Say It With Feelings

New Mom Tested Nutrition Messages for WIC Participants

Presenters:

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Patricia O. Race, MEd, RD, CDN

National WIC Association Annual Conference
May 26, 2009

Background & Overview

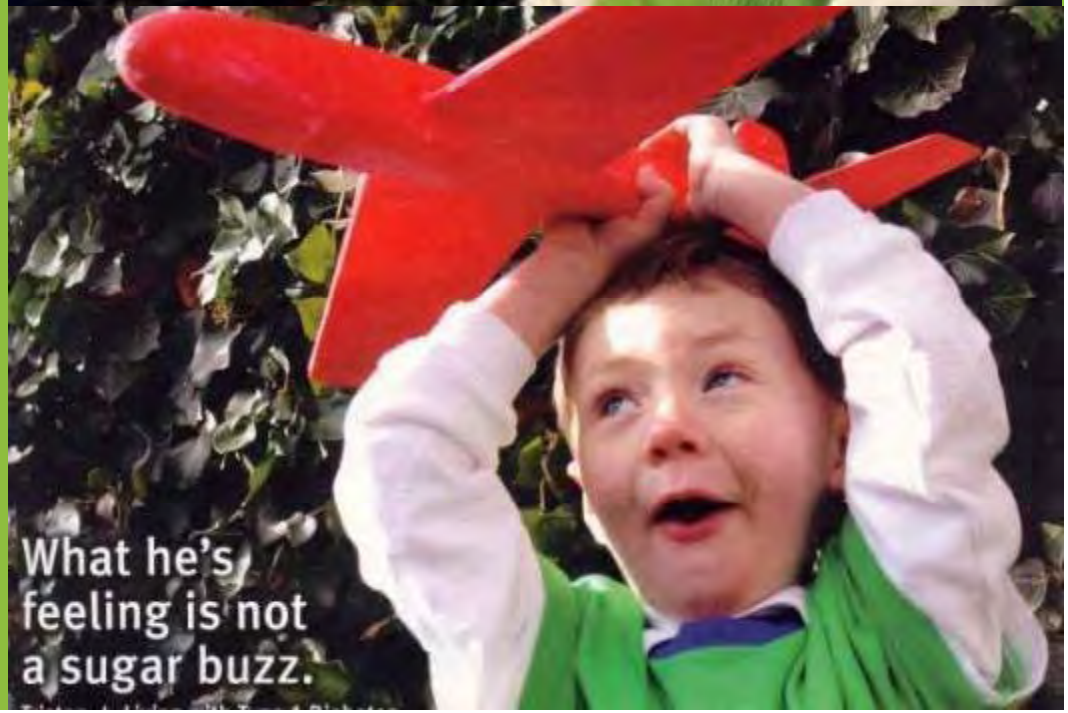
Judy F. Wilson, RD, MSPH

Senior Nutrition Advisor - Office of Research and Analysis

Food and Nutrition Service

Food Ads

…and messages are all around us.



Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

Some promote healthier foods…

But many do not…

Consumers hear our messages when we…

Say It

With

FEELING!!

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

Say It with Feelings!

New Mom Tested Nutrition Messages for WIC Participants

Overview & Background

Research & Implications

Applications & Dialogue

WHAT ARE THE FNS CORE NUTRITION MESSAGES?

...a set of actions that resonates with and assist mothers and children in adopting specific diet-related behaviors.

