

**Attachment E – Moderator’s Guide for Parent Focus Group  
“MyPlate at Home” Handout**

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Research undertaken to inform the development of nutrition education materials for the  
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### Section I. Getting to know each other (10 minutes)

- Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a researcher from the Michael Cohen Group. What are all of your names \_\_\_\_\_?
- On behalf of Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrient Service, we are conducting an independent evaluation of the MyPlate nutritional lessons that are being taught in your child's school. As part of that evaluation, we are talking to parents and caregivers like you about your thoughts on nutrition. Before we begin I want to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers here -- we just want to know what you think. Whatever your opinion may be, it will be extremely helpful for us to hear it. OK?
- Let's start with some easy ones:(ASK GROUP)
  - o What are your \_\_\_\_\_ grade children's favorite foods?
  - o What are their least favorite foods?
  - o What are their favorite fruits and vegetables?
  - o How often do you prepare meals and snacks for your child? What, if any meals, do they eat away from home (i.e., lunch or breakfast at school)

### Section II. Baseline Understanding of Nutrition (20 minutes)

- Now we're going to talk about nutrition and health, but first let's talk about what that means for you:
  - o What does it mean to be *healthy*? (Note use of "portion")
    - (Probe: how is food choice related to being healthy?)
  - o What does the word *nutrition* mean?
  - o How do you find out about which foods are "*healthy*" or "*nutritious*"?

- (Probe: in other words, where do you go for nutrition or health information?)
- (Probe: how do you use this information?)
- (Probe: how often do you seek out health and nutrition information?)
- o How do your children find out about foods that are *healthy* or *nutritious*?
  - (Probe: From you? School?)
- o Where, or from whom, do you think children *should* get information on health and nutrition?
- o Do you ever talk to your children about health and nutrition?
  - (Probe: What do you talk about?)

### **Section III. General Opinions “MyPlate at Home” Handout (15 minutes)**

- Now we’re going to talk about this “**MyPlate at Home**” handout and its role in shaping children’s nutrition. [DISTRIBUTE COPIES OF HANDOUTS FOR RESPONDENTS’ TO READ.]
  - o What are your first reactions to this handout?
    - (Probe: Is it easy to understand?)
    - (Probe: What stands out when you look at this?)
    - (Probe: Who do you think this is made for?)
  - o Do you think you would use something like this at home?
    - (Probe: How would you use it?)
    - (Probe: Where would you keep something like this?)

## Section VI. Specific Content of the “MyPlate at Home” Handout (40 minutes)

- Now we’re going to talk about the specific information on this handout. Let’s look at each of these tips:

*“Encourage your kids to make half their plate fruits and vegetables”*

- What do you think about this message and the tips below it?
  - (Probe: Is it something that you would agree with? Why or why not?)
  - (Probe: Do you think about portions when preparing your child’s meals?)
  - (Probe: Is this information relevant for your children?)
- Have you ever heard this before?
  - (Probe: Where? From whom?)
- Does this information conflict with anything else that you’ve heard?
  - (Probe: Where did you hear that information?)

*“Offer your school-age kids fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk and yogurt at meals and snacks”*

- What do you think about this message and the tips below it?
  - (Probe: Is it something that you would agree with? Why or why not?)
  - (Probe: Is this information relevant for your elementary school age child?)
- Have you ever heard this before?
  - (Probe: Where? From whom?)
- Does this information conflict with anything else that you’ve heard?
  - (Probe: Where did you hear that information?)

*“Give yourself and those you love the goodness of whole grains”*

- What do you think about this message and the tips below it?
  - (Probe: Is it something that you would agree with? Why or why not?)
  - (Probe: What does it mean for something to be “whole grain”?)

- (Probe: Is this information relevant for your family?)
- Have you ever heard this before?
  - (Probe: Where? From whom?)
- Does this information conflict with anything else that you've heard?
  - (Probe: Where did you hear that information?)

*"Make family time an active time"*

- What do you think about this message and the tips below it?
  - (Probe: Is it something that you would agree with? Why or why not?)
  - (Probe: Is this information relevant for your family?)
- Have you ever heard this before?
  - (Probe: Where? From whom?)
- Does this information conflict with anything else that you've heard?
  - (Probe: Where did you hear that information?)

*"Drink water instead of sugary drinks"*

- What do you think about this message or statement and the tips below it?
  - (Probe: Is it something that you would agree with? Why or why not?)
  - (Probe: Is this information relevant for your family?)
- Have you ever heard this before?
  - (Probe: Where? From whom?)
- Does this information conflict with anything else that you've heard?
  - (Probe: Where did you hear that information?)

*Checklist - Do you find the checklist useful?*

- (Probe: Why or why not?)
- (Probe: Would you use this checklist to help your family take steps to eat healthier?) Why or why not?
- (Probe: How do you feel your child would respond to these changes?)

- Of all of the tips on this sheet, is there one that really stands out to you that you'd like to try at home? Which one?
- How do you feel about the photographs on the handout?
- Your child's school shared this with you as part of a lesson your child received on eating healthy. Do you remember receiving it?
  - o What is the best way for your child's school to share something like this with parents? (Probe: send home paper handout with student, at back to school night, e-mail, on the school website?)

#### **Section IV. Wrap up (5 Minutes)**

Before we wrap up, I want you to take a couple of minutes to ask you if there any information or topics that you think would be important to include that were left out of this handout?

*You have been great and have helped me a lot.*

*Thanks so much for talking with me today!*