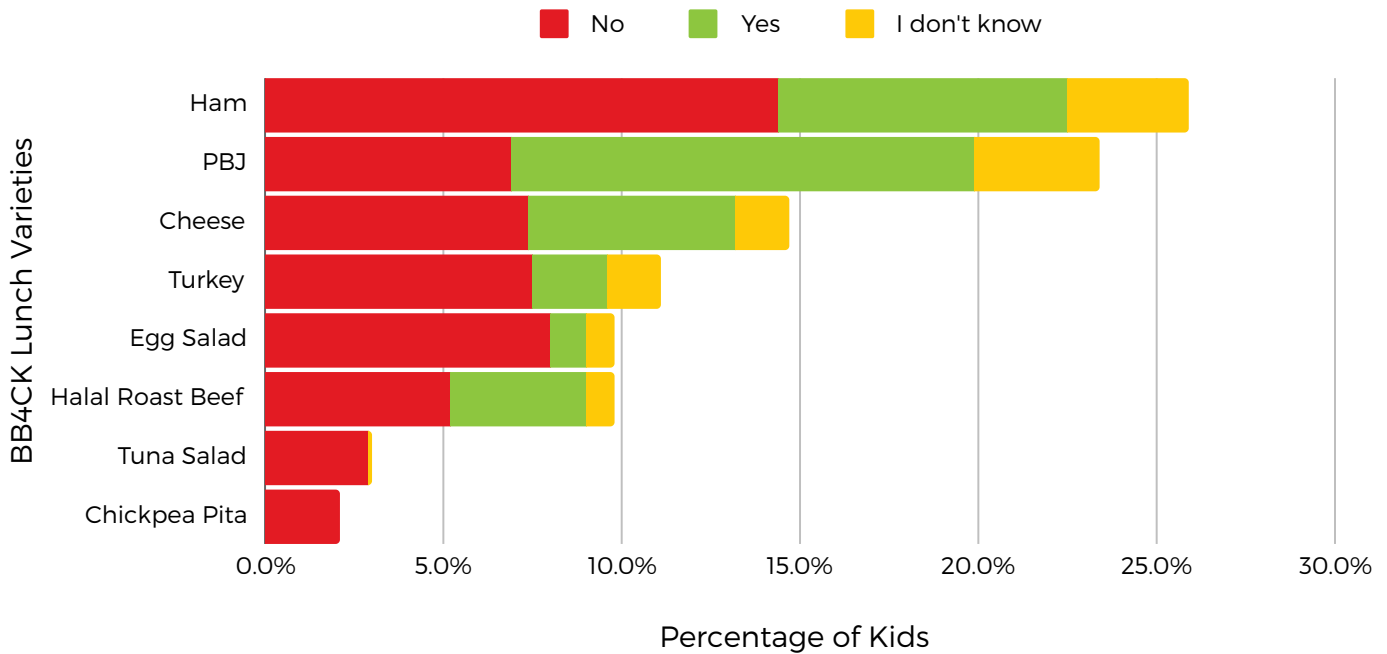
The best tasting sandwiches according to the surveyed kids included the PB&J, Halal Roast Beef, and Cheese (5/5). Conversely, the lowest ranked included the Chickpea Pita, Tuna Salad, and Egg Salad. These three sandwiches also had the lowest median fullness scores.

Generally, the BB4CK lunch fullness scores were not rated as highly as the taste scores among all the categories. The Chickpea Pita was only chosen among 5 of the survey respondents which limits any learnings gained compared to the other varieties.

The City of Calgary camps also provided sauces to kids like Chipotle and Ranch to further customize their meals. However, we did not identify any significant difference in median taste scores between the City of Calgary and YMCA camps.



Have Kids eaten food like the BB4CK Lunches at home?



Compared to the other sandwich types, there was a significantly greater percentage (56%) of kids who ate the PB&J sandwich who indicated they ate lunches similar to it at home.

Trends from the data

50%

Probability of kids who ate the PB&J and Halal Roast Beef lunches ranking them 5/5 (Yummy).

71%

Probability of kids who said they ate food like it at home ranking the lunch as 5/5 (Yummy) compared to 31% among those who did not.