FNS Core Nutrition Messages

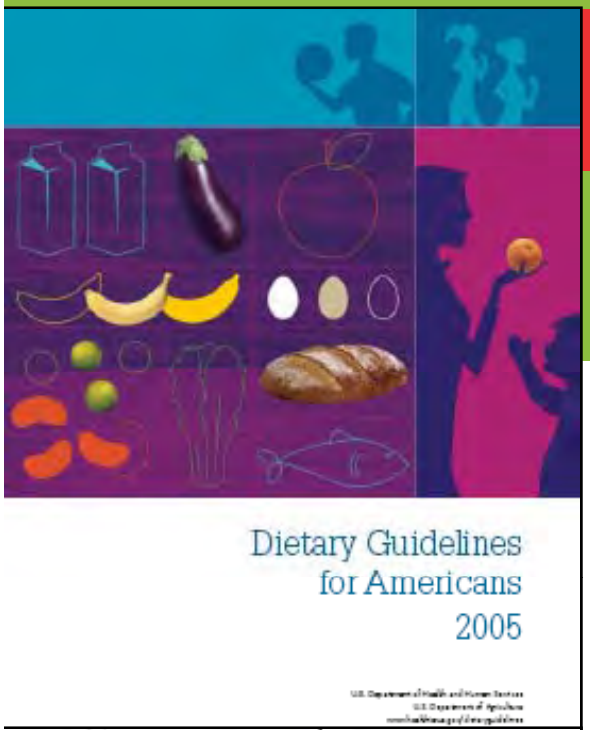
Why do we need them?

- FNS Programs reach millions of people
- We serve many of the same groups
- We have a common goal
- Help us to “Speak with one Voice.”
- Resources are limited for testing
- Need for consumer-tested messages

Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs

Reach 1 in 5 Americans

USDA



Core Messages

Allow us to make a bigger impact together!

- **Core messages and related tips are consumer tested**
- **Support nutrition education priorities and policies**
- **Support national and USDA goals (HP2010)**
- **Accurate, easy-to-read & relevant**
- **Help us 'Speak with one Voice"**

Developmental Process and Timeline

FY 2006

- Workgroup-audiences, behaviors, message concepts
- Contractor-refines messages, plans research
- OMB clearance

FY 2007

- Focus groups & reports completed
- Messages revised, supporting content developed
- Contact modified, timeline extended, more focus groups
- OMB Clearance

FY 2008

- Focus groups and related reports completed,
- Messages revised & reviewed by workgroup
- Guidebook drafted and reviewed by internal/external partners

FY 2009

- Finalized reports & and Guidebook
- Established web pages
- Conducted briefing and promotional activities

Key Roles

Workgroup

- Theoretical approach & message concepts
- Audiences & behaviors
- Input /comments on products

Contractor

- Refined message concepts & content
- Plan and conducts focus groups, OMB clearance
- Drafted guidance, prepares reports.

Project Team

- Technical support & input into product
- Review, compile aggregates comments
- Manages contract and deliverables

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

FNS Core Nutrition Messages: The Products

Guidebook

Maximizing the Message: Helping Moms and Kids Make Healthier Food Choices

- 16 Core Messages
  - 7 for moms of preschoolers
  - 4 for moms of 6-10 yr old kids
  - 5 for 8-10 yrs old kids
- Supporting Content on 3 Topics
- Research Findings
- Implementation & Evaluation Guidance

Reaching Message On Lines:

3 Easy Steps

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/

Click on Core Messages HERE…

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Food and Nutrition Service

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Search FNS

Go

- Search all USDA
- Search Tips
- Topics A-Z

Browse by Subject

- Community Outreach
- Data & Statistics
- Financial Management
- Forms
- Food Safety
- Grants
- Nutrition Education
- Regulations & Policy
- Research
- Programs & Services

You are here: Home

Nutrition Assistance Programs

No one should go hungry in America. FNS provides children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education. We help nearly one in five people. Check out our programs to see if we can help you or your family.

