

Memorandum

Date: April 2, 2013

To: Julie Wise, OMB Desk Officer, Food and Nutrition Service

Through: Jameela D. Turay, Food and Nutrition Service, Information Clearance Officer; Ruth Brown, OCIO Desk Officer

From: Alicia White, Senior Nutritionist, Child Nutrition Division
USDA – Food and Nutrition Service

Re: Under Approved Generic OMB Clearance No. 0584-0524
Request Approval to Perform Research for Team Nutrition Posters for Elementary and Middle School

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the USDA Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services is requesting approval for formative research under Approved Generic OMB Clearance No. 0584-0524.

This request is to acquire clearance for the testing of poster concepts to support the implementation of healthier school meals and facilitate the adoption of healthy eating habits among children in grades K through 8. This package addresses initial research which will help FNS focus resources on strategies that are most likely to resonate, motivate and appeal to the target audience. Specifically, FNS seeks to conduct focus groups with students in grades 3 through 8 as well as in-depth interviews with district food service directors to gather feedback and inform the development of poster concepts that will effectively encourage healthy eating habits. This package includes final versions of all testing stimuli that will be used during the research as well as a recruitment screener and discussion guides.

A second round of formative research will be submitted later, in a separate package, to test developed posters.

The following information is provided for your review:

1. **Title of Project:** Team Nutrition Posters for Elementary and Middle School
2. **Control Number:** 0584-0524, Expires 4/30/2013
3. **Public affected by this Project:** Individuals/Households and State/Local/Tribal Governments
 - Elementary school students (grades 3-4) who attend a school participating in the National School Lunch Program. One-third of students will also reside in a household whose income falls at or below 185% of the Federal poverty line.
 - Elementary school students (grades 5-6) who attend a school participating in the National School Lunch Program. One-third of students will also reside in a household whose income falls at or below 185% of the Federal poverty line.

- Middle school students (grades 7-8) who attend a school participating in the National School Lunch Program. One-third of students will also reside in a household whose income falls at or below 185% of the Federal poverty line.
- Parents of students will respond to questions on the screener for their children (see previous bullets), and will sign Agreement on Security of Comments (Attachment G) and parental consent (Attachment H) forms.
- District food service directors (grades 3-8) employed by a district with schools participating in the National School Lunch Program. Directors will sign Agreement on Security of Comments for Food Service Directors (Attachment I).

Please refer to the Methodology/Research Design section of this document for further logistical details for each audience. The posters to be developed are for use in the school cafeteria and other places where food is served at school. Due to the setting in which the posters will be utilized and the target audience, all poster content will be in English, thus all focus groups and interviews will be conducted in English.

4. Number of respondents:

Screener*

Audience	Number of Persons - Formative Round (May 2013)
Elementary School Student Participants Grades 3-4	960
Elementary School Parents Grades 3-4	960
Elementary School Student Participants Grades 5-6	960
Elementary School Parents Grades 5-6	960
Middle School Student Participants Grades 7-8	960
Middle School Parents Grades 7-8	960
District Food Service Directors	240
Total	6,000

*Includes non-responders. Generally, for every 12 respondents, 11 will not complete the entire screener (may terminate after introduction or after one of the other questions). For specialized audiences such as food service directors, for every 20 respondents, 19 will not complete the entire screener.

Focus Groups & Interviews**

Audience	Number of groups	Number of participants per group	Total number of participants
<i>Elementary School Student Participants Grades 3-4</i>	8	6	48
<i>Elementary School Student Participants Grades 5-6</i>	8	6	48
<i>Middle School Student Participants Grades 7-8</i>	8	6	48
<i>District Food Service Directors (One-on-one in-depth interviews)</i>	12	1	12
Total	36	N/A	156

**Groups with elementary and middle school students will recruit 10 to seat 6.

5. Time needed per response:

Time Needed Per Screening Questionnaire***

Audience	Time (minutes)	Time (hours)
Elementary School Student Participants Grades 3-4	5	0.08
Elementary School Parents Grades 3-4	10	0.17
Elementary School Student Participants Grades 5-6	5	0.08
Elementary School Parents Grades 5-6	10	0.17
Middle School Student Participants Grades 7-8	5	0.08
Middle School Parents Grades 7-8	10	0.17
District Food Service Directors	10	0.17

***The time per response is an average of the response per respondent. Respondents may be terminated by FNS due to the response to a question or respondent may choose to terminate at any point during the screening (before the first question, after the introduction or at the end of the screener).

