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**Moderator's Guide
USDA/FNS In-person Kid Focus Groups**

ON-SITE, INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN TO MAKE THEM COMFORTABLE WITH THE SURROUNDINGS (10 MINUTES)

WELCOME AND GROUND RULES

[OMB Statement read to parents and children before groups begin]

1. First of all, I want to thank you for coming in today. My name is _____ and I am very excited that you could all make it today, and we should have a fun discussion. The group discussion will last only one hour. Do any of you need anything before we start? If you need to go to the bathroom during the next hour just let me know and a co-worker will show you where it is.
2. Have any of you ever been to a group discussion like this before? *Moderator to review and explain to the kids the details of the room.*

Well, I want to tell you a few things before we begin. There are microphones in the room that are recording what is said. I have to write a report after I am done today, and it makes it easy for me to be able to go back and listen to everything we talked about.

Behind me is a one-way mirror, which means there are a few people behind the mirror watching. A few other people working on this project with me are observing this discussion and taking notes since I can't write down everything you say.

Because we are taping, it is important that you try to **speak one at a time**. It is my only "rule" of the day. So if everyone can be polite and try not to talk over each other I would appreciate it. It will also help the people taking notes to not hear everyone talking one at a time!

3. Before we start I want everyone to know that there are no **wrong answers**. We just want to hear your most honest thoughts, so don't worry if you have a different thought or opinion than someone else in the group. The more thoughts you can share the better! I know you all have great thoughts to share and I can't wait to hear them.

INTRODUCTIONS

- Ok, so now that I have told you all about the room, let's take a minute before we start to introduce ourselves. *Moderator to go first by saying name again and fun fact about himself- for example favorite thing to do in his free time.*
- Ok, so now that you know a little bit about me, I would love to hear all about you! Let's go around the room and everyone can just say their first name, age and grade as well as their favorite activity.
- What are some types of things you do when you are not at school? [USE TO GAUGE MEDIA USAGE, PROBE: Television, Internet (what sites do you visit), IM, read magazines (which ones)?] Where do they access the internet?

PERCEPTIONS OF HEALTH/NUTRITION

Today we are going to be talking about health and nutrition. We will also be showing you some ideas for posters that people have made to try to explain health and nutrition to you. We want to know what you think of them to help us understand how to make them better for kids your age.

Let's start by talking about health and nutrition.

1. Let's make a list. [MODERATOR GO TO EASEL:] What are some things you do to be healthy?
2. Let's take a look at the things you said. [MODERATOR LOOK FOR EATING/DRINKING HEALTHY THINGS. IF NOT LISTED ASK: What about things you eat and drink? Is there anything about eating or drinking that can be healthy?]
3. Do you think it is important to eat or drink healthy? Why or why not?
4. What do you think the phrase "healthy foods" means?
 - a. Can you give me some examples of healthy foods?
 - b. How do you know that they are healthy?
5. [IF NECESSARY:] What about healthy drinks? Are there things you can drink that are healthy?
 - a. What are some examples?
 - b. How do you know they are healthy?
6. Let's talk about milk for a second.
 - a. Do you drink milk? [If yes:] When do you usually drink milk?
 - b. What kinds of milk do you drink? [PROBE: Fat-free (Skim), Low-fat (1%), Reduced Fat (2%), whole, soy milk, flavored milk]

HEALTH AND NUTRITION AT HOME

I want to spend some time talking about the different ways you have learned about nutrition and being healthy.

Attachment F

1. What do your parents tell you about nutrition or eating healthy? What do they say?
2. Do your parents try to get you to eat healthy foods? What do they do to get you to do this?
3. Let's pretend that I went to your house for dinner on a normal night.
 - a. First, who is there? Do you usually eat dinner by yourself, or do other people usually eat with you?
 - b. Who, if anyone, is eating with you?
 - c. Who usually makes dinner? Does anyone help? Who?
 - d. Do people eat the same things, or do they eat different things? [IF NECESSARY: Does your plate have the same foods on it that your mom's plate does? Your brother's/sister's?]
 - e. If you see your mom or dad eating something different than what you are eating, do you ask if you can try it? Why or why not?
 - f. Is the television usually on during dinner?
4. Again, pretending I was over your house for dinner, what would I hear your parents say/see your parents do to get you to eat healthy foods?
 - a. What types of healthy foods do they try to get you to eat? Do they eat healthy foods, too?
 - b. What works? In other words, what have they done that has actually gotten you to eat healthy foods?
5. In your family, whose job is it to make sure that people are eating healthy things like fruits and vegetables or drink low-fat milk?

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES – WHAT YOU EAT DURING THE DAY

1. Now we are going to talk about something different. Let's talk about what you eat during the day.
 - a. Let's pretend that I went to your house with you after school. We walk through the door. What is usually the first thing you do?
 - i. Do you usually get something to eat? Is it a meal or a snack? Do you get it yourself or does someone else make/give a snack to you?
 - ii. Do you normally get something to drink, too? What do you drink?
 - iii. Do you ever eat fruit? What fruit do you eat?
 - iv. Do you ever eat vegetables? Which ones?
 - v. Does a member of your family ever encourage you to eat fruit or vegetables when you come home from school?
 - vi. Why don't you eat fruit/vegetables more as a snack? [PROBE: eat something else instead, don't have any, take too long to make]
 - b. Now, let's pretend that I was sitting with you in the lunchroom at school. What do you normally eat for lunch?
 - i. Do you ever eat fruit at lunch? What types of fruit do you eat at lunch?

