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**Menu Labeling Education Focus Groups  
Appendix II  
Moderator's Guide**

**Introduction (2 minutes)**

Thanks for joining us today. I'm \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm from RTI International. We're a non-profit research organization based in North Carolina. We are conducting research on behalf of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. As part of that research, we are holding discussions around the country about how calorie information on menus will help in making healthier food choices. The purpose of the discussion is to hear your views and opinions on food and eating habits and get your reactions to some informational materials. Your insights are very important to us and your time today is appreciated. We will have about 90 minutes for our discussion.

Before we begin, I want to review a few ground rules for our discussion.

- There are no right or wrong answers in today's discussion. We want to know your honest opinions and experiences.
- We are audio and video recording this conversation so that I can give you my full attention and not have to take a lot of notes. In addition, I have a colleague listening to our conversation to take notes so that your opinions are accurately captured. Some project staff from our research team will be watching the discussions from the video recording. When writing up our findings, we will not include any information that could identify you. Your name, address, and phone number, will not be given to anyone, and no one will contact you about this research after this group is over.
- Everyone's participation is important; we want to hear from everybody.
- It is OK to disagree.
- Please speak up (speak loudly).
- Please speak one at the time so we can hear all the responses – no side conversations.
- Please turn off your cell phones or anything else that may make it difficult to concentrate.
- If at any point you feel uncomfortable with my questions, simply let me know that you prefer not to answer.
- Do you have any questions before we begin?

**Warm-Up (10 min)**

Thanks again for being here. Everyone in the room has something in common - you are all mothers of young children. Let's warm up by going around the room and saying your first name and your child(ren)'s ages and their favorite foods.

### **Motivations for Eating Out/Eating Restaurant Food (20 minutes)**

Great, let's get started. For this discussion, we'll be talking about your experiences at fast-food and other restaurants when you go there with your children (between the ages of 3 and 10).

1. To begin with, what types of establishments do you go to with your children when you eat out?
2. How often do you eat out in fast food restaurants with your children? What are the advantages/disadvantages of eating fast food with your children?
3. Who decides what your child(ren) will order? Do you decide, or help them to choose their food?
  - a. [Adapt depending on whether mothers decide or help child to choose] What kinds of things do you consider when helping your child to choose their food?  
[Probe: to get something the child will enjoy, choosing a meal that will be eaten, to get full, to get nutritional variety, to choose a healthier meal, etc.?]

### **Perceptions about Healthy Foods and Sources of Nutrition Information (15 minutes)**

For the next set of questions, I'm going to ask you about "healthy eating."

4. How do you decide what is "healthy" for your kids to eat when you eat out?
5. What does your child know about healthy eating? Where does he/she typically get this information?
  - a. [IF PARENT GIVES INFO] How do you try to teach your child about healthy eating?
  - b. How does your child respond to information about healthy eating?
  - c. When eating out, who or what has the most influence on how healthy your children's meals are?
6. When eating out, what, if anything, makes it confusing or otherwise difficult for you to decide if a food is healthy for you and your children?
7. Where do you typically get information about eating healthy? [Probe: TV, newspapers, magazines, online, family, other]
  - a. What commercials, ads, or other sources of information about healthy living or healthy eating do you remember most? What specifically made these memorable?
  - b. How, if at all, did these ads/campaigns influence you? What made them effective/what would have made them more effective?
  - c. What types of messages about healthy living or healthy eating are most motivating or inspiring to you personally? [MODERATOR: trying to understand types of messages that successfully motivate adoption or maintenance of healthy eating behaviors over time]
8. When it comes to nutrition information about the foods your kids eat, what are your most trusted sources of information? What makes them a trusted source of this information?

### **Perceptions about Using Calorie Information when Eating Out (15 minutes)**

9. Currently, how do you get nutrition information about meals/foods you order in restaurants? [Probe: Do they look at the menu to see if the menu highlights healthy items? Do the menus display calorie information? Do they ask for additional information from restaurant staff? Do they look up additional information from a website?]
10. How can nutrition information provided by restaurants and other eating establishments be more helpful to you?
11. When eating out, how do you try to encourage your child to make healthier choices? [Probe: By suggesting healthy alternatives? By offering smaller portions? By being a role model for your child? By choosing different side orders, such as apples instead of fries?]
12. What are some challenges/barriers/obstacles to using calorie information to choose meals/foods in the restaurant? [Probe: lack of knowledge about child's calorie needs, lack of time, lack of interest, lack of motivation, picky eating, cost, perceived conflicts between enjoyment vs. healthy eating, etc.]
13. What would make calorie information easier to use when you and your child are eating out?

### **Concept Testing (20 minutes)**

For the final activity, we are going to ask you to look at [insert number so they know what to expect] sample information pieces to get your reactions. [MODERATOR: Hand out concept sheets/display stimuli]

14. Looking at concept X [For each concept, probe:]
  - a. What is your immediate reaction?
  - b. What is the main message? How clear is the message?
  - c. What is this message asking you to do?
  - d. What questions, if any, do you have after seeing it?
  - e. What might you do after seeing this? [Probe: which actions would be easy or hard to do and why, what information or tools that would help people implement the actions suggested in the messages]
  - f. What could be done to make it more persuasive? [Probe: what catches your attention, what makes the concept appealing or unappealing, what feels most inspiring or motivating for you personally]

### **Closing (8 min)**

That's all the questions I have. Do you have any questions for me or any additional feedback that you'd like to provide?

Thank you very much for your time today. Your feedback is very much appreciated.

## Concepts

<b>Concept 1</b>	Peer to peer - Moms like you
<b>Headline</b>	We did it, and so can you!
<b>Body Copy</b>	I worried that my child would not like the healthier options. So we did a fun taste test to try them out, and found a meal that she loves. Now when we grab a quick bite to eat, we both walk away happy.

<b>Concept 2</b>	Happy, healthy children
<b>Headline</b>	I want what's best for my child
<b>Body Copy</b>	Every mom wants happy, healthy children. Choosing healthier options when you go out to eat will not only keep your kids satisfied today but also teach them healthy habits for a lifetime.

<b>Concept 3</b>	Simple swaps - Compare foods
<b>Headline</b>	Now that's a happy meal!
<b>Body Copy</b>	The next time you go out to eat with your child, try a simple swap like grilled chicken for crispy or a single hamburger for a double-cheeseburger. A healthy option that still keeps them full and satisfied. Now that's a happy meal!

<b>Concept 4</b>	Simple swaps - Choose healthy options
<b>Headline</b>	Take the guess work out of healthy choices
<b>Body Copy</b>	If calorie counts aren't adding up for you, try swapping water instead of soda or switching out fries for vegetables. Simple swaps help keep your child's meal under 600 calories and their appetites satisfied.

<b>Concept 5</b>	Shock factor – Children’s calorie needs
<b>Headline</b>	Do you know how much your kids are really eating?
<b>Body Copy</b>	Next time you go to a restaurant, take a look at the calorie numbers next to the items your kids are ordering. Are they bigger than you expected? Have your kids try some of the lower-number items and see if they like them – you may be surprised!