Time Needed For Consent Forms

Audience	Time (minutes)	Time (hours)
Parents	5	0.08
District Food Service Directors	5	0.08

Time Needed Per Focus Group or Interview

Audience	Time (minutes)	Time (hours)
Elementary School Student Participants Grades 3-4	60	1
Elementary School Student Participants Grades 5-6	60	1
Middle School Student Participants Grades 7-8	60	1
District Food Service Directors	45	0.75

6. Total Burden Hours on Public:

(a) Affected Public	Respondent Type	(b) Survey Instruments	(c) No. Respondents	(d) Frequency of Responses	(e) Est. Total Annual Responses per Respondent (c x d)	(f) Hours per Response	(g) Total Burden Hours (e x f)
Individuals & Households	Elementary School Participants Grades 3-4	Screener*	960	1	960	0.08	76.8
	Elementary School Participants Grades 3-4	Focus Group	48	1	48	1	48
	Elementary School Parents Grades 3-4	Screener*	960	1	960	0.17	163.2
	Elementary School Parents Grades 5-6	Consent Forms**	48	1	48	0.08	3.84
	Elementary School Participants Grades 5-6	Screener*	960	1	960	0.08	76.8
	Elementary School Participants Grades 5-6	Focus Group	48	1	48	1	48
	Elementary School Parents Grades 5-6	Screener*	960	1	960	0.17	163.2
	Elementary School Parents Grades 5-6	Consent Forms**	48	1	48	0.08	3.84
	Middle School Participants Grades 7-8	Screener*	960	1	960	0.08	76.8
	Middle School Participants Grades 7-8	Focus Group	48	1	48	1	48
	Middle School Parents Grades 7-8	Screener*	960	1	960	0.17	163.2
	Middle School Parents Grades 7-8	Consent Forms**	48	1	48	0.08	3.84
State/Local/ Tribal Government	District Food Service Directors	Screener*	240	1	240	0.17	40.8
	District Food Service Directors	Consent Forms**	12	1	12	0.08	.96
	District Food Service Directors	Focus Group Discussion	12	1	12	0.75	9
TOTAL			6,000		6,312		917.28

*Includes burden for those answering none or part of the questions. See narrative under sections 4 and 5.

**Includes burden for completing an Agreement on Security of Comments (i.e., confidentiality agreement), parental consent form and all handouts.

7. Project Purpose, Methodology and Design:

Background

As authorized under Section 6(a)(3) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 USC 1755(a)(3), the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) provides training and technical assistance for school food service, nutrition education for children and their caregivers, and encourages school and community support for healthy eating and physical activity. These activities are implemented under the Agency's Team Nutrition initiative that is designed to improve children's lifelong eating and physical activity habits by using the principles of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Under the Team Nutrition initiative, FNS is developing posters and suggestions for school-wide nutrition education events that use scientifically based, behaviorally focused, and motivational messages to encourage children to choose and consume fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat or fat-free milk. The new school meal pattern requirements, published on January 26, 2012, require schools to serve meals that include more fruits, vegetables and whole grain rich foods and offer only fat-free and low-fat milk.

The proposed social marketing campaign will include posters and school-based event suggestions to help motivate students to select and try new healthful offerings. Not only will this help foster the development of healthy eating habits, but it can also assist schools in reducing plate waste by increasing student acceptance of these foods.

These posters support Team Nutrition's behavior-oriented strategy of "providing multifaceted, integrated nutrition education for children and their parents" and use the cafeteria (school lunch and breakfast) as a learning environment in which children develop skills in making nutritious food choices from all five food groups for a healthy lifestyle.

While FNS has conducted some previous focus groups with 8- to 10-year-olds regarding fruit and vegetable messages, more research is needed regarding how to encourage these foods (particularly beans, dark green vegetables, and red and orange vegetables) at lunch and breakfast at school. Limited research is available regarding middle school audiences. Additional insights are also needed regarding how to best encourage children to consume low-fat or fat-free milk and whole grains in these settings. FNS has not conducted any recent focus groups with youth on milk and whole grains.