Spotlights

More

- Putting Healthy Food Within Reach
- Expanding Your School Breakfast Program
- Leading the Fight Against Hunger
- FNS Core Nutrition Messages

Programs

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly the Food Stamp Program)
- Women, Infants and Children
  - Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
  - School Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- School Meals
  - National School Lunch Program
  - School Breakfast Program

What's New

- Recovery Act
  - Vilsack Announces First Wave of USDA Economic Stimulus Funding
  - 2009 Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities
- FNCS Testifies on Problems of Overweight & Obesity
- USDA To Award $3 Million in Grants To Increase SNAP Participation
- Peanut Butter Recall
  - March 5 Statement
  - Jan. 30 Statement
  - Jan. 23 Statement
- USDA Celebrates School Breakfast Week
- Core Nutrition Messages

FNS Recovery Act Information

Target Audiences

Low-Income Moms of Preschool Children

Low-Income Moms of Elementary School Kids (6-10 year-olds)

Kids 8-10 years old.

Key Behaviors Addressed

- Moms and kids eat recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables
- Moms eat and prepare foods with their 2-5 yrs old kids more often.
- Moms allow their 2-5 yrs olds to decide whether and how much to eat
- Kids consume recommended amounts of milk & milk products, selecting primarily low- and fat-free options.

Supporting Content…

- Narratives (Mom Stories),Tips, and Recipes
- Topics:
  - Role Modeling
  - Cooking and Eating Together
  - Making Fruits and Vegetables Available and Accessible at Home
- Can be used in print materials, for classroom discussions, in anticipatory guidance and more.

Messages for Mothers of Preschoolers

Messages Concepts:

- Cooking and Eating Together
- Role Modeling-Eating Fruits and Vegetables
- Division of Feeding Responsibility

motivational

behaviorally focused

consistent

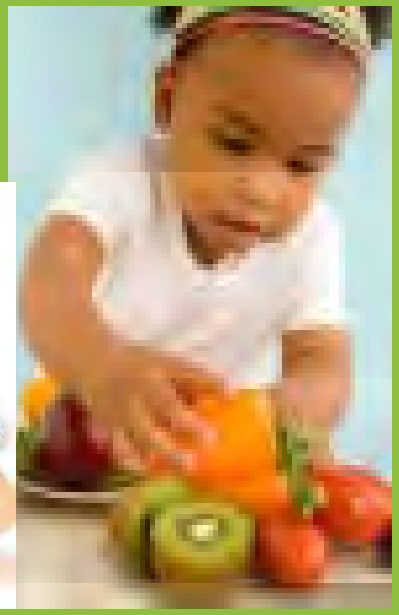
compelling

relevant

repeated often

attention-getting

multiple channels



Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

An Audience-Focused Approach…

FNS Core Nutrition Messages Formative Research

Alicia H. White, MS, RD

Focus Group Schedule

Phase 1: Rochester, NY; Baltimore, MD; Dallas, TX

3 Formative Groups

Phase 2: Los Angeles, CA; Chicago, IL; Birmingham, AL

3 Evaluative Groups: Role Modeling and Cooking/Eating Together
3 Formative Groups: Division of Feeding Responsibility

Phase 3: Raleigh, NC; Tampa, FL; San Antonio, TX

3 Evaluative Groups: Division of Feeding Responsibility

December '07 May/June '08 July '08

Participants-Moms' Groups

- Lived with their preschool-age child
- Were low-income (gross household income ≤185% of U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines)
- Were primary food shoppers/preparers in their households
- Spoke and read English

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Demographic Characteristics (N=95)

	# of Moms
Race/Ethnicity	
Black or African American	40
White or Caucasian	29
Hispanic	24
Other	2
Level of Formal Education	
High school or less	40
Some college	45
College graduate	10
Employment	
Not employed	38
Employed part time	23
Employed full time	34
Participate in WIC, Free/Reduced Lunch, Food Stamps	
WIC	32
Free/Reduced Lunch	21
Food Stamps	35
None	38

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Moms Groups: General Findings

- What do mothers find compelling in messages about feeding their children?

Moms Groups: General Findings

- Consider moms' hectic schedules and concerns about time

Moms Groups: General Findings

- **Teach**
- **Learn**
- **Help be Independent**

Moms Groups: General Findings

- Family Time

Moms Groups: General Findings

- Messages with the word "patience."

