

## Attachment H

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### USDA/FNS Messaging Testing Focus Group Moderator's Guide (Low-income Mothers of Children 2-5 years of age) Milk and Whole Grain Messages – Evaluative Round (February 2011)

#### 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, a favorite hobby, and...

[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. WARM UP/HELPING CHILDREN STAY HEALTHY (5 minutes)

1. Let's begin our discussion this evening by discussing how we help our 2-5 year-old children eat healthfully.
  - a. What types of foods are important for your children's healthy growth and development? Let's make a list. [MODERATOR WRITE RESPONSES ON EASEL; PROBE: MILK/MILK PRODUCTS, FRUITS & VEGETABLES, WHOLE GRAINS]
    - i. Looking at this list, what would you say is MOST important? What makes you say that?
    - ii. Now, which of these foods do your preschoolers eat more readily, and which ones do they resist eating? What makes you say that? [BRIEFLY GO THROUGH LIST AND IDENTIFY WITH RESPONDENTS WHICH THEIR KIDS EAT READILY/WHICH THEY RESIST]

### IV. LOW-FAT MILK/MILK PRODUCTS (5 minutes)<sup>1</sup>

1. Now let's focus on what your 2-5 year-old child drinks.
  - a. What types of beverages do you offer your 2-5 year-old child at meals and snacks? [PROBE FOR MILK]
    - i. How often does your 2-5 year-old child drink milk?
  - b. Do you usually buy milk and milk products? What type? [IF NECESSARY, PROBE: lowfat, whole, skim, 1%, 2%, flavored vs. plain.] Why do you buy that type of milk?
    - i. [If multiple types] Which type do you offer your 2-5 year-old to drink?
    - ii. Do you think one type is more or less healthy for you and your kids? If so, which one and why?
  - c. And do you usually buy milk products? What type? [IF NECESSARY, PROBE: cheese, yogurt and probe to assess whether they buy low-fat/fat-free varieties.] Why do you buy those types of milk products?
    - i. Which of these milk products do you offer your 2-5 year-old and/or does your 2-5 year-old child eat?
  - d. When do you usually offer your 2-5 year old child milk and milk products? [PROBE: specific meals, with snacks]
    - i. Is milk usually the only drink you offer to them, or do you give your 2-5 year old child other drink choices? What are those other choices?
  - e. Do you personally drink milk at meals or with snacks? Why/why not?

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<sup>1</sup> We will update this line of questioning based upon the findings of the formative round of research. We plan to cover some of the same information as is in the formative guide in order to serve as a baseline (e.g., so we have some information about respondents as we interpret their reactions to messages/supporting content), but we will also tailor this specific line of questioning to address issues/questions that arise out of the formative discussions. Also, note that we will keep this section relatively brief so that the focus of this round of testing can be on gaining reaction to refined messages and associated supporting content. A finalized guide will be re-submitted to OMB prior to testing in February 2011.

f. Do you personally eat cheese or yogurt at meals or with snacks? Why/why not?

## V. WHOLE GRAINS (5 minutes)<sup>2</sup>

1. Now let's focus on your 2-5 year old child eating whole grain foods.
  - a. What are some whole grain foods that you can think of? [MODERATOR WRITE RESPONSES ON EASEL. PROBE IF NECESSARY: cereal, bread, pasta, tortillas, oatmeal, etc.]
  - b. Do you usually buy whole grain foods?
    - i. [FOR THOSE WHO BUY] What type of whole grain foods? [IF NECESSARY, PROBE: bread, pasta, cereal, tortillas, etc.] Why do you buy those foods?
      1. How do you know which foods are whole grains?
      2. What do you look for? [MODERATOR: probe to understand whether they know what to look for]
    - ii. [FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT BUY] What are some of the reasons why you don't buy whole grain foods? [PROBE: PRICE, TASTE, ETC.]
  - c. When do you usually offer your 2-5 year old child whole grain foods? [PROBE: meals, with snacks]
    - i. What types of whole grain foods do you most often offer them? Why these foods?
    - ii. [IF APPROPRIATE] Are they offered whole grains at child care?
  - d. Do you personally eat whole grains at meals or with snacks? Why/why not?

## VI. STRATEGIC MILK/MILK PRODUCT MESSAGES (10 minutes)

1. Now, we are going to read some statements written to help people to get themselves, and their children, to drink low-fat milk and eat low-fat milk products like cheese and yogurt, and then we'll read some statements written to assist moms in helping their children learn to love whole grain foods.

So first, we are going to look at a set of statements. Each statement is written on a card. I would like you to sort these cards. Place the card with the statement that you **find to be most convincing** on top. Put the one that does the second-best job underneath that one, and so on and so forth, until you get to the card that did the worst job (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 A**,<sup>3</sup> please write the letters of the cards in the order in which you have stacked them.

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<sup>2</sup> We will update this line of questioning based upon the findings of the formative round of research. We plan to cover some of the same information as is in the formative guide in order to serve as a baseline (e.g., so we have some information about respondents as we interpret their reactions to messages/supporting content), but we will also tailor this specific line of questioning to address issues/questions that arise out of the formative discussions. Also, note that we will keep this section relatively brief so that the focus of this round of testing can be on gaining reaction to refined messages and associated supporting content. A finalized guide will be re-submitted to OMB prior to testing in February 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Handouts will be developed to match the messages and stimuli tested in the evaluative round of research. All evaluative materials will be developed based on findings from the formative round. Finalized handouts will be re-submitted to OMB prior to testing in February 2011.

Then, we'll talk about it.

[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.]