Purpose

The purpose of the proposed research is to gather insight into children's perceptions of healthy foods and feedback on draft poster and message concepts aimed at encouraging healthy eating habits. This formative research will gather input from children as well as district food service directors on the practical use of these posters and how the messages and images on the posters could be used in other ways (e.g., labels of the names of vegetable dishes on the serving line, on school menus, etc.).

The proposed formative research will verify that the developed messages and supporting content are clear, credible, actionable, relevant and useful to the intended audience and ultimately compel them to take action. The results of this formative round of research will guide the refinement of the poster concepts and aid in the development of final posters.

Methodology/Research Design

The tables below outline the research design and the subsequent sections outline the approach in more detail. All student groups will be conducted outside of school hours.

Target Audience	Research Methodology
Elementary School Student Participants Grades 3-4	8 focus groups (48 participants), divided by gender
Elementary School Student Participants Grades 5-6	8 focus groups (48 participants), divided by gender
Middle School Student Participants Grades 7-8	8 focus groups (48 participants), divided by gender
District Food Service Directors	12 one-on-one in-depth interviews

This research will test messages and poster concepts that help motivate children to make healthier food choices within the food service environment in their schools.

In-person focus groups will be the methodology used for research with students. The focus group research design allows for in-depth exploration of key motivations and barriers to action around these topics. Small-group dynamics will help to generate new insights regarding the attitudes and perceptions that influence dietary choices of students who participate in National School Lunch Program.

Given the unique perspectives food service directors provide, it is paramount to include them in this research process. However, there are limited numbers of these individuals in some locations. Therefore, to gather these perspectives and maximize the geographic diversity of these audiences, one-on-one in-depth-interview discussions will be employed.

Focus groups and interviews will be designed to inform the further development and refinement of posters that convey the key messages and supporting content to promote healthier food choices in an engaging way.

The formative research moderator's guides (Attachments C, D and E) will serve as a tool to facilitate the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

The in-person research among students and food service directors will be conducted in four cities across the United States in order to maximize the geographic and ethnic diversity of participants.

Cities	Elementary School Student Participants Grades 3-4	Elementary School Student Participants Grades 5-6	Middle School Student Participants Grades 7-8	District Food Service Directors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Edison, NJ</i> • <i>Los Angeles, CA</i> • <i>Columbus, OH</i> • <i>Memphis, TN</i> 	8 focus groups (2 per city)	8 focus groups (2 per city)	8 focus groups (2 per city)	12 one-on-one in-depth interviews

Design/Sampling Procedures

The sample will include four different audiences as identified above. The groups of elementary and middle school students will consist of children in grades 3 through 8 who are attending a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program. One-third of the student sample will reside in a household whose income falls within 185% of the poverty line. All respondents will be of different families.

To minimize respondent posturing within groups, sessions among students will be segregated by gender.

The sample will also include district food service directors. All food service directors will be employed by a school district that with schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program. All recruits will have been employed in their position for a minimum of six months. These interviews will take place in the same districts where the student mini-groups are scheduled to take place.

The screeners for these sessions are located in Attachments A and B.

Site Selection

The formative sessions, planned for May 2013, will be conducted in four cities – New York City Metro Area (specifically, Edison, New Jersey), Los Angeles, California, Columbus, Ohio and Memphis, Tennessee. The sites for formative research testing were chosen because they represent four geographically different areas of the country (Northeast, West Coast, Mid-West and Southeast) and include both large urban locations, smaller urban locations and suburban areas. These locations were also chosen because market research facilities are available in these cities with access to databases from which a diverse sample of respondents can be recruited. These facilities will recruit from zip codes up to 45 minutes away to help ensure a mix of suburban and urban students.

Recruitment of Participants

FNS will partner with local focus group recruitment facilities in each location to identify and screen potential participants for the testing using a random selection technique from their databases of area residents willing to participate in research. These focus group facilities develop their databases by placing ads in local papers and using community events and local resources to recruit respondents. Then, facilities will call individuals from their databases that are most likely to meet the criteria identified for participation for a specific project. Facilities will obtain specific demographic information on the individuals who agree to participate to make the recruiting process more efficient. For this effort, we are partnering with facilities who have a long track record of quality recruits.

When screening respondents, recruiters will speak with the parent, and then speak with the child who will be participating in the groups. This two-phased screening process will ensure the child qualifies based on the criteria described within this document, has parental permission to participate and is able to articulate their opinions for the purposes of the focus group. The screener (Attachment A) will be used to ascertain that participants are representative of those participating in or eligible for FNS programs.

