

Welcome
Core Nutrition Message Webinar

**Reaching Moms of
Preschoolers with
Messages that
Matter**
March 26, 2008



Sponsors:
Cooperative State Research Education & Extension Service
Food and Nutrition Service

March 26, 2008

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(WIC)

Hosts & Speakers

Greetings

I am Helen Chipman your moderator for today's session. I am also National Program Leader Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES) USDA Families, 4-H and Nutrition Unit.

Let me start by introducing my co-hosts and speakers. I will keep this very brief, but the session overview available at <http://fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/TrainingOpportunities.htm> provides more background information about speakers that you can review later.

The co-host today is:

Judy F. Wilson RD, MSPH
Senior Nutrition Advisor
Food and Nutrition Service
Office of Research and Analysis
and Alicia White, RD, MS
Nutritionist, Food and Nutrition Service
Special Supplemental Food Programs Division (WIC)

Judy and Alicia were directly involved in developing the core nutrition messages. Judy created and obtained funding for this project and Alicia served as the project officer.

Learning Objectives

- Articulate the rationale for the messages and describe the developmental process
- Apply lessons learned from the qualitative research
- Utilize messages, supporting content, and the website to support ongoing nutrition education, new initiatives, and new food policy



After participating in these sessions you will be able to:

- Articulate the rationale behind the messages and describe the developmental process.
- Apply lessons learned from the qualitative research (focus groups) to enhance nutrition education and communication.
- Utilize messages and supporting content as well as the FNS Core Message web pages to support ongoing nutrition education, new initiatives and new food policy.

Judy Wilson will now provide an overview of the Core message initiative and provide some background about it.



The slide features a header with fresh produce (broccoli, orange, tomato, peppers) and a photo of a woman feeding a child. The main title is 'FNS Core Nutrition Messages' in white and red text on a green background. Below this, 'Overview & Background' is written in white on a red background. A speaker photo and name are on the left, and the USDA logo, webinar title, and date are at the bottom.

FNS Core Nutrition Messages

Overview & Background

Speaker:
Judy F. Wilson, RD, MSPH
Senior Nutrition Advisor

 **FNS Core Messages Webinar** **March 26, 2009**

Thank you Helen. I also want to thank all of you for your patience and understanding as we sorted out how to expand this webinar to include as many of you as possible. I want to give special thanks to Art Pridemore, who works at CSREES, for managing the technical arrangements and tolerating all of my frantic calls and emails.

Maximizing the Message

Overview of Session



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

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service



- Overview of Core Message Initiative
- Message Development
- Picking Outlets for Messages
- Ways to Put the Messages into Practice
- Tour of the Web Pages
- Next Steps

- Today's session will include an Overview of the Core Message Initiative
 - Why do we need them?
 - Behavior outcomes, audience, and messages concepts
- Ms. White will discuss Message development and testing including what we learned from moms in the focus groups; and
- Picking Outlets for Messages-learning about your audience and selecting the approach
- Dr. Chipman will lead the discussion of Ways to Put the messages into practice-discussing this from our prospective and then we want to hear from you
- We will take a tour of the web pages so you know where to find products; and
- Touch on next steps
- We will wrap up with a few reminders around 3:25.

WHAT ARE THE FNS CORE NUTRITION MESSAGES?

...a set of actions designed to assist mothers and children in adopting specific diet-related behaviors



FNS Core Messages Webinar

March 26, 2009

The Core Messages are a set of actions designed to assist low-income mothers and children in making specific diet related changes . These messages have been consumer tested for clarity and relevance.

The FNS Core Message project is not a new campaign or education material, rather it provides products and communication tools that nutrition educators in USDA programs, can use to develop and enhance nutrition education activities and resources.

A presentation slide with a green background. At the top left, the word "Messages" is written in a large, red, cursive font. To its right, a red rectangular box contains the text "FNS Core Nutrition" in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below this, a white rectangular box contains the question "Why do we need them?" in a green, italicized, sans-serif font. Underneath the question is a bulleted list with three items, each preceded by a red square bullet. At the bottom left of the slide is the USDA logo. At the bottom center is the text "FNS Core Messages Webinar". At the bottom right is the date "March 26, 2009".

FNS Core Nutrition

Messages

Why do we need them?

- Programs reach millions of low-income
- Helps Nutrition educators “Speak with one Voice.”
- State and local Programs have limited resources to develop and test messages.

USDA

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Together, the USDA Nutrition Assistance Programs spent over \$750 M in 2008 and States, like many of yours, contributed millions more.

Together we can increase the visibility and repetition of our messages by “Speaking with one Voice”.

The FNS & EFNEP Programs reach millions of low-income people each year. We maximize our message impact when we work together to deliver consistent, accurate, and consumer tested messages. Unfortunately many States do not have the funding or staff to develop and test messages. These core messages help to bridge that gap by providing tested messages and supporting content for a large portion of the target audience.

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

USDA
FNS Core Messages Webinar
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The core messages provide nutrition educators with consumer tested messages and related tips that are personally relevant, doable and resonate with the target audience. These messages can help consumers take small steps to put the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPyramid into action. The messages:

- Support Program-based nutrition education and policies
- Have been approved by the joint USDA/DHHS Dietary Guidelines Working Group
- Support national and USDA goals as well as priorities of the Agency



The target audience for the messages are:

- Low-income moms of Preschool children.
- Moms of Elementary School Kids 8-10 years.