Attachment F

- ii. What about vegetables? What types do you eat at lunch?
- iii. [IF MANY SAY THEY EAT FRUITS/VEGETABLES AT LUNCH:] Now I've been to a few lunchrooms before. I know that sometimes, the fruit or vegetables moms pack in a lunch from home, or those that people get in the lunch line at school, don't really get eaten. Is that what happens for you? Do you usually avoid eating the fruits and/or vegetables on your tray/in your bag?
- iv. Why don't you eat fruit/vegetables at lunch? [PROBE: Better options, don't like the ones offered at school, not given to me/offered]

MILK CONSUMPTION

- 1. Now, let's focus a bit on milk and milk products. Let's start with what comes to your mind when I say the phrase, "milk products"? What are some milk products?
- 2. Is it important to drink milk and eat milk products like cheese and yogurt? What makes you say that?
- 3. Think about the milk products that we mentioned.
 - a. Which of those do you eat?
 - b. Do you know what kind you eat? Is it the low-fat or fat-free kinds or the regular kind, or are you not sure?
- 4. Do you drink milk with dinner? How often?
 - a. Did you used to drink milk at dinner when you were younger (like 2 or 3 years old)? Did you drink milk more or less often than you do now?
 - b. Why do you think you drink more/less now with dinner than before?

CONVINCING FAMILY MEMBERS

- 1. What if it were your job to get your family to drink more low-fat/fat-free milk/eat more low-fat/fat-free milk products? Would you want that job?
 - a. What do you think you would **say** or **do** to make sure people did this in your house?
- 2. What if it were your job to get your family to eat more fruits and vegetables? Would you want that job?
 - a. What do you think you would **say** or **do** to make sure people did this in your house?

FOOD INFLUENCE

- 1. Now we are going to try something different. I want you to answer the question using a scale. If 10 means that your Mom always gives you exactly what you want for dinner, and a 1 means she never

Attachment F

gives you what you want, what number would you give your Mom in terms of giving you what you want for dinner? What makes you say that?

2. Do you ever ask your Mom to buy you a type of food at the grocery store? [PROBE: at the store when you ask, or do you put it on the shopping list]
 - a. [IF YES:] What do you usually ask for?
 - b. [IF YES:] Does your Mom usually buy it for you?
3. Do you ever ask your Mom to buy a kind of fruit or vegetable for you? How often?
4. If you asked for a type of fruit or vegetable, do you think your Mom would buy it for you? What makes you say that?

PERCEPTIONS OF POSTER CONCEPTS

As I mentioned earlier, we want to get your opinion on specific ideas for teaching nutrition and health to children like you.

[A TOTAL OF 6 POSTER CONCEPTS WILL BE PRESENTED, 3 IN EACH CATEGORY. CATEGORIES WILL BE ROTATED:]

Milk Messages

- Low-fat milk keeps you going strong – ask mom to pour you some at dinner.
- Fuel up with low-fat milk at meals. And soar through your day like a rocket ship.**
- Snack like a super hero. Power up with fruit and low-fat yogurt.
- Eat smart to play hard. Drink low-fat milk at meals.**

Fruit and Vegetable Messages

- Be a food detective. Hunt for fruits and veggies with mom at the store.
- Remind mom which veggies are your faves. So she will know to put them on your plate.
- Eat smart to play hard. Eat fruits and veggies at meals and snacks.**
- Fuel up with fruits and veggies. And soar through your day like a rocket ship.**

[NOTE: Given that statements with “**” are the same concept repeated in both categories, only one of the two will be presented to participants. The “**” statement selected for testing will be rotated across groups as well.]

[NOTE: Since there are no right or wrong answers, moderator should reassure respondents that it is OK if they do not know the answer to these questions. Respondents should just let us know if they are not sure.]

1. Now, I am going to show you a series of ideas for posters that you may see in your school. Remember these are not finished. They are just ideas for posters. You are going to help to make them better. [SHOW POSTER]
 - a. What is your first reaction?

Attachment F

- i. What do you like about it?
 - ii. What do you not like about it?
- b. What do you think this poster is trying to say?
- c. What, if anything, is confusing or difficult to understand?
- d. Does this poster make you want to do what it asks you to do (drink more low-fat milk/eat more fruits and veggies)? What makes you say that?

[REPEAT THIS LINE OF QUESTIONING FOR EACH OF THE POSTER CONCEPTS FOR EACH CATEGORY. AFTER A SET OF 3 POSTERS IS PRESENTED, ASK:]

2. Now I am going to place a letter next to each poster. On the sheet of paper in front of you, write down the letter of the poster that you like the best. [TAKE HAND COUNT OF PREFERENCES SO THAT IT CAN BE AUDIO RECORDED] Why did you select that poster?

[REPEAT QUESTIONS/EXERCISE FOR OTHER CATEGORY OF POSTERS]

[AFTER ASKING FAVORITES FOR EACH CATEGORY, PLACE ALL 6 POSTERS AROUND THE ROOM AND ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:]

3. Now I want you to think about all 6 posters that we have talked about today. On the sheet of paper in front of you, write down the letter of the poster that you like the best. [TAKE HAND COUNT] Why did you select that poster?
4. Which poster did you like the least? What makes you say that?

WRAP UP AND FINAL THOUGHTS [IF TIME]

Our time is almost up. I would like to get a few final thoughts from you.

1. What do you think is the most important reason to drink low-fat milk?
[MODERATOR WILL RECORD RESPONSES ON FLIP CHART AND DISCUSS]
2. What do you think is the most important reason to eat more fruits and vegetables?
[MODERATOR WILL RECORD RESPONSES ON FLIP CHART AND DISCUSS]

We're all done for today. Thank you so much for your time; we appreciate that you came. Your have been very helpful. Thanks again and enjoy the rest of your day.