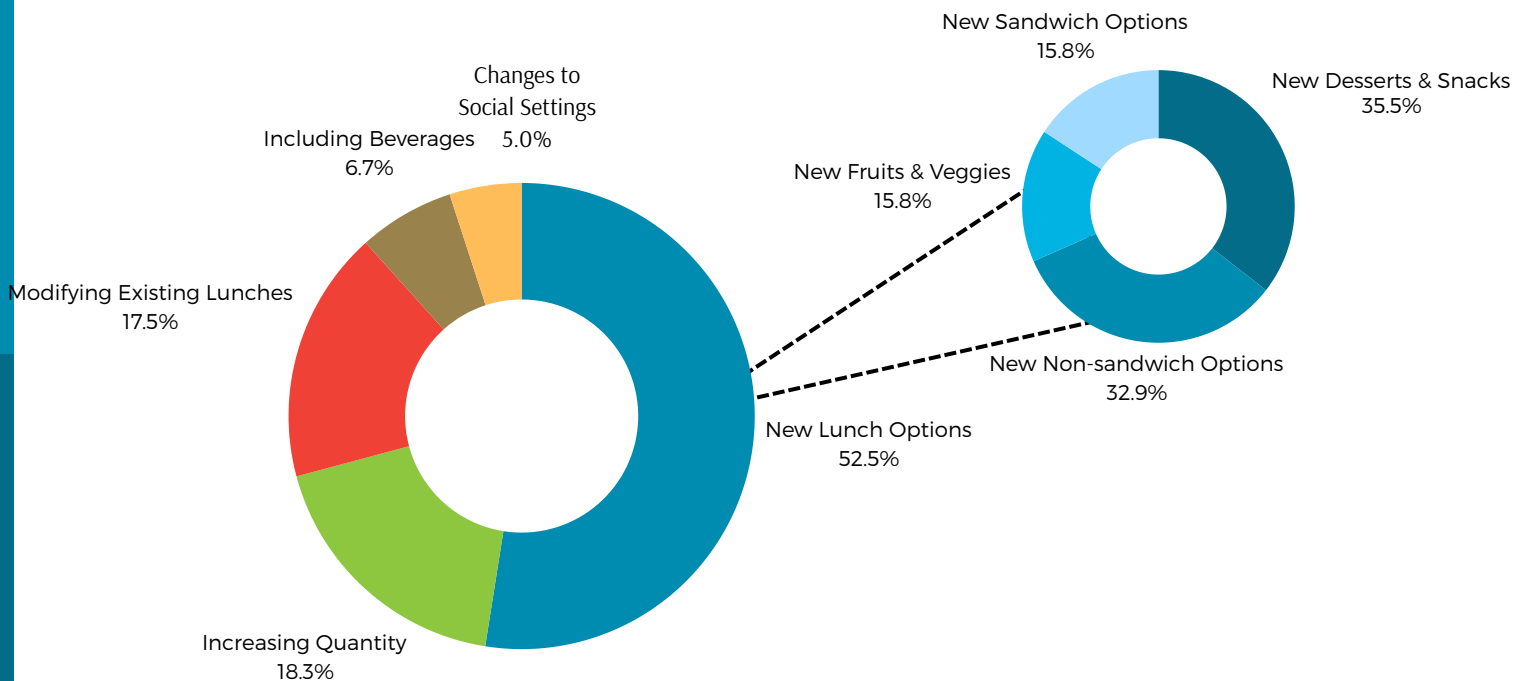
We observed distinct positive associations from our findings. Although there were a high degree of correlation between responses, measures of taken to adjust the analysis indicated that having a lunch option that was more recognized by kids contributed to more positive receptions of taste. This feeling was echoed by camp counselors who indicated that kids appreciated having options which matched their cultural and dietary preferences.



What kids believe would make BB4CK Lunches better

To better understand how the BB4CK Lunches can closely match the needs & wants of kids, we encouraged kids to write down anything they think would make existing lunches better.

What kids suggested to improve BB4CK Lunches



73% of kids provided feedback for lunches to better suit their preferences. Based on the responses of those who provided feedback, 53% indicated they wanted new lunch options such as:

36%

Desired new desserts & snacks like cake, candy, and chips.

33%

Desired new non-sandwich options like pizza, fries, and wraps.

16%

Desired new fruit and veggie options like grapes and strawberries.

16%

Desired new sandwich options like chicken and sausage sandwiches.



What we learned from camp counselors

We identified four main themes about the impact of BB4CK Lunches on kids from our discussion from a group of camp counselors from the City of Calgary using a cluster analysis.

Accessible BB4CK lunches and snacks mitigate hunger experienced by kids throughout the day

"Being able to have that food or fuel was very important and just being able to feed them whenever they needed something or felt like their body needed something." - Camp Counselor

BB4CK lunches were customized to meet the preferences of kids

"It [customizing sandwiches] gave them the opportunity to experiment with their sauces, those are really a good time for them to connect over the sandwiches." - Camp Counselor

BB4CK lunches helped kids socialize with kids, staff, and family

"The kids, were more prone to trying things when they saw the leaders eating it, you know. So if the leader tried it, 'oh she's eating it like that, I wanna try it like that'."