Be patient with them…

Patience works better…

They learn from watching you. Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.

Core Messages

They take their lead from you. Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.

Role Modeling Messages

- Moms preferred messages emphasizing mothers' abilities to "lead" their children through positive example.

They learn from watching you.

Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.

They take their lead from you.

Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.

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Role Modeling Messages

- Mothers preferred messages with:

  "Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too."

- And disliked:

  "Eat fruits and veggies, **and eventually**, your kids will too."

- Found unrealistic:

  "Serve fruits and veggies **at every meal** to help them grow up healthy."

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“I see my daughter peeping around the corner
seeing what [I’m] eating and running in and saying,
‘I want some, I want some.’”

-Mother of Preschooler,
Birmingham, AL

"…I think of things my parents used to do and I think those are things I should try to do–they [kids] take their lead from you. They're very impressionable. Whatever you do, they do, too."

-Mother of Preschooler,
Chicago, IL

Role Modeling Messages

- Mothers had mixed feeling about:

Meals are a great time to play follow the leader.

Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.

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Cooking and Eating Together

- Many reported eating together with their child (mostly dinner); many did not
- Reasons for not eating together: scheduling conflicts and challenges of feeding a preschooler
- For some, dinner time was "family time" *and* TV time
- Most did not involve children in any food preparation activities

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Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time.

Core Messages

Make meals and memories together. It’s a lesson they’ll use for life.

Cooking and Eating Together

- Strong positive response to **meals as family time**
- Connected with the idea of **food preparation as a learning opportunity** for their children
- **Examples of age appropriate** cooking activities motivating to mothers
  - High preference for activities that appeared practical and not too time consuming
    - Liked: washing vegetables, stirring and adding ingredients, etc.
    - Disliked: the idea of their child putting on a "cooking show" or making a cookbook

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Example of Supporting Content

Teach your kids to create healthy meals. It's a lesson they'll use for life.

- Kids like to try foods they help make. It's a great way to encourage your child to eat fruit and vegetables.
- Kids feel good about doing something "grown-up". Give them small jobs to do. Praise their efforts. Their smiles will light up your kitchen.
- Kids love helping in the kitchen. Parents love knowing that their child is also learning skills they'll use for life. Help teach them to follow instructions, count, and more!

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Division of Feeding Responsibility Messages

- Disbelieved children when they say “I’m full.”
- Stated children don’t need to eat all, but need to eat “enough.”
- Voiced strongly negative reactions to letting children “decide” how much to eat.

USDA

Division of Feeding Responsibility Messages

First Concept Statements Tested (Phase 1)

Want to grow healthy kids? Set the table with healthy food choices. Then relax. Let kids decide how much to eat.
Make mealtime a healthy and fun time. You put healthy meals on the table. Let them choose how much to eat.
When you offer healthier foods, you know your kids are getting what they need. Let them decide how much to eat.
No pressure. No bribes. No food fights. Just healthy meals, happy kids and happy moms.
Make eating together fun and healthy. You choose the food. Let your kids choose how much to eat.

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“Even though it’s a tiny little bit, well, you have to force them to eat. So if I just let them decide how much they’re gonna eat, they won’t eat.”

Mother of Preschooler,
Dallas, TX

“I can’t trust her when she says, ‘I’m all done,’ because it means… ‘I wanna go play.’”

Mother of Preschooler,
Raleigh, NC

Division of Feeding Responsibility Messages

- More receptive to messages emphasizing:
  - Helping children learn new skills/ become more independent
  - Helping children learn by serving themselves
  - Letting children decide how much to eat of “new” foods; offering small tastes

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Let them learn by serving themselves.
Let your kids serve themselves at dinner. Teach them to take small amounts at first. Tell them they can get more if they're still hungry.

Core Messages

Sometimes new foods take time.
Kids don't always take to new foods right away. Offer new fruits and veggies many times. Give them a taste at first and be patient with them.