Parents of participants will receive \$50 as a token of appreciation for their child's participation in the focus group. This level of honorarium is necessary for a number of reasons: (1) the incidence rate for recruiting children's focus groups is significantly lower than that of general consumer focus groups; (2) participation requires both the student and at least one parent to be available and willing to come to the facility at a given time; and (3) beyond agreeing to participate, the incentive must be high enough to motivate parents and their kids to show on the day of the groups.

Food service directors will also be given \$50 as a token of appreciation. This level of honorarium is necessary to help ensure we are able to identify and successfully recruit enough members of this "expert" audience. There are only a handful of qualified individuals in each market, thus limiting the pool from which to recruit and increasing the difficulty of finding the right respondents.

System of Record FNS-8, FNS Studies and Reports, published in the Federal Register on 4/25/1991 at 56 FR 19078, covers personal information collected under this study and identifies safeguards for the information collected.

Focus Group Sessions

Each mini focus group with elementary and middle school students (grades 3-8) will last 60 minutes. Interviews with food service directors will last 45 minutes. In all sessions, a trained moderator will facilitate the discussion as described in the moderator's guides (Attachments C,D and E).

Four themes with two poster concepts per school-level have been developed for testing, for a total of eight posters for elementary school students and eight posters for middle school students. In order to complete the research during the 1-hour session with students and get the depth of feedback needed to inform design revisions, each focus group will evaluate two themes (or four poster concepts) in detail. All posters will be shown to food service directors.

Poster Testing

All posters are available in Attachment F of this package.

Elementary School Students

Theme A – “It’s Launchtime”



Poster Concept A_1



Poster Concept A_2

Theme B – “Colorful in. Powerful out.”



Poster Concept B_1



Poster Concept B_2

Theme C – “Every Day is Tryday”



Poster Concept C_1



Poster Concept C_2

Theme D – “Don’t be Afraid”



Poster Concept D_1

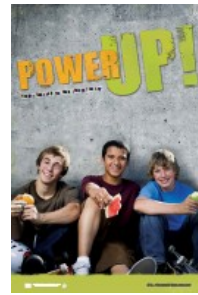


Poster Concept D_2

Middle School Students
Theme A – “Power Up”

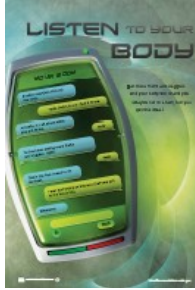


Poster Concept A_1



Poster Concept A_2

Theme B – “Listen to Your Body”

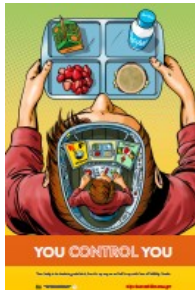


Poster Concept B_1

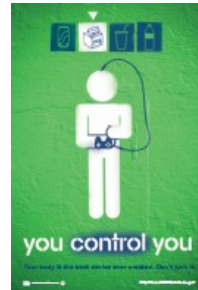


Poster Concept B_2

Theme C – “You Control You”



Poster Concept C_1

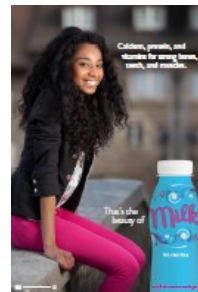


Poster Concept C_2

Theme D – “Milk”



Poster Concept D_1



Poster Concept D_2

Testing Schedule

The following testing schedule, which randomizes the order in which posters are shown, will be used to prevent bias.

3rd & 4th Grade – Elementary School

Group	Poster 1	Poster 2	Poster 3	Poster 4
City 1 – Boys	A_1	A_2	B_1	B_2
City 1 – Girls	C_1	C_2	D_1	D_2
City 2 – Boys	D_1	D_2	C_1	C_2
City 2 – Girls	B_1	B_2	A_1	A_2
City 3 – Boys	B_2	B_1	D_2	D_1
City 3 – Girls	A_2	A_1	C_2	C_1
City 4 – Boys	C_2	C_1	A_2	A_1
City 4 – Girls	D_2	D_1	B_2	B_1