These audiences are served by multiple nutrition assistance Programs SNAP, WIC, School Meals and EFNEP Programs reach millions of households with Moms and kids each year and moms are important “gate keepers” of foods eaten and available at home. When all of the programs communicate the core messages ,we can reach more moms and kids, reach them more often, and in more locations with consistent and reinforcing messages that increase our ability to “make a difference.”

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.



FNS Core Messages Webinar

Messages development was done in collaboration with internal and external nutrition and communications experts from both federal and State levels and academia. This workgroup identified the target audience and key behaviors for the messages based on national priorities, research findings about modifiable social and personal characteristics and methods. The workgroup was an ongoing part of the development process and plays a vital role in the final products.

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



FNS Core Messages Webinar

March 26, 2009

Maximizing the Message, is a guidebook for nutritionists and other health communication professionals. It presents the core nutrition messages and supporting content. Inside this guide, you will find background information, a brief summary of the developmental process and research findings, as well as suggestions and tips for putting the core messages into practice. It also discusses potential communication channels and evaluation.

It contains the:

- 16 Core Messages
- Supporting Content
- Summary of Research
- Evaluation Guidance

About the Supporting Content...

- Narratives (Mom Stories), Bulleted 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.



Supporting Content include tips, strategies, and encouragement to facilitate behavior change. The content is provided in various forms, such as a narrative story by a mother, recipes and short bulleted lists.

This content reflects tips, strategies, and language that resonated with mothers during our focus group testing. See “Putting the Messages Into Practice” (page 16 of the guide) for ideas on how to incorporate the messages and supporting content into your nutrition education activities.

Messages for Mothers of Preschoolers

Messages Concepts:

- Role Modeling-Eating Fruits and Vegetables
- Cooking and Eating Together
- Division of Feeding Responsibility
 - Letting Children Serve Themselves
 - Offering New Foods



The message concepts for mothers of preschool kids include those shown on the slides.

As you will hear later, the division of feeding responsibility proved quite challenging.

Messages for Mothers of Elementary School Age Children

Availability and Accessibility

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Low-fat/Fat-free Milk



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The session next week will address the messages for mothers of Elementary School Age Children shown on this slide.

Messages for 8 to 10 Year Old Children

Promote

Consumption of:

- Fruits and Vegetables
- Low-fat/Fat-free Milk



FNS Core Messages Webinar

March 26, 2009

And those for 8-10 year old kids. Messages for these two groups are complimentary and reinforcing.



To develop messages that are relevant, believable and compelling—messages that really capture mothers’ attention— we involved low income mothers in the developmental process.

The feedback we gathered from mothers in 8 states across the nation forms the heart of the messages we are sharing with you today.

It is also reflected in the “real-life” tips and other supporting content that addresses mothers concerns about helping their children develop healthy habits when household resources are limited and schedules are hectic.

Our hope is that understanding the research behind the core messages will help you implement them in your programs and provide you with new insights about how to communicate with mothers on these issues.



In total, we conducted 12 focus group sessions with low-income mothers of preschoolers (2 to 5 year old children). A total of 95 mothers participated in all, with 7-8 mothers participating in each focus group session.

We used trained female moderators to facilitate 90-minute sessions using a structured discussion guide.

Overall, half of the focus groups were formative sessions which were designed to provide us with information that would assist us in developing messages that mothers found practical, relatable, and compelling on an emotional level. Specifically, questions were designed to foster discussion about mothers' attitudes and behaviors surrounding nutrition and mealtime in the household as well as the emotional benefits mothers associated with helping their child develop healthy habits.

We tested concept statements during these early sessions to help us identify directions for messages that held promise.

The other half of the focus groups were evaluative sessions, primarily focusing on mothers' reactions to test messages and supporting content. Three of these evaluative sessions focused on role modeling and cooking/eating together messages and three presented division of feeding responsibility messages.

Concept Statements/Messages

- **Examples of Concept Statements**
 - Teach your children to enjoy many different foods. Try to offer a variety of foods, encourage your children to taste them, and let them decide how much to eat.
 - The first time Mary had spinach, she pushed it around with her finger. On the 4th try, she put it in her mouth, but spit it out. The 7th time, Mary ate one small bite. The 11th time, Mary asked Mom for more. Offer new foods often. Patience often works better than pressure.
- **Example of Message**
 - **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 small taste at first and be patient with them.

LSCA

So, what exactly is the difference between testing a concept statement, like we did in the formative groups, and testing messages like we did in the evaluative groups? As you can see from these examples, the concept statements are preliminary messages that utilize a variety of approaches to communicating a concept such as role modeling. They tend to be longer, less refined, and less focused than actual message statements.

The messages we tested tapped more directly into the emotions mothers expressed during the formative focus groups and addressed identified barriers and realities surrounding child-feeding practices. These messages were more polished and simpler.



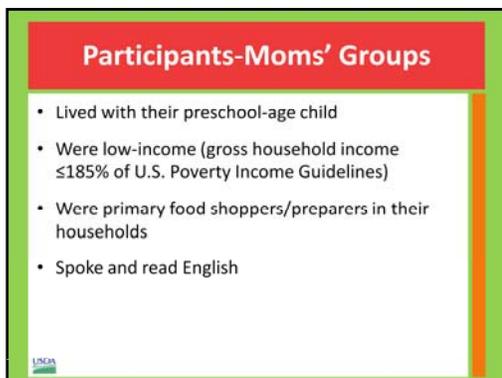
We conducted focus groups with mothers and children in nine locations in eight states between December 2007 and July 2008.

These States included Maryland, Texas, California, Florida, North Carolina, New York, Alabama, and Illinois.