Core Message

Patience works better than pressure.
Offer your children new foods. Then, let them choose how much to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy a food when eating it is their own choice. It also helps them learn to be independent.

“One of the things that I’ve taken out of [this discussion] is teaching my son how to serve himself so that he can learn good portion sizes and learn to become more independent.”

-Mother of Preschooler,
Tampa, FL

Related Findings…

- Focus Groups conducted with mothers of elementary school age children and 8-10 year olds.
  - Mothers didn't want to *pour some for everyone* (i.e., themselves) at dinner.
  - Confusion exists about the fat content and nutritional value of different types of milk.
  - Mothers felt milk not as important for older children.

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Limitations/
Areas for Further Study

They learn from watching you. Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.

Guess who is watching you! Your kids! Eat fruits and vegetables so your kids will too.

They take their lead from you. It's a lesson they'll use for life.

Give them a taste at first and be patient with them.

Make mealtime a family time.

Let them learn by serving themselves.

Maximize Your Message

Advancing Implementation:
A National and State Perspective

Patricia O. Race, MED, RD, CDN

New York State Department of Health

Promoted on WIC Works

Accessibility Information | What's New | About WIC | WIC-Talk | Site Info/Search

WIC Works Resource System

WIC Learning Online

WIC Databases

WIC Sharing Center

WIC Learning Center

WIC Topics A - Z

WIC-Talk

Last updated: 03/11/2009

What's New at WIC Works

Resources from the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service:

New WIC Food Packages: Resources for Staff
- Helping WIC Participants Make the Switch to Low Fat and Fat Free Milk
- Whole Grain Calculator

- Breastfeeding a Magical Bond of Love (WIC Hispanic Breastfeeding and Promotion Project)

FNS USDA Food & Nutrition Service

- Nutrition Messages for Low-income Moms and Children

Additional New Resources:

- State-developed VENA Implementation Materials
- Breastfeeding Support and the New Food Packages; A Review

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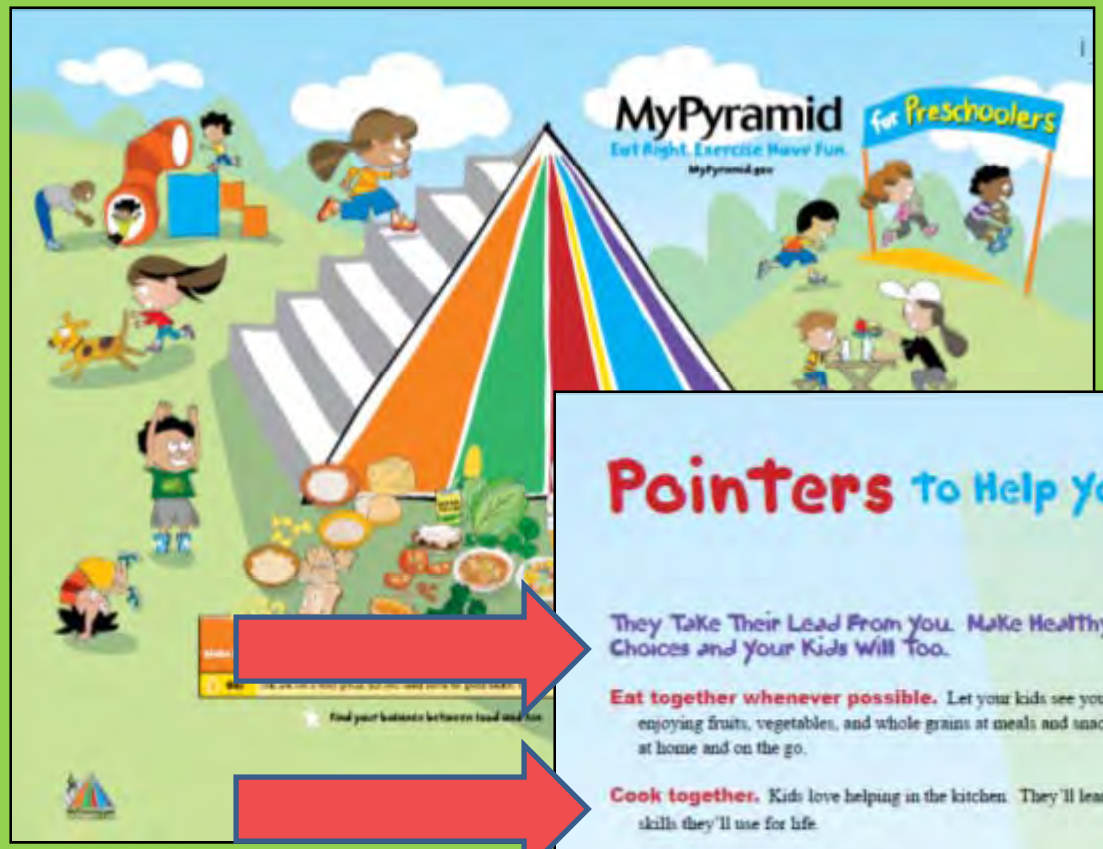
Core Messages In Action