[Insert Messages]<sup>4</sup>

- a. [GO AROUND TABLE:] Which one did the best job? The second best job? Take a moment and explain why you selected those as your top two? [PROBE: likes, main idea/takeaway]
- b. [GO AROUND TABLE:] Now, let's look at the other side of the coin. Which **TWO** did not speak to you at all? [IF NECESSARY:] Which **TWO** statements were at the bottom of your stack? Please explain why you thought these statements did a bad job.
- c. Were any of the statements confusing to you? Which one(s)? What about them were confusing?

**VII. MILK/MILK PRODUCT SUPPORTING CONTENT (20 minutes)**

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

[SHARE MESSAGES ON CARDS, THEN DISTRIBUTE SUPPORTING CONTENT, NARRATIVE PARAGRAPH/**HANDOUT B**]<sup>5</sup>

First, read these paragraphs written by a mom of a 2-5 year-old. **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. Did it sound realistic? What makes you say that?
- c. What do you think these paragraphs were trying to tell you? What do you think about the ideas the person in these paragraphs talks about? Are they believable? Doable?
- d. Would you try these ideas? Which ones? What makes you say that?

[DISTRIBUTE SUPPORTING CONTENT, REMAINING INFORMATION/**HANDOUT C**]<sup>6</sup> Now I am going to show you more information. Again, this information has been written to go with the

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4 Messages will be developed based upon findings from the formative round of research. When messages are finalized, they will be re-submitted to OMB, prior to testing in February 2011.

5 Handouts and messages will be developed based on findings from the formative round of research. Finalized materials will be re-submitted to OMB prior to testing in February 2011.

6 Handouts will be developed based on findings from the formative round of research. Finalized handouts will be re-submitted to OMB prior to testing in February 2011.

messages you read on the cards. Don't worry about how they look on the pages, for now, just focus on what is written.

I would like for you to 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.

- a. Before we talk about specifics. What did you think of what was written on the pages? [PROBE: Interesting? Informative? Boring?]
- b. [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]
- c. 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]
- d. 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 on each page do you think HAVE to be included? Why did you select those?
- e. Can you think of other tips that you have tried at home that would be helpful for other moms to know? What are they?

### VIII. STRATEGIC WHOLE GRAIN MESSAGES (10 minutes)

1. Now we'll look at a second set of messages about whole grain foods, and we'll do the same sorting exercise as we did with the milk messages. Like last time, please place the card with the statement that you **find to be most convincing** on top. Put the one that does the second-best job underneath that one, and so on and so forth, until you get to the card that did the worst job (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 D**,<sup>7</sup> please write the letters of the cards in the order in which you have stacked them. Then, we'll talk about it.

[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.]

*[Insert Messages]<sup>8</sup>*

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<sup>7</sup> Handouts will be developed based on findings from the formative round of research. Finalized handouts will be re-submitted to OMB prior to testing in February 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Messages will be developed based upon findings from the formative round of research. When messages are finalized, they will be re-submitted to OMB, prior to testing in February 2011.

- a. [GO AROUND TABLE:] Which one did the best job? The second best job? Take a moment and explain why you selected those as your top two? [PROBE: likes, main idea/takeaway]
- b. [GO AROUND TABLE:] Now, let's look at the other side of the coin. Which **TWO** did not speak to you at all? [IF NECESSARY:] Which **TWO** statements were at the bottom of your stack? Please explain why you thought these statements did a bad job.
- c. Were any of the statements confusing to you? Which one(s)? What about them were confusing?

## IX. WHOLE GRAIN SUPPORTING CONTENT (20 minutes)

2. Now we are going to look at some information that has been written to go with the whole grain messages you just read.

[SHARE MESSAGES ON CARDS, THEN DISTRIBUTE SUPPORTING CONTENT, NARRATIVE PARAGRAPH/**HANDOUT E**]<sup>9</sup>

First, read these paragraphs written by a mom of a 2-5 year-old. **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. Did it sound realistic? What makes you say that?
- c. What do you think these paragraphs were trying to tell you? What do you think about the ideas the person in these paragraphs talks about? Are they believable? Doable?
- d. Would you try these ideas? Which ones? What makes you say that?

[DISTRIBUTE SUPPORTING CONTENT, REMAINING INFORMATION/**HANDOUT F**]<sup>10</sup> 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 pages, for now, just focus on what is written.

I would like for you to 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.

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

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<sup>9</sup> Handouts and supporting content will be developed based on findings from the formative round of research. Finalized materials will be re-submitted to OMB prior to testing in February 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Supporting content will be developed based on findings from the formative round of research. Finalized materials will be re-submitted to OMB prior to testing in February 2011.

- g. [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]
- h. 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]
- i. 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 on each page do you think HAVE to be included? Why did you select those?
- j. Can you think of other tips that you have tried at home that would be helpful for other moms to know? What are they?

#### X. FALSE CLOSE (5 minutes)

1. [BRIEF] Throughout this evening, we have talked and read about providing you with ways to assist your 2-5 year-old children to drink more low-fat/fat-free milk and/or eat more milk products, and to eat more whole grain foods. Is there anything we missed? In other words, is there something that would aid you in helping your 2-5 year-old children to do so that we haven't discussed so far? What is it?
2. While I step out of the room for a moment to see if I need to cover any additional information, please answer the questions on **Handout G**.<sup>11</sup> [DISTRIBUTE HANDOUT G] The questions on this handout read, "What is the one thing you would tell a friend if you were going to help him/her help their 2-5 year-old children to drink or eat more low-fat or fat-free milk/milk products?" and "What is the one thing you would tell a friend if you were going to help him/her help their 2-5 year-old children to eat more whole grain foods?"

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

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<sup>11</sup> Handouts will be developed based on findings from the formative round of research. Finalized handouts will be re-submitted to OMB prior to testing in February 2011.