

Memorandum

Date: May 11, 2015

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

Through: Ruth Brown, United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Chief Information Office, Departmental Clearance Officer

From: Lynnette Thomas, Food and Nutrition Service, Branch Chief, Planning & Regulatory Affairs;

Re: Under Approved Generic OMB Clearance No. 0584-0524 Request for Approval to Perform Formative Research for Team Nutrition Educational Materials for Summer Meals

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is requesting approval for formative research under Approved Generic OMB Clearance No. 0584-0524. This request is to acquire clearance to conduct formative research in order to inform the development of Team Nutrition Educational Materials for the Summer Food Service Program and National School Lunch Program. The following information is provided for your review:

1. **Title of the Project:** Team Nutrition Educational Materials for Summer Meals
2. **Control Number:** 0584-0524, Expires 06/30/2016
3. **Public Affected by this Project:** Individuals/Households
 - Low-income parents/caregivers (parents) with at least one child 5-17 years old who reside in households whose income falls at or below 185% of the poverty line.

See section 7, *Project Purpose, Methodology & Formative Research Design* for a description of the number of parent participants by site and language status (English- and Spanish-speaking) and research methodology (focus groups).

4. Number of Respondents:

Table 4.1 - Number Parent Screeners*

Audience	Number of Parents
Parents of children ages 5-8	3,840
Parents of children ages 9-12	3,840
Parents of children ages 13-17	1,920
Total	9,600

*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).

Table 4.2 - Parent Focus Group Participants**

Age Group	English Language FGIs (# of Parents)	Spanish Language FGIs (# of Parents)	Total # of Parents
Ages 5-8	2 (n = 12)	2 (n = 12)	24
Ages 9-12	2 (n = 12)	2 (n = 12)	24
Ages 13-17	1 (n = 6)	1 (n = 6)	12
Total	5 (n = 30)	5 (n = 30)	60

**Groups will recruit 8 to seat 6 parents.

5. Time Needed Per Response:

Table 5.1 - Time Needed per Research Component

Audience (total number)	Research Activity	Time (minutes)	Time (hours)
Parents of children age 5-17 (n=9,600)	Screener***	5	.08
Parents of children age 5-17 (n=80)	Consent Form	15	.25
Parents of children age 5-17 (n=60)	Focus Group Interview	90	1.5

***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).

6. Total Burden Hours on Public:

Table 6.1: Total Burden Hours of Public

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	
Affected Public	Respondent Type	Survey Instruments	No. Respondents	Frequency of Response	Est. Total Annual Responses per Respondent (c x d)	Hours per Response	Total Burden Hours (e x f)
Individuals & Households	Parents/ Caregivers of children ages 5-17	Screeners*	9,600	1	9600	0.08	800
	Parents/ Caregivers of children ages 5-17	Consent Forms	80	1	80	0.25	20
	Parents/ Caregivers of children ages 5-17	Focus Groups	60	1	60	1.50	90
Total			9600	1.01	9740	.09	910

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

7. Project Purpose, Methodology, and Formative Research Design:

Background

As authorized under Section 6(a)(3) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 USC 1755(a)(3), the US 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 an informational graphic (**Infographic**) and pamphlet targeted to parents (**Parent Handout**), to increase awareness of the importance of healthy food choices and physical activity during the summer months and the availability of summer meal programs offered under the Summer Food Service Program and Seamless Summer Option of the National School Lunch program. These materials support Team Nutrition’s behavior-oriented strategy of “providing multifaceted, integrated nutrition education for children and their parents.”

Purpose

The purpose of the proposed research is to gather insight into parent’s perceptions and practices regarding child feeding and physical activity when their child(ren) are out of school during the summer. It will also provide information about parent’s attitudes and beliefs

regarding summer meal programs and obtain feedback on draft parent communication tools (the parent handout and infographic) that are designed to motivate parents to provide their children with healthful food choices and opportunities for physical activity during the summer months.

The proposed research will verify that the developed messages and informational graphics are clear, credible, actionable, relevant and useful to the intended audience and ultimately compel them to take action. The results of this research combined guide revisions and further development of these communications tools.