Pointers to Help your Preschooler Develop Healthy Habits

They Take Their Lead From You. Make Healthy Choices and Your Kids Will Too.

Eat together whenever possible. Let your kids see you enjoying fruits, vegetables, and whole grains at meals and snacks at home and on the go.

Cook together. Kids love helping in the kitchen. They'll learn skills they'll use for life.

Help Them Try New Foods.

Sometimes new foods take time. Kids don't always take to new foods right away. Offer new foods many times. Give them a small taste at first and be patient with them.

Offer only one new food at a time. Serve something that you know your child likes along with the new food. Offering too many new foods all at once could be overwhelming.

Picky Eating is Temporary.

Patience works better than pressure. Let your child choose how much to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy a food when eating it is their own choice.

Offer choices. Rather than ask "Do you want broccoli for dinner?" ask "Which would you like for dinner: broccoli or cauliflower?"

Play Actively Everyday.

Make play time a family time. Make physical activity fun for the whole family. It includes anything that gets your child moving both inside and outside the house. Walk, run, and play with your child rather than sitting on the sidelines.

Focus on fun not performance. Not all children are athletes. But all can make activity a lifetime habit.

For more great pointers on these and other subjects go to: mypyramid.gov/preschoolers/

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

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They Take Their Lead from You

Subjects

- MyPyramid Basics
  - *Inside the Pyramid*
  - *Tips & Resources*
  - *Got a Question?*
- Interactive Tools
  - *MyPyramid Plan*
  - *Menu Plan*
  - *MyPyramid*
  - *Child Cost Calculator*
- Multimedia
  - *Video Podcasts*
  - *Audio Podcasts*
  - *PSAs*
  - *Animation*
- Specific Audiences
  - *Preschoolers (2-5y)*
  - *Kids (6-11y)*
  - *Pregnancy & Breastfeeding*

Your child picks up all of your attitudes and behaviors — including your eating habits!

Preschoolers love to copy what their parents do. They are likely to mimic your table manners, your likes and dislikes, your willingness to try new foods, and your physical activities.

Kids learn from watching you. Eat fruits and veggies and they will too.

Tips for setting a good example:

- Eat together. Eat meals with your child whenever possible. Let your child see you enjoying fruits, vegetables and whole grains at meals and snacks.
- Take it with you. Show your child how to make healthy choices when you are on the run. Put oranges, bananas, or other fruits in your bag for quick snacks. Let your child see that you like to munch on raw vegetables.
- Share the adventure. Be willing to try new foods, and try new foods together.
- Cook together. Encourage your preschooler to help you prepare meals and snacks. Teach your child to tear lettuce or add veggie toppings to pizza. Cooking together can mean more "mommy (or daddy) and me" time on busy days.
- Keep things positive. Discourage older children and other family members from making yucky faces or negative comments about unfamiliar foods.