The locations were selected to allow for recruitment of participants that reflected the demographics of FNS programs and to include people from various geographic areas of the country. We held groups in both larger urban cities (e.g., Los Angeles, Dallas) as well as smaller cities (e.g., Rochester, Raleigh).

As you can see here, the focus groups were conducted in 3 phases. Originally we planned on conducting the first 2 phases.

Due to mothers' strong negative reactions to division of feeding responsibility concept statements in phase 1, we felt that additional formative testing on the division of feeding responsibility was needed before we actually could develop any messages for testing.



All of the women in our focus groups resided with their child;

had gross household incomes at or below 185% of U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines;

were primary food shoppers/preparers in their households;

and could speak and read English.

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

This slide shows the demographic characteristics of the focus group participants. Participants were primarily African American, White and Hispanic mothers.

And we had a mix in terms of marital status, education level, and employment.

Over half of participants were or had children participating in WIC, Food Stamps and/or receiving free/reduced priced lunch.



So what bubbled up to the surface in terms of overall findings.

Most mothers reported having busy hectic schedules. And time appeared to play role in mothers' preference for messages and the likelihood that they would deem suggestions as realistic, practical, and actionable.

Overall, we found that messages and supporting content that emphasize mothers' roles as teachers, the idea of helping children learn lessons they'll use for life, and providing opportunities for children to grow developmentally and become more independent resonated best.

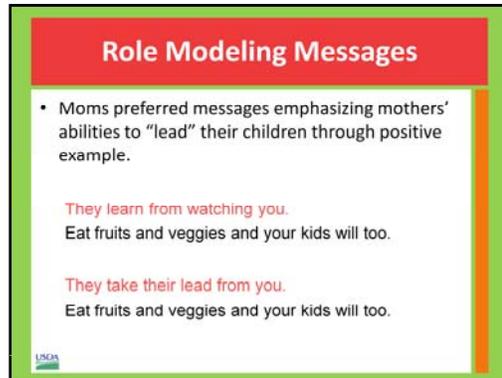
Mothers also liked the idea of family time with their child, the idea of a time for sharing and talking with their child. They also liked messages with the word patience.

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.

Here you see the final core messages related to role modeling. Let me tell you how we got here.



Across groups, mothers viewed being a good role model and teacher for their child as an important part of their role as a "mother."

Mothers shared examples of how their children had copied their behavior in the past including instances when their children wanted to eat the same foods they were consuming.

This is consistent with findings reported in a 2004 article in JADA by Birkett and colleagues. In this study, Washington WIC participants also indicated that they were very interested in being good role models for their children and expressed desires to foster their children's development.

We also found that mothers preferred messages that emphasized their abilities to "lead" their children through positive example. Mothers preferred the phrases, "They learn from watching you..." and "They take their lead from you..."

Birkett D, Johnson DB, Oberg D, Thompson J. Reaching low income families: Focus group results provide direction for a behavioral approach to WIC services. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 2004;104:1277-1280.

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."

LSCA

Most mothers preferred messages that noted a clear and certain benefit and disliked parts of messages that implied an “ambiguous” pay-off sometime in the future (i.e., “...and eventually, your kids will too!”).

Mothers found messages that suggested that they could serve F&V to their child at every meal unrealistic—since they did not always eat every meal with their child.

"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

Here you see a participants' response to one of the core messages on role modeling and the visual imagery it brought to mind.

“...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

And another.

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.

LSCA

We also tested this message with mothers which did not make our final cut because moms in our groups had mixed feelings about the “follow the leader” phrasing; some did not like the idea of “playing games” at mealtime.

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



LSCA

While many mothers reported eating together with their child (mostly dinner); there were also many who did not.

Of those that currently ate meals together, many reported watching television during these family meals.

Mothers that did not eat dinner with their children noted varying family member schedules and the challenges associated with feeding their child while eating dinner themselves as barriers.

In terms of cooking together---Many mothers reported that they did not involve their child in any food preparation activities.

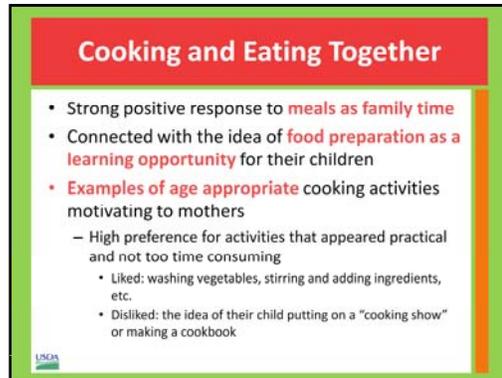
Mothers tended to doubt their children’s abilities to help prepare foods and expressed concerns about the safety and time required for such activities.

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.

Here are the final cooking together/eating together messages.



Most mothers connected with the idea of meals as a time to create family memories, spend time together, and talk to one another. The Make Mealtime a Family Time and Cook Together. Eat Together. Talk Together...messages elicited very positive responses from mothers.

Mothers again noted a preference for the phrase “It’s a lesson they’ll use for life” and reacted positively to supporting content that portrayed “cooking together” as a learning experience for their children and as something that would make their child feel good.

Mothers were more open to involving older preschoolers (4-5) in cooking activities. While time appeared to influence mothers’ willingness to engage their children in certain cooking activities, mothers also expressed concerns about preschoolers being around a hot stove and thought that children were too young to prepare foods or cook.