Methodology/Research Design

Ten focus groups interviews (FGIs) will be conducted across two cities in separate FNS regions: Fort Lee, New Jersey (Mid-Atlantic Region) and Kansas City, Missouri (Mountain Plains Region). FGIs will be segmented by parent’s primary language and child’s age as follows:

Table 7.1 - Parent Focus Group Participants

Age of Participant’s Child(ren)	English Language FGIs (# of Parents)	Spanish Language FGIs (# of Parents)	Total # of Parents
New Jersey			
Ages 5-8	1 (n = 6)	1 (n = 6)	12
Ages 9-12	1 (n = 6)	1 (n = 6)	12
Ages 13-17	-	1 (n = 6)	6
Kansas City, Missouri			
Ages 5-8	1 (n = 6)	1 (n = 6)	12
Ages 9-12	1 (n = 6)	1 (n = 6)	12
Ages 13-17	1 (n = 6)	-	6
Total	5 (n = 30)	5 (n = 30)	60

Parent focus groups are segmented by the age(s) of the parent/caregivers’ children as parent/caregiver concerns about health and wellness topics and relevant strategies may differ depending upon the age of their child(ren). This segmentation oversamples parents of children ages 6-11 since children within this age range tend to frequent summer meal programs more often. Children’s age and parents’ primary language will be identified in the screener (see Attachment A). If participating parents have children from multiple age ranges, they will be instructed to consider only the children in the age range that corresponds to the focus group when responding to questions.

Focus groups will be 90 minutes in duration, and will include:

- A general discussion about nutrition and physical activity;
- Previous experience with and misconceptions about SFSP or similar programs;
- Parents’ responses to the draft Infographic and Parent Handout.

Trained moderators will conduct all FGIs using semi-structured interview guidelines (see Attachment C) and an open-ended approach, giving the moderator freedom to spontaneously reword questions, establish rapport, and prod areas of conversation that are salient for the participants (e.g. Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). A fluent Spanish speaker will conduct all Spanish-language focus groups interviews.

During the FGI, parents will also complete a worksheet (see Attachment D) after viewing the draft parent handout (see Attachment E) and infographic (see Attachment F) to provide specific feedback about clarity and relevance.

Discussions will be recorded and transcribed, and will become the data for further analysis. Codes, representing new insights and relevant opinions, will be identified by multiple trained coders using inductive thematic analysis (e.g. Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012) and discussed in qualitative debriefing sessions.

Design/Sampling Procedures

The sample will include two primary audiences: English- and Spanish-speaking parents. All participants will be from households whose income is less than 185% of the federal poverty rate, adjusted for household size (see Table 7.2). Parents participating in FGIs will reflect the national distribution of racial/ethnic diversity of US low-income families (i.e. households at less than 185% of the federal poverty rate). Qualifying parents will be those who have children between the ages of 5-17. Only one parent per child will be allowed to participate in FGIs.

Table 7.2 - Poverty Threshold Adjusted for Household Size¹

Household Size	Maximum Annual Household Income
1	\$21,589.00
2	\$29,100.00
3	\$36,611.00
4	\$44,122.00
5	\$51,633.00
6	\$59,144.00
7	\$66,655.00
8	\$74,166.00

¹ Adapted from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2014-04788.pdf>, FNS, 2014

Site Selection

Research will take place in two locations: Fort Lee, New Jersey and Kansas City, Missouri. These locations were chosen because research facilities are available in these cities with access to databases from which a diverse sample of respondents can be recruited. They provide representation from two geographically different areas of the country. These facilities will recruit from zip codes up to 45 minutes away to help ensure a mix of suburban and urban parents.

Recruitment

FNS will partner with a local focus group facility (Fieldwork) in each location to identify and screen potential participants using a random selection technique from their databases of area residents willing to participate in research. The recruiter maintains and updates a database of individuals with and without prior research experience, recruited through email, social networking campaigns, local fairs and events, and word-of-mouth. The facility will call individuals from their databases most likely to meet the criteria for participation in this research and complete the screener (see Attachment A). The questions on the screener will be used to guarantee the groups represent racial/ethnic and socio-economic diversity and identify English- and Spanish-speaking parents.

Participants that meet the screening criteria will be provided with a consent form (see Attachment B) that includes detailed study information. Signed consent will be required for participation.

Incentive

Parent/caregiver focus group participants will be given a \$50 incentive upon completion of the FGI. The selection of this amount comes from past experience of the evaluators in the recruitment of a low socio-economic group and can help ensure adequate representation of participants (Groