

Attachment E

OMB Control # 0584-0524
Expiration Date: 03/31/2013

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USDA/FNS Formative Messaging Triad Moderator's Guide (Low-income Mothers) Child Feeding Practices

I. WELCOME AND GROUND RULES (5 minutes)

Welcome everyone. My name is _____. I am an independent marketing researcher. Thank you for coming for this discussion. Before we begin, I'd like to explain a few things about the discussion.

1. First of all, I want everyone to know there are **no wrong answers**. (We want to know your opinions and those opinions might differ. This is fine. We want to know what each of you thinks about the topics we will be discussing.)
2. You have probably noticed the microphones in the room. They are here because we are **audiotaping** the discussion. Afterwards, I have to write a report. I want to give you my full attention and not have to take a lot of notes. Also, because we are taping, it is important that you try to **speak one at a time**. I may occasionally interrupt you when two or more people are talking at once in order to be sure everyone gets a chance to talk and that responses are accurately recorded.
3. Behind me is a one-way mirror. Some of the people working on this project are observing this discussion so that they can hear your opinions directly from you. However, your identity and anything you personally say here will remain confidential. By confidential, I mean your names, addresses, and phone numbers will not be given to anyone, and no one will contact you after this group is over. When I write my report, I will not refer to anyone by name.
4. Please turn off your **beepers & cell phones**. The group will last only 90 minutes. Should you need to go to the restroom during the discussion, please feel free to leave, but we'd appreciate it if you would go one at a time.
5. Feel free to say what is on your mind. If you have something negative to say, it is all right. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. We just want to hear your opinions.

II. INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

1. Now, first let's spend a little time getting to know one another. Let's go around the table and introduce each of ourselves. Please tell me:
 - First name, and
 - What local area you live in,
 - Who you live with (ages of children), pets, plants, etc., and
 - A little bit about yourself—such as what you do for a living or a favorite hobby.

[MODERATOR: Instruct respondents that when questions in the guide refer to children, they should think of their 2-5 year-old child/ren, even if they have another child in a different age range. REMIND

THEM OF THIS THROUGHOUT THE SESSION]

III. MEALTIMES (10 minutes)

1. As I just mentioned, everyone around the table is a Mom of a 2-5 year old. I want to begin our conversation tonight talking a little bit about what mealtimes are like with your 2-5 year-olds.
 - a. Take a moment and think about what word or phrase you would use to describe a typical family mealtime with your 2-5 year-old?
 - b. Please explain why you decided on that particular word or phrase?
[MODERATOR: Have everyone give a word or phrase and explain their response.]
 - c. What are some of the best things about mealtimes?
 - d. On the flip side, what are some of the challenging things about mealtimes?

IV. CHILD FEEDING PRACTICES (20 minutes)

1. Thank you for that. Now, I want to shift gears a bit, and we are going to talk about the job you and your preschoolers have when it comes to helping your kids eat healthfully. We'll focus on dinner or the evening meal for our conversation.
 - a. Before we get into specifics, how often, if at all, would you say you eat dinner together, with all the people living in your household?
 - i. Do you sit together to eat; do you eat in front of the TV; etc.?
 - b. For typical dinners, does your 2-5 year old eat meals separately (i.e., earlier) or with the rest of the family?
 - c. Again thinking about dinner, how does dinner get served at your house?
 - i. How do you usually let everyone serve themselves (i.e., for example from bowls/containers on the table), do you prepare a plate for everyone in the kitchen, etc.?
 1. How about your 2-5 year old - how does food get on his/her plate?
 - ii. [IF THEY SERVE THEIR 2-5 YEAR OLD:] How do you decide how much to serve your child? Do you just serve them or do you ever ask how much he/she wants?
 1. How old should a child be when you start letting him/her serve himself/herself at least some of what is offered at meals?
 - iii. Are you concerned about how much your child eats, or if he or she is eating enough? What makes you say that?
 1. [IF APPROPRIATE] Do you have any rules about when your 2-5 year old has eaten enough? What are the rules? [PROBE: finish certain amount, finish certain foods, taste everything, eat a certain amount to get dessert, etc]
 - iv. How do you introduce new foods? [PROBE: make them eat one taste, make them eat all, etc.]

2. For the next few questions, we're going to talk about the jobs you and your preschooler may have when it comes to eating.
- a. Let's focus on you. What would you say is your job as a Mother when it comes to helping your preschooler eat? What do you have a responsibility to do? Let's make a list. [MODERATOR WRITE RESPONSES ON EASEL].
 - i. How easy or hard is it to accomplish all of these things?
 - 1. How often would you say you succeed?
 - a. How does it feel when you succeed?
 - b. And how does it feel when you aren't as successful?
 - 2. What sort of things would you consider as providing positive encouragement to get a child to try/eat more of something (i.e., making comments about how good something tastes, letting them have dessert if they eat it, telling them that they just have to taste something)
 - ii. Generally speaking, how much help do you need from your preschooler to be successful?
 - b. Now let's focus on your preschooler. What would you say is their job when it comes to eating? [MODERATOR WRITE RESPONSES ON EASEL].
 - i. How often would you say preschoolers accomplish all of these things?
 - ii. Can young children decide for themselves how much to eat or when they have had enough to eat? What makes you say that?
 - 1. Did you trust that they knew how much to eat when they were younger (infants, for example)? What's different, if anything, now that they're preschoolers?
 - c. Some people believe that parents should choose *what*, *where* and *when* to eat – and that children should choose *how much* and *whether to eat*. What's your initial reaction to this idea? [MODERATOR WRITE THE CONCEPT ON EASEL; REFER TO EASEL SO THAT RESPONDENTS CAN VIEW AS THEY CONSIDER.]
 - i. What are the benefits of allowing your children to decide how much food they want or when they have had enough to eat?
 - 1. What concerns do you have about letting your children decide how much food they want or when have had enough to eat?
 - ii. What are the benefits of allowing you children to decide *whether to eat*?
 - 1. What concerns do you have when it comes to letting preschoolers decide *whether to eat*? What do you think would happen if your child didn't eat anything at a meal?
 - 2. How does it make you feel when your preschoolers don't eat?
 - 3. How do you feel about the following statement: "Children will eat, and they will eat the amount they need. They will learn to eat the foods their parents eat."

- iii. What questions do you have when it comes to learning more about this idea? For example, what information would you need in order to be comfortable with this idea? [PROBE: information for overweight vs. underweight kids]

V. CHILD FEEDING PRACTICES STRATEGIC MESSAGES (20 minutes)

Now we are going to shift gears for a moment and take a look at some short statements. Each is written on a card. I would like you to sort these cards.

Read all of the cards and place the card with the message that you **find to be most convincing** on top. Put the one that you find second-most convincing underneath that one, and so on and so forth, until you get to the card with the message that you find to be least convincing (which should be on the bottom).

After you have done that, you will notice that each card has a letter in the lower right-hand corner. On Handout 1, please write the letters of the cards in the order in which you have stacked them. Then, we'll talk about it. [DISTRIBUTE HANDOUT 1]

[NOTE TO MODERATOR: To the extent possible, try to get respondents to ignore issues with grammar and/or word choice. The key is to have them focus on the concepts.]

Letter	Message
T	Moms choose what's on the table. Let kids choose what's on their plates. Offer a variety of healthy foods, and let kids serve themselves. They'll eat what their little tummies need and learn to make healthy food choices for life.
H	When you trust them to choose healthy foods, they'll learn to trust themselves. Help your kids build a healthy future by trusting them to say whether they are hungry and when they have had enough to eat. Kids will learn how to listen to their bodies and make healthy food choices for life.
F	Feed their independence at mealtimes. Each meal with your preschooler is a chance to help them to grow to become more independent by helping them learn to make healthy food choices. Start early and you'll help them learn to build healthy eating habits for life.
L	Lessons for life, one meal at a time. Offer a variety of healthy foods and let kids decide what to eat. Now is the time to start helping your preschooler to form healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime.
M	Team up with Mother Nature. She lets your kids know when they're full. Young children's bodies tell them when they are hungry and when they've had enough to eat. When your kids tell you they've had enough, listen to them. They'll learn to listen to their bodies to make healthy food choices now and as they get older.
S	Think several meals, not one. Your child has several chances every day to eat a variety of healthy foods. If your child chooses not to eat much or nothing at all at one meal, don't worry. They'll make up for it at other meals and get what they need for good health over time.

- What do you think these statements are trying to tell you?
- [GO AROUND TABLE:] Which one did you find to be the most convincing? Take a moment and explain why you selected that one as your top choice?
- [GO AROUND TABLE:] Now, let's look at the other side of the coin. Which **ONE** did you find to be the least convincing? Why did you select that one?
- Were any of the statements confusing to you? Which one(s)? What about them were confusing?

VI. SUPPORTING CONTENT FOR EXISTING MESSAGES (20 minutes)

1. Now we are going to look at some information that has been written to go with different messages than the ones you just read.

[SHARE MESSAGES ON CARDS, THEN DISTRIBUTE SUPPORTING CONTENT, NARRATIVE PARAGRAPHS/HANDOUT 2]

First, read these paragraphs written by moms of 2-5 year-olds. **Circle** any statement, word, or phrase that you particularly like, and **draw a line through** any statement, word, or phrase that you did not like or did not understand.

- a. Before we talk about specifics. What did you think of these paragraphs? [PROBE: Interesting? Informative? Boring?]
- b. What do you think these materials are trying to say to you?
- c. Did it sound realistic? What makes you say that?
- d. What do you think about the ideas they talk about? Are they believable? Doable?
 - i. Would you try these ideas? Which ones? What makes you say that?

[DISTRIBUTE SUPPORTING CONTENT, REMAINING INFORMATION] Now I am going to show you more information. Again, this information has been written to go with the messages you read on the cards. Don't worry about how they look on the page, for now, just focus on what is written.

Please take the next few moments to read this information and **circle** any statement, word, or phrase that you particularly like, and **draw a line through** any statement, word, or phrase that you did not like or did not understand. Then, we'll talk about them.

[SHARE SUPPORTING CONTENT, REMAINING INFORMATION/HANDOUT 3]

Before we talk about specifics. What did you think of what was written on the pages? [PROBE: Interesting? Informative? Boring?]

- a. [GO AROUND TABLE] What stood out to you? Which TWO or THREE statements, phrases or words did you like best? Take a moment and explain why you chose those. [MODERATOR IDENTIFY WHAT PEOPLE CIRCLED] [PROBE: Helpful, realistic, doable]
- b. Now, let's look at the other side of the coin. Which statements, phrases or words did you cross out because you did not like or did not understand them? Take a moment to explain why you chose those. [MODERATOR IDENTIFY WHAT PEOPLE CROSSED-OUT]
- c. Let's say that you were creating a brochure and you had to select which of the information you just read to put into it. Since brochures are small, you can't use all of the information you read. What 1 or 2 pieces of information do you think **MUST** be included? Why did you select those?

VII. FALSE CLOSE (10 minutes)

1. Tonight we discussed a number of issues. While I step out of the room for a moment to see if I need to cover any additional information, please answer the question on Handout 4. [DISTRIBUTE HANDOUT 4] The question on this handout reads, "Of all of the ideas we talked about this evening, which one would you be most likely to try in your own household?"

[IF TIME: DISCUSS RESPONSES TO THIS ITEM.]

Thank you very much for your participation! Have a great evening!

Attachment E1

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First Name: _____

Date: ____/____/2010

Location: _____

Session #: _____

Handout 1

Take a look at your stacked cards. Each card has a letter in the lower right-hand corner. Please write the letter of each statement in the blanks below in the order in which you sorted the cards.

Does best job of helping you to help your child become an independent eater

Does worst job of helping you to help your child become an independent eater

Attachment E1a

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Please note that the materials to follow will be printed on 3 x 5 index cards.

Moms choose what's on the table. Let kids choose what's on their plates. Offer a variety of healthy foods, and let kids serve themselves. They'll eat what their little tummies need and learn to make healthy food choices for life.

T

When you trust them to choose healthy foods, they'll learn to trust themselves. Help your kids build a healthy future by trusting them to say whether they are hungry and when they have had enough to eat. Kids will learn how to listen to their bodies and make healthy food choices for life.

H

Feed their independence at mealtimes.

Each meal with your preschooler is a chance to help them to grow to become more independent by helping them learn to make healthy food choices. Start early and you'll help them learn to build healthy eating habits for life.

F

Lessons for life, one meal at a time. Offer a variety of healthy foods and let kids decide what to eat. Now is the time to start helping your preschooler to form healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime.