Supporting content that listed various age-appropriate cooking activities was motivating to mothers when activities appeared practical and not too time consuming. For instance, mothers were receptive to the idea of children mashing soft fruits, vegetables or beans, but not to the idea of their child putting on a “cooking show” or making a cookbook.

Providing opportunities for mothers and their preschool age children to engage in short food preparation activities, with consideration given to safety concerns, may help increase mothers’ willingness to involve children in these activities at home.

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!

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.



LSCA

Most mothers voiced strongly negative reactions to the idea of allowing their preschool-age child to “decide” how much to eat. Mothers stated that children would often say they were full so they could go play or avoid eating a food they disliked.

Many mothers doubted the likelihood of their child consuming a “balanced” diet if they were allowed to choose which foods to eat from those offered (i.e., children would only eat macaroni and cheese and no vegetables). Several mothers believed that children should not be made to “clean their plates.” However, these mothers noted that their children needed to eat “enough” of what was offered.

Mothers often viewed the adequacy of what their child ate over the span of a day or meal and not over the course of several days.



This slide shows the initial concept statements we tested regarding the division of feeding responsibility, that we felt used some of the language we've seen typically used to communicate this idea to the public. None of these statements tested well in their entirety. Moms liked the part of the messages about offering healthy food choices but were consistently opposed to language stating that the child should decide or choose how much to eat.

Moms in our groups reported using food rewards, punishments, pressure, and bargaining tactics to get their child to eat.

But they did not consider these behaviors to be “bribing” or “forcing,” nor did they identify their struggles to get their children to eat as “food fights.” As a result they discounted messages that implied that they engaged in these behaviors. This suggests that nutrition educators should describe these behaviors more specifically and avoid language mothers perceive as having negative connotations.

“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

2



Mothers were more receptive to division of feeding responsibility messages that emphasized their roles in helping their children learn new skills. These messages emphasized moms' roles in the process while giving children more say in how much food ended up on their plate and the amount of food mom expected them to eat. One avenue for doing this was through a message about letting preschoolers serve themselves—something we learned early on that none of the mothers were doing.

Moms found messages about letting children “Learn by serving themselves” to be motivating. In fact these messages generated excited discussion amongst mothers in our group. They specifically liked the idea of letting their children serve themselves from small bowls to help their children become more independent, advance developmentally, and learn portion sizes.

Convincing mothers to let their children decide how much to eat is challenging. In these focus groups, mothers appeared more receptive to relinquishing some control when it came to the consumption of new foods. This may provide an important first step for nutrition education in an area where beliefs and practices appear strongly entrenched.

In our focus groups, many mothers reported that they only offered a new food to their child two-to-three times if their child didn't like it. This is consistent with other published studies.

In our testing, mothers did not like the specification of the number of times a child might need to be exposed to a new food. However, this could reflect the wording of the concept statement and could potentially be ameliorated with a greater focus on offering the new foods over time.

Instead, mothers preferred a message that encouraged them to give their children many small tastes or portions of new fruits and vegetables. Mothers identified with the idea that “new foods take time” and liked an emphasis on having “patience” with their child during the process. Some mothers were also receptive to the idea that helping children develop a taste for many types of foods would lead to easier family meal preparation. Meaning they would not have to make multiple meals.

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.

Final messages are shown here.

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



Limitations/
Areas for Further Study

Convincing mothers to allow their children to decide whether and how much to eat is not a simple task. More research is needed to identify how to best encourage mothers to adopt this behavior. More research is also needed to test the efficacy of these messages when incorporated into theory-based interventions."

While these findings provide insights into the messaging preferences of low-income mothers, they cannot be generalized to a large population with the measurable confidence associated with a quantitative survey. Focus groups were conducted with low-income White, Black and Hispanic mothers that spoke and read English. These messages may not have the same appeal to other audiences or when translated into other languages.



There are many ways that we can put the messages into practice and you have already heard about some of these from other speakers.

Putting the Messages into Practice

Speaking:
Dr. Chipman

- Use the messages to enhance nutrition education
- Connect the messages with your programs
- Share the messages with partners
- Use the messages with related interventions and materials

The **Core Messages** were designed for use in the nutrition assistance programs. They may also be appropriate for use in other programs serving low-income women & children. Both the messages and their supporting content are tools that can enhance theory-based interventions that:

- Address the behavior outcomes Judy mentioned earlier
- Use motivators & reinforcements that are relevant to the target audience
- Are delivered thru multiple channels of communications
- Involve participants
- Expose participant to the messages multiple times

■ **Remember to connect the messages with the Programs.** For example using the messages to support and reinforce program policies such as the new WIC food package and the SNAP-ED guiding principles. You use a variety of educational approaches in your work and the messages can be integrated into these approaches such as:

- facilitated group discussions
- hands-on classes
- counseling sessions, and
- social marketing campaigns.

Share the messages with partners and using the messages in collaborative activities.

Finally, remember that the messages can be used with many of our current initiatives and incorporated into a variety of materials that promote the same behaviors and focus on the same target audience. For example, some of the messages work very well with SNAP-Ed **Loving Your Family Feeding Their Future resources.**

Consider Appropriateness with Specific Audiences

- Messages tested with English speaking:
 - Hispanics
 - Non-Hispanic
 - African Americans
 - Caucasian
- Test before using with other groups or in other languages



It is important to consider cultural relevance when using the messages. They were tested with English speaking Hispanic and Non-Hispanic African American and White audiences. If you plan to use the messages with other racial ethnic groups or in other languages, conduct additional formative research to ensure that the messages are relevant, understood and motivational to your audience.