"[Experimenting with sauces] are really a good time for them to connect over the sandwiches, the food, talking about like 'what do you think they put in this energy balls', or things like that like 'how do we make it'. " - Camp Counselor

Kids liked the choice of lunches but desired more options

"So it allowed them to have the autonomy of choice to be like 'Oh I actually want roast beef today is that okay' and were like 'Yeah, totally! Have roast beef or have turkey, have this, have 3 sandwiches if you want!'. " - Camp Counselor



Discussions with camp counselors also identified areas of growth for the organization and broader community-level impacts. For example, counselors noted they would desire more non-perishable snack options for kids as they would be hungry after the weekend and they did not have supplies to meet the needs of kids.

- *“We would like to see more non-perishable items because a lot of the time, snacks that come through are baked goods, and lasted for the next 2 sessions. So when the third session comes, they are hungry first thing in the morning so we would have to wait for delivery of that date and find them food.”* - Camp Counselor

Counselors also shared that they noticed many families this year interested in taking lunches home compared to last year.

- *“A lot more parents were coming in and not feeling embarrassed about it, but coming in and grabbing, and ‘please take, because we’re getting new supply tomorrow’, so I just saw a lot more families coming in and parents coming in. Or kids saying ‘can I take for my sibling’. I saw a lot more this year for sure.”* - Camp Counselor
- *“I was able to provide some of those lunches to kids who forgot their lunch [at other Calgary Programs] when they can’t get a hold of their parents, so that was also one of our successes that we had.”* - Camp Counselor

Findings from this year’s Summer Camp Program illustrate the increasing demand for accessible and appropriate lunches across the city. In many cases, counselors noticed kids sacrificing their own lunches so they could take home for their families. This demonstrates the growth of families experiencing food insecurity across the city and the need to provide resources so families have equitable access to food.



How do we compare to last year?

Generally, we did not find results from the 2023 and 2024 iterations to diverge. We observed a similar positive shift in sentiment before and after receiving the BB4CK Lunches with no significant difference in the median scores of kids between the years. The median taste and fullness scores were also consistent between iterations. The lack of observable differences in the scores could be due to changing cohorts between years, and mainly highlight general findings between years.

We did identify less kids desiring beverage options, specifically water. Based on feedback from last year, we learned a lot of kids desired water with their food. This year, 250 reusable water bottles were donated and distributed to City of Calgary Camps.

“Also, I just want to add that the water bottles were a great thing, I didn't realize how many kids did not have water bottles, like every single kid pretty much asked for one. A lot of them were showing up without one.” - Camp Counselor

Feedback from the previous year was considered in this year's iteration with the rise in the number of camps supported, providing a new lunch option (chickpea pita), ensuring kids were adequately hydrated, and providing more snack options such as baked goods and frozen yogurt. The kids were also better able to customize their sandwiches by mixing ingredients and sauces to align with their preferences. The chickpea pita was also a vegetarian and halal-friendly option, using a different kind of bread that kids liked.

“So, they actually want more wrap choices, other than just chickpeas. That was like one thing, it was like ‘oh we love pita, is this something we can put roast beef and things like that?’ We ended up allowing them to like experiment with their sandwich.” - Camp Counselor



The 2024 iteration of the BB4CK Summer Camp Program represented an expansion in both the number of collaborating camps and lunchtime provisions. Based on feedback from last year's program, we included new sandwich and snack options and tried to support summer camps across the city in a variety of methods. Findings from this year indicated the lunches were generally liked by the kids and they were encouraged by counselors to customize their meals to better match their tastes. Counselors were also provided lunches which had a profound impact on the kids as they were better able to socialize and relate to the kids during lunch time periods. Findings also revealed areas of growth for the organization in future iterations of the program by considering new lunch-type options and ensuring camps have access to appropriate food options throughout the day.

Findings from this program represent a snapshot of the current food insecurity landscape in Calgary and its impacts on kids and families. More work is needed to ensure Calgarians have access to appropriate foods and kids are able to thrive outside of the school-year.



Contact Us!



BROWN BAGGING FOR
Calgary's Kids

Email:
info@bb4ck.org

[\(403\) 264-7979](tel:(403)264-7979)

Address:
909 11 Ave SW #110, Calgary,
AB T2R 1L8





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