L

Team up with Mother Nature. She lets your kids know when they're full. Young children's bodies tell them when they are hungry and when they've had enough to eat. When your kids tell you they've had enough, listen to them. They'll learn to listen to their bodies to make healthy food choices now and as they get older.

M

Think several meals, not one. Your child has several chances every day to eat a variety of healthy foods. If your child chooses not to eat much or nothing at all at one meal, don't worry. They'll make up for it at other meals and get what they need for good health over time.

S

Attachment E2a

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Please note that the materials to follow will be printed on 3 x 5 index cards.

These are existing messages provided by USDA FNS, and were finalized in prior round of testing. These finalized messages will be provided to participants as additional background for reacting to supporting content in Attachments E2 and E3.

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.

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.

“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.

Attachment E2

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First

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Handout 2

Please turn to the next page.

Getting beyond broccoli.

“My daughter Alicia loves broccoli. I figured that since she liked that, trying other vegetables would be easy. I was wrong. Alicia didn’t want anything to do with corn, peas, carrots or any other vegetables. Her pediatrician told me to keep offering new foods with familiar foods, and that over time Alicia would give them a try. I didn’t think it would work, but it did!”





How I ended the new food war.

“I like to think that I am a good mom to my 3year-old son, Matt. But, getting him to try new fruits and vegetables was a true test of my patience. Finally, I figured it out. I stopped trying to pressure or plead with Matt to just try one bite. I simply put out small portions of new foods at each meal and snack time, and let him decide to try them or not. By being patient and offering new foods over and over for many meals, eventually Matt began to taste and eat them.”

Greater independence is worth a little spilled food.



“Recently, I took a big step for me and my 4-year-old daughter. I let her start serving herself at meal times. I use small, clear, unbreakable serving containers so she can see the food and spoon it easily and safely. At first, I held the bowl steady so she wouldn’t make a big mess. But then I figured, who cares about a little spilled food? My child is learning to be more

independent. And she is learning how to take a small portion at a time. Then if she is still hungry, she can serve herself more. That’s a lesson she can use for a lifetime of healthier eating.”

Attachment E3

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Handout 3

Please turn to the next page.

Help your child learn how to love a variety of foods. Offer and encourage your kids to taste new foods. When they do, reward them with praise instead of treats.

Kids learn to like new foods by:

- Having them offered over and over
- Having them served with familiar foods
- Seeing friends and grown-ups eating these foods
- Tasting them many times
- Making the decision by themselves to eat a new food



Continue to offer a new food many times. Keep trying. Don't give up. Many young children must be offered a new food several times before they will try it. Continue to offer a new food and eventually, your kids will give it a try.

Moms often ask:

Q. How do I know my kids are getting enough food and nutrition?

A. Children eat when they are hungry and usually stop when they are full. It's also helpful to know that a child's stomach is about the size of his/her fist. So what may not look like much food to you may actually be just right for their tiny bellies.

Q. What are some helpful tips when it comes to feeding my children?

A. Here are three that many Moms find helpful to keep in mind:



- 1. You choose the foods to put on the table.** Try pairing new foods with foods you know your kids will eat. Your child may not care for all that's offered, but that's okay. Kids eat better when they have the freedom to decide what to eat and not eat.
- 2. Trust your children to choose what and how much to eat.** Children learn to know when they are satisfied if they are allowed to decide what to eat from a variety of nutritious foods, and eat only as much as they want. This will help them develop healthy eating habits for life.
- 3. They will eat the amount they need.** Toddlers have a strong sense of hunger, appetite and fullness, so they

are likely to stop eating when they are full rather than when the food is gone.

Your kids will learn many useful lessons when you let them serve themselves at mealtime:

- They learn to make their own decisions about what and how much to put on their plates.
- They learn to be more aware of when they are hungry and when they are full.
- They further develop their fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.
- They learn to share, take turns and be responsible for their choices.

Try these tips to make serving themselves an even better experience:

- Start with small bowls they can easily hold in their little hands.
- Encourage your children and praise them when they serve themselves successfully.
- Use clear bowls so they can see the food.



Attachment E4

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Handout 4

1. Of all the ideas we talked about this evening, which one would you be most likely to try in your own household?