Consider your population their race, ethnicity, background, and other characteristics, and make adjustments as needed to ensure that the messages are appropriate for them. For example, some segments of the population have religious beliefs/practices that preclude serving milk/milk products with certain foods at meals. In such cases you can modify the supporting content to offer other suggestions and test them with a few moms to make sure they are clear and have the intended effect.

Making the Messages Part of EFNEP

- Work from EFNEP's strengths – Individuals & Families

- Series of lessons
- Learner centered
- Parent/child focus
- Practical application

- Work from EFNEP's strengths – Communities



There are many ways to apply these messages in nutrition education programs. This can be easily done utilizing the unique strengths and characteristics of the respective program. For EFNEP, you have the opportunity to provide a series of lesson that are learner centered, and that focus on the parent and child relationship with the goal to help participants practice and apply what they learn.

As an example, a major challenge for parents of pre-school children is getting them to try new foods. The role modeling messages are a natural fit. Using the anchor, add, apply, away approach, you could incorporate the supporting content – the narrative example along with their own experience, the bulleted tips along with ideas that they have - and then encourage them to set goals (what and how) and report back on their success.

Application of the message could be reinforced by partner organizations with whom you work.

Applications for WIC

Speaking:
A. White



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



The Implementation Guide discusses several ways State and local WIC agencies can use the FNS Core Nutrition messages including incorporating the messages into anticipatory guidance for mothers of preschoolers, counseling sessions, nutrition education classes, social marketing campaigns and print materials. Several States are taking advantage of the role modeling messages to support nutrition education efforts associated with the provision of cash vouchers for fruits and vegetables being provided in new food packages for children. For instance Alabama is printing the “They learn from watching you...” message on their State food list. Other State WIC Agencies, such as Illinois, have started including the messages as part of their staff training.

The image is a screenshot of the WIC Works website. At the top, a red banner reads "Promoted on WIC Works". Below this is a navigation bar with links for "Accessibility Information", "What's New", "About WIC", "WIC-Talk", and "Site Info/Search". The main content area is titled "What's New at WIC Works" and lists resources from the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service. A red arrow points to the resource "Nutrition Messages for Low-income Moms and Children".

Promoted on WIC Works

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

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)
- Nutrition Messages for Low-income Moms and Children

FNS USDA Food & Nutrition Service

Additional New Resources:

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

WIC Learning Online

WIC Databases

WIC Sharing Center

WIC Learning Center

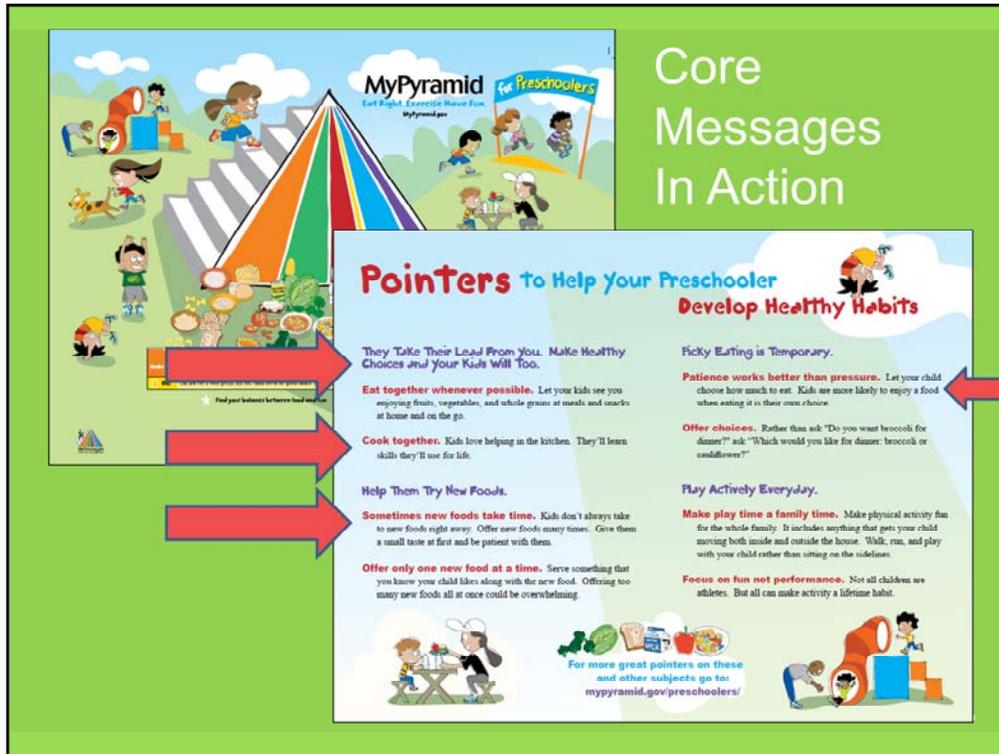
WIC Topics A - Z

WIC-Talk

Last updated: 03/11/2009

USDA

On the national level, we are sharing information with WIC agencies through the WIC Works Resource System and as Judy mentioned we will be printing a limited number of the “Maximizing the Message...” guidebooks.



We are incorporating the messages into a variety of materials. This MyPyramid for Preschoolers mini poster includes Pointers for Parents on the back which feature core messages and supporting content. It is currently being printed. WIC is also working on developing additional fact sheets that we anticipate will include core messages.

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You are here: Home / MyPyramid for Preschoolers / Developing Healthy Eating Habits / Set a Good Example

Search MyPyramid.gov

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.

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.