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Make Mealtime a Family Time

Family meals allow your preschooler to focus on the task of eating and give you a chance to model good behaviors.

It takes a little work to bring everyone together for meals. But it's worth it and the whole family eats better.

- Start eating meals together as a family when your kids are young. This way, it becomes a habit.
- Plan when you will eat together as a family. Write it on your calendar.
- You may not be able to eat together every day. Try to have family meals most days of the week.

Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time!

Make family meals enjoyable

- Focus on the meal and each other. Turn off the television. Take phone calls later.
- Encourage your child to try foods. But, don't lecture or force your child to eat.
- Involve your child in conversation. Ask questions like:
  - What made you feel really happy today?
  - What did you have to eat at lunch today?

Applications for WIC

- Anticipatory Guidance
- Motivational Interviewing
- Food Package Education
- Facilitated Discussion
- Social Marketing

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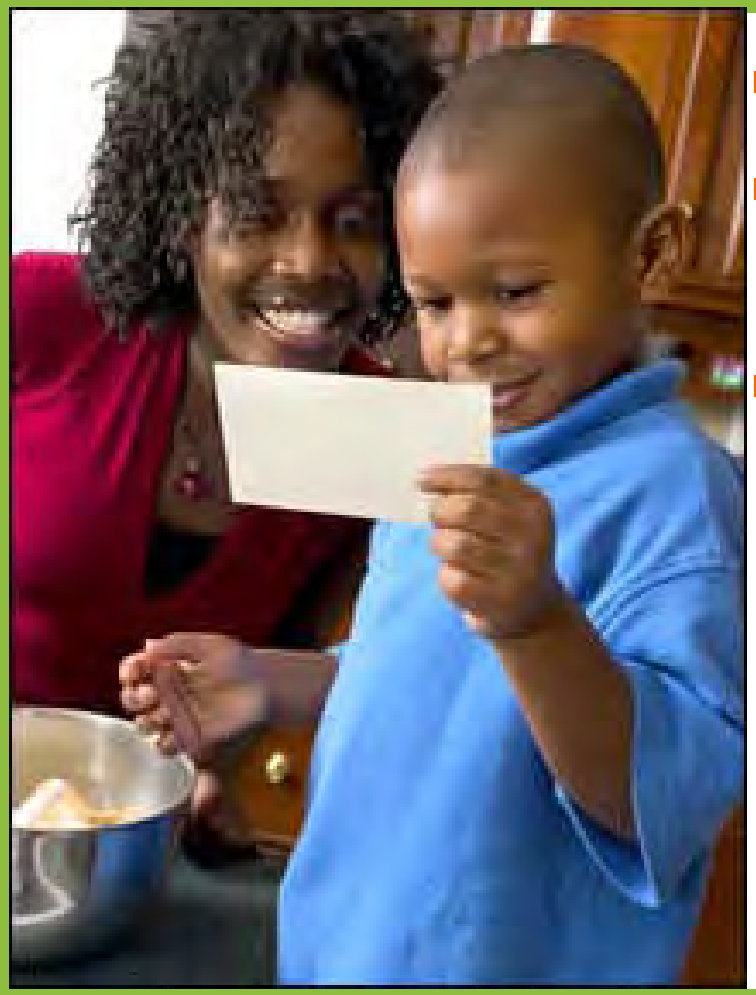
Applications for WIC



- Messages are flexible
- Suitable for multiple communication channels
- Work with many approaches
  - Direct Education
  - Indirect
  - Social Marketing

www.nal.usda.gov/foodstamp

March 26, 2009

Putting the Messages to Work…

Collaboration with Partners

- Incorporate into the State Nutrition Action Plan
  - WIC
  - Child and Adult Care Food Program
  - Food Stamp Nutrition Education
  - Obesity Prevention Program