5th & 6th Grade – Elementary School

Group	Poster 1	Poster 2	Poster 3	Poster 4
City 1 – Boys	B_1	B_2	C_1	C_2
City 1 – Girls	A_1	A_2	D_1	D_2
City 2 – Boys	D_2	D_1	A_2	A_1
City 2 – Girls	C_2	C_1	B_2	B_1
City 3 – Boys	C_1	C_2	D_1	D_2
City 3 – Girls	B_2	B_1	A_2	A_1
City 4 – Boys	A_2	A_1	B_2	B_1
City 4 – Girls	D_1	D_2	C_1	C_2

7th & 8th Grade – Middle School

Group	Poster 1	Poster 2	Poster 3	Poster 4
City 1 – Boys	B_2	B_1	A_2	A_1
City 1 – Girls	D_2	D_1	C_2	C_1
City 2 – Boys	D_1	D_2	B_1	B_2
City 2 – Girls	C_1	C_2	A_1	A_2
City 3 – Boys	C_2	C_1	D_2	D_1
City 3 – Girls	A_2	A_1	B_2	B_1
City 4 – Boys	A_1	A_2	C_1	C_2
City 4 – Girls	B_1	B_2	D_1	D_2

Given the above schedule each elementary school poster will be tested a total of eight times – four times with elementary school boys and four times with elementary school girls. Each middle school poster will be tested four times – twice with middle school boys and twice with middle school girls.

Data Analysis

FNS and its research partners will use a mix of group activities and group discussion throughout this information collection to help gather the data necessary to inform the development of posters for this initiative. A trained focus group moderator, professional qualitative analysts observing the research and the FNS team will work together to identify consistencies heard across student focus groups. Specifically, the analysis team will work to create city-specific and grade-specific summaries of the discussions to uncover the similarities and differences in perceptions across geographies and ages. Activities, such as poster evaluations, will be quantified to provide a better sense of what students like and dislike about the posters tested; however, the data from these activities will be regarded as directional in nature and not representative of the larger population.

To further facilitate data analysis, focus groups and interviews will be audio and video recorded and all recordings will be transcribed for the purposes of reporting. Transcripts will be reviewed for recurring themes stated across multiple focus groups and respondents as well as key quotations from respondents that help to summarize key findings. Note that no names will be associated with individual respondents' comments.

Differences across group location and audience will be noted when appropriate, but given the qualitative nature of this research, findings will be considered descriptive and directional. No attempt will be made to generalize the findings to be nationally representative or statistically valid.

Upon the completion of analysis, a final report including a summary of the key themes as well as strategic recommendations for refinements to the poster concepts will be used to guide poster development.

Outcome

The data gathered in this research will help FNS to understand the key messages that are most effective at motivating students to choose healthy foods. These insights will provide FNS with direction on finalizing a poster campaign that will be present in schools. FNS may also decide to publish summary findings of the focus group research either electronically or in print.

8. **Confidentiality:** System of Record FNS-8, FNS Studies and Reports, published in the Federal Register on 4/25/1991 at 56 FR 19078, covers personal information collected under this study and identifies safeguards for the information collected. Participants will be informed of privacy act provisions before the interview.

Parents of elementary and middle school children will sign an Agreement on Security of Comments (Attachment G) ensuring that the participants' names will not be divulged in any focus group reports except as otherwise required by law. They will also sign a parental consent form (Attachment H). Food service directors will also sign an Agreement on Security of Comments (Attachment I). These forms were previously approved by OMB under FNS Core Nutrition Messages Concept Testing ICR Reference No: 200709-0584-003 (OMB control number: 0584-0524).

9. **Federal Costs:** Contract costs, formative research tasks (for elementary and middle school students, parents and school food service managers): \$273,701.28.

10. **Research Tools/Instruments:**

- Attachment A: Screening Questionnaire for Elementary and Middle School Students
- Attachment B: Screening Questionnaire for District Food Service Directors
- Attachment C: Moderator's Guide for Elementary School Students (Grades 3-6)
- Attachment D: Moderator's Guide for Middle School Students (Grades 7-8)
- Attachment E: Moderator's Guide for District Food Service Director Interviews
- Attachment F: Posters to be Test During Research
- Attachment G: Agreement on Security of Comments for Parents of Elementary and Middle School Students (Grades 3-8)
- Attachment H: Parental Consent Form for Parents of Elementary and Middle School Students (Grades 3-8)
- Attachment I: Agreement on Security of Comments for District Food Service Directors