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

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The MyPyramid for Preschoolers Web site also features the core messages and supporting content including this one on role modeling

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Home About Us News & Media Site Help Online Ordering Contact Us En Español

You are here: Home / Preschoolers / Developing Healthy Eating Habits / Make Mealtime a Family Time

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.

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?

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

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And this one on Cooking/eating together.

Making the Messages Part of SNAP-ED



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



Speaking:
J. Wilson

As you have heard from others, the core messages are flexible and are suitable for multiple communication channels.

They work well with many of the approaches used in SNAP.

Direct Education

Indirect Education

Social Marketing

SNAP-Ed has included the messages in guidance materials and has links to the messages on the SNAP-Ed Connection website. The messages work well with other SNAP-Ed resources. For example, Helen mentioned the Loving Your Family, Feeding their Future resources.

Integrating the Messages in Other Programs is Too!

- Hands on cooking demonstrations and community sites
- Interactive Bulletin Boards at CACFP, YWCA, etc
- Create handouts and articles
- Match them with compelling photo and use them as a “trigger” for groups.



1. Use the messages in conjunction with **Healthy cooking demonstration**: Select a low cost recipe from the SNAP-ED recipe data base or the ESPH for Parents web pages, and integrate the **“Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time.”** message. Engage moms in a discussion about the messages and ask them to share how they accomplish this in their own family and/or barriers to doing so.
2. **Create an interactive bulletin board** for display at CACFP , YWCA and other locations.
3. **Create articles** using the messages and supporting content that can be inserted into community newspaper, newsletter, parent notices, etc.
4. **Pair the messages with compelling photos** that tap into mothers emotions and use as a trigger to get the discussion going with groups of moms.



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

*"My 3 year old picks up
on so much. She loves
to copy what I do.
Sometimes she will ask
for a food she saw me
eat. And I didn't even
know she was watching
me."*

Here are a few examples that illustrate these ideas. Keep in mind that we did not test the messages with photos nor did we test any of these ideas. Therefore, it is essential that you get feedback from your audience and use

With the right photo, the message paired with supporting content can be a handout to reinforce a session, to promote a taste testing or food demo sessions.



Cook Together.

Eat Together.

Talk Together.

**Make Mealtime A
Family Time.**

You can pair the messages with a compelling photo that reflects your target audience. This example makes an eye catching poster or ad for mom/kid cooking class and other events.

Sometimes, new foods take time



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

Discussion opener

This is an example of a visual you can create and use to trigger discussion.

For example you could ask moms

1. Have you ever seen this happen?
2. What do you think this girl is feeling now?
3. Would you want to find out more about how to address this type of problem?
4. What thoughts do you have for helping kids to learn to like new foods?



Practical Applications from States: A Dialogue



Speaking: Dr. Chipman

We know that many of you are using the core messages or may have ideas and plans for using them in your programs, that could be used by others, as well. So we really want to hear from State and local people today.

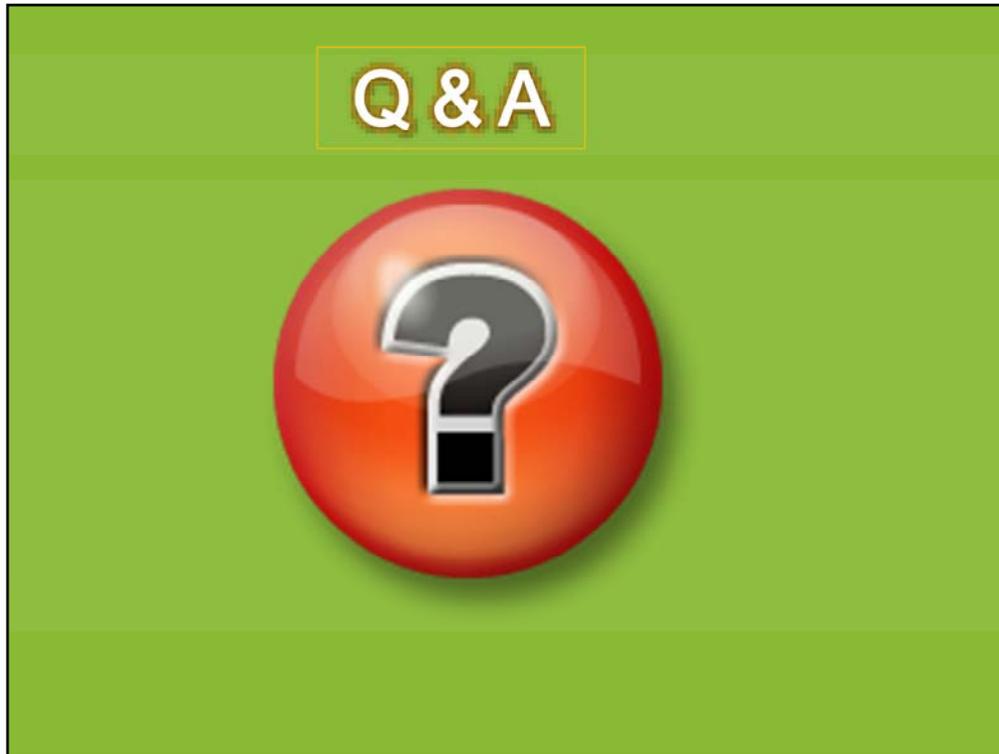
Practical Applications: Participants' Examples

- How are you using, or how might you use these messages for...
 - EFNEP
 - WIC
 - SNAP-Ed
 - Direct Education
 - Social Marketing Campaigns
 - CACFP
 - Other Nutrition Programs



To facilitate hearing from you with the technology that we are using:

- I will ask for examples by program name
- The operator will queue you in
- We'll only have time to take one or two examples per program, so please share using the Q&A feature if you have a great idea and are not able to verbally share today.



We will follow the same process for questions. I will ask for questions by region of the country. We'll take one question, and then move to another region. We'll repeat this process as time permits.

Again, if you are not able to have your question addressed verbally, please use the Q&A function.

Consider Evaluation

- What Has FNS Done?
 - Formative Evaluation as part of the developmental process.
 - Review of related research
 - Focus Groups
 - Expert Review
- Things To Consider
 - Is additional formative research needed?
 - Will you use the messages as part of an ongoing intervention?
 - Are you using the messages to create new communication tools?



FNS tested these messages during development as tools for expanding and enhancing ongoing education and comprehensive, theory-based intervention. FNS did formative evaluation to make sure the messages are— clear, relevant, etc. If you are using the messages with other population groups or in other languages consider doing further evaluations. This could be as intercept interviews by which you ask moms to review the product and tell you what they got from it to see if they still understand the message, or other methods. Remember to do testing if you add pictures to make sure the picture help to get the right message across.

If you are using them as part of a new intervention consider doing other types of evaluation. Think about applying for grants to support the evaluation. Think about what you will do— how often, where, what types of intervention design, etc.

Reaching Message On Lines: 3 Easy Steps

The screenshot shows the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) website home page. The browser address bar displays <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/>. The page features a navigation menu with links for Home, About FNS, Newsroom, and a dropdown menu for Help. A search bar is located at the top left. The main content area is titled "Nutrition Assistance Programs" and includes a "Spotlights" section with three featured articles: "Putting Healthy Food Within Reach" (with a SNAP logo), "Expanding Your School Breakfast Program" (with a School Breakfast logo), and "Leading the Fight Against Hunger". A "Programs" section lists various initiatives such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Women, Infants and Children, School Meals, National School Lunch Program, and School Breakfast Program. A "What's New" sidebar on the right lists recent news items, including "Recovery Act" updates, "FNS Testifies on Problems of Overweight & Obesity", and "USDA To Award \$5 Million in Grants To Increase SNAP Participation". A yellow callout box with the text "Click on Core Messages HERE..." points to the "FNS Core Nutrition Messages" link in the "Spotlights" section. A red circle highlights the "Nutrition Education" link in the "Browse by Subject" sidebar. Another red circle highlights the "Core Nutrition Messages" link in the "What's New" sidebar.

You can enter the core message web pages from any of these 3 points on the FNS home page.

Core Message Home Page
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/default.ht>

Core Nutrition Messages

You are here: Home > Core Nutrition Messages

Core Nutrition Messages

Accurate, consumer-tested, powerful...

The Food and Nutrition Service has released a set of 16 nutrition education messages, supporting content (such as tips and recipes) and implementation guidance for use in the nutrition assistance programs. Nutrition educators can employ these tools to support and enhance nutrition education targeting low-income mothers and children.

Use the messages in interventions designed to: increase consumption of fruits, vegetables or low-fat milk products and foster child feeding practices that support the development of healthy eating habits.

Key Features of the messages and supporting content:

- Development guided by a workgroup of internal and external experts in nutrition education, communication and the FNS programs.
- Based on findings from 30 focus-groups conducted with low-income mothers and children, over half of whom were participating in FNS programs.
- Accurate, easy-to-read and emotionally based.

We also want to hear from you about ways you have used the messages. Forward this information including related materials to: oaNEWeb@fns.usda.gov.

See Also

- Messages
- Supporting Content for Messages
- Implementation Guidance
- Other Materials/Resources
- Training Opportunities

◦ Ideas from the Field
Coming Soon

Overview of Core Messages

They're still growing. Help your kids grow strong. Serve fat-free or low-fat milk at meals.

Sample Message for Moms. Note that the photo was not included in testing.

Search FNS

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

Download Guidebook & other resources.

Access site thru NE

The home page provides an overview of messages. See Also – Coming Soon!

Plan to share your strategies with us

Other Materials and Resources

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the URL <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Resources.htm>. The page title is "Core Nutrition Messages" and the main heading is "Other Materials/Resources". The page content includes a search bar, a "Browse by Subject" menu, and a list of resources. A red arrow points to the URL bar, and another red arrow points to the "Webinar Flyer" link in the resources list. A photo of two children eating is also visible.

You are here: Home > Core Nutrition Messages

Core Nutrition Messages

Other Materials/Resources

These materials and resources will assist you in sharing information about the core messages with your staff, colleagues and partners. Let us know about other items that would be helpful to you.

We also want to hear from you about ways you have used the messages. Forward this information including related materials to: caneweb@fns.usda.gov.

- Webinar Flyer
- Flyer
- One Slide Summary (ppt)
- One Slide Summary with Notes (pdf)
- Ten Slide Summary (ppt)
- Ten Slide Summary with Notes (pdf)

See Also

- Messages
- Supporting Content for Messages
- Implementation Guidance
- Other Materials/Resources
- Training

Last modified: 02/26/2009

This page contains flyers and slides in power point and PDF format. Visit this page often for new resources.