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Social Marketing

- Develop a cross-program social marketing plan
  - PH Detailing project for health care providers
  - Posters, book marks, grocery bags
  - Point-of-sale messages (clings)
  - Radio Public Service Announcements
  - Add to Website

Incorporate Into Lesson Plans

- Loving Your Family. Feeding Their Future
- Just Say Yes To Fruits and Vegetables (SNAP-Ed)
- Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings (SNAP – Ed)

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Facilitated Discussion

- Summarize and Act!
- What is one idea you have to get your child to eat more fruits and vegetables this week?
  - *Sometimes new foods take time.*
- After hearing from everyone today, what new fruits or vegetables would you like to try?
  - *They learn from watching you. Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will to.*

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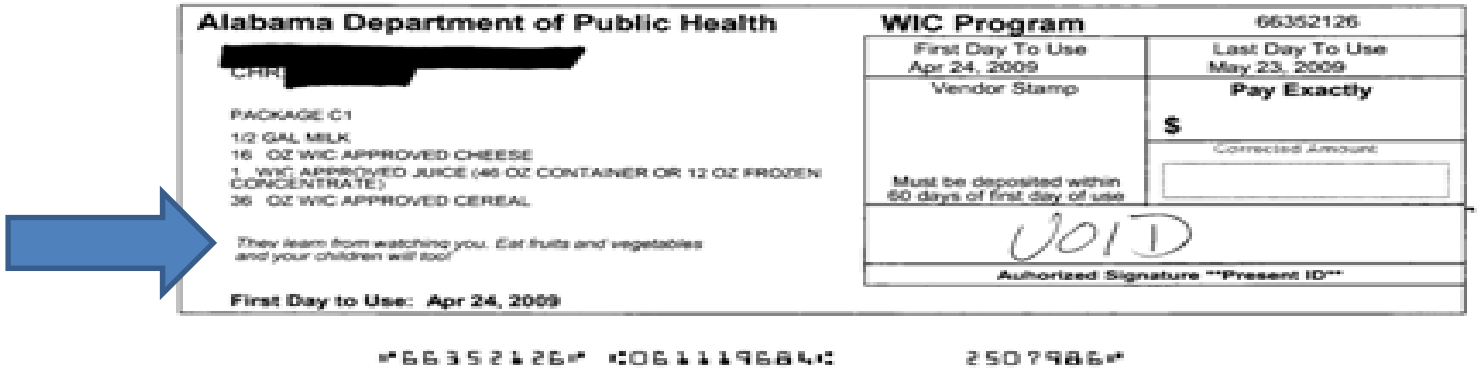
Great Ideas From Other States! Adding Messages to WIC Vouchers



Alabama Department of Public Health

WIC Program

66352126

CHR [redacted]

PACKAGE C1

1/2 GAL MILK

16 OZ WIC APPROVED CHEESE

1 WIC APPROVED JUICE (46 OZ CONTAINER OR 12 OZ FROZEN CONCENTRATE)

36 OZ WIC APPROVED CEREAL

They learn from watching you. Eat fruits and vegetables and your children will too!

First Day to Use: Apr 24, 2009

First Day To Use	Last Day To Use
Apr 24, 2009	May 23, 2009
Vendor Stamp	Pay Exactly
	$
Must be deposited within 60 days of first day of use	Corrected Amount
VOID	
Authorized Signature "Present ID"	

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Great Ideas From Other States!

- Using during goal setting exercises
- Take-away cards
- Including on postcard appointment reminders
- Reinforcements at Farmer's Markets
- Parent Newsletters
- Incorporating supporting content into take home materials
- Developing Digital Photo Receiver Programs

Next Steps

- Print *"Maximizing the Message"*
- Collect and share practices from the field
- Integrate messages into emerging Program resources
- Expand messages and supporting content
  - DFR
  - Whole Grains
  - Supporting content for other messages
- Solicit your help

For more information visit our web pages at:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/default.htm

THANK YOU

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