Download the Guidebook

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Maximizing.htm

View Favorites Tools Help

Core Nutrition Messages

Search FNS

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

Browse by Subject

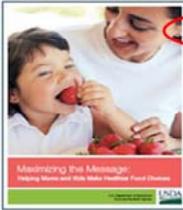
- ▶ Community Outreach
- ▶ Data & Statistics
- ▶ Financial Management
- ▶ Forms
- ▶ Food Safety
- ▶ Grants
- ▶ Nutrition Education
- ▶ Regulations & Policy
- ▶ Research
- ▶ Programs & Services

You are here: Home > Core Nutrition Messages

Core Nutrition Messages

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

Maximizing the Message provides you with 15 audience-tested nutrition messages that address important dietary behaviors influencing the health of low-income mothers and children. We invite you to use the core nutrition messages and supporting content in your nutrition education efforts. Collaborating with other programs in your community to promote the core messages can take this effort to "speak with one voice" one step further.



This guide presents the core nutrition messages and supporting content that are specifically designed for use with the low-income mothers and children participating in Federal nutrition assistance programs.

Inside this guide, we have provided background information, a brief summary of the developmental process and research findings, as well as suggestions and tips for putting the core messages into practice. It also contains discusses potential communication channels and evaluation.

Please share how you have used the messages. Forward this information including related materials to: oaaneweb@fns.usda.gov.

See Also

- Messages
- **Supporting Content for Messages**
- Implementation Guidance
- **Other Materials/Resources**
- Training Opportunities

Download the entire guidebook or just the chapters you need from this page.

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



So, what's next, we have taken a few baby steps toward putting the messages into practice, and plan to make bigger strides in the future. We will

Print and disseminate copies of “*Maximizing the Message*”

Collect and share practices from the field

Integrate into emerging Program resources

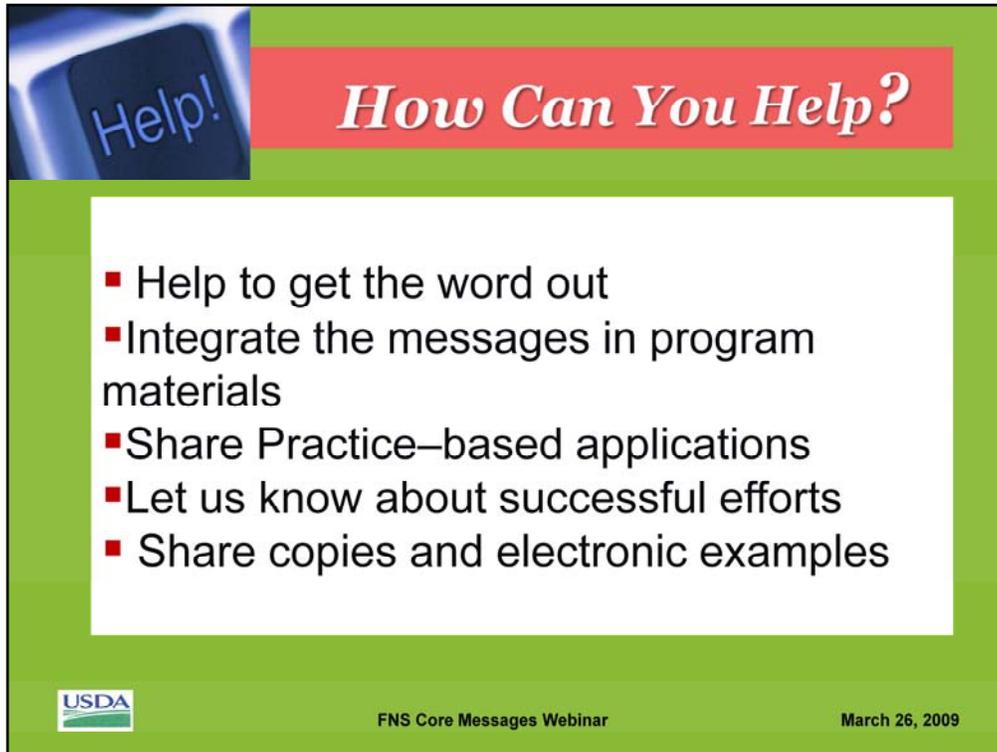
Expand messages and supporting content

DFR

Whole Grains

Supporting content for other messages

Solicit your help



Help!

How Can You Help?

- Help to get the word out
- Integrate the messages in program materials
- Share Practice-based applications
- Let us know about successful efforts
- Share copies and electronic examples

 FNS Core Messages Webinar March 26, 2009

We need your assistance.

Help to get the word out by

- disseminating the flyer mentioned in presentation
- putting a link your Web-site to the Core Messages web pages
- Sharing the messages with and inform stakeholders/partners
- Integrate the messages in program materials and interventions
- Share Practice-based applications
- Let us know about successful efforts
- Share copies and electronic examples
- Help us get the word out

This will promote replication of ideas-rather than duplication-and spur new idea or modifications of current ones for other population groups.

Wrap Up

- Provide feedback
- Report attendees by Program
- CEUs for RD
- Share practices and applications
- Share photos and materials
- Have fun and keep up the good work!



I want to acknowledge and thank Art Pridemore for assisting with the technology elements of this webinar.

Also we thank each of you for joining us and sharing your thoughts and questions in this joint agency webinar.

A few final items to share:

1. Please provide feedback on the webinar. Your comments are important and will be used to improve future webinars.
2. Please send a report to Judy regarding the number of attendees by program. We do not need names of attendees.
5. If you need Certificates of Completion for (RDs) please click the CEU button on this web page.
3. Remember to share how you are using the messages so that others can benefit from your experience.
4. FNS would love to get photos you own that work well with the messages and materials you have developed that use the messages.

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

THANK YOU



March 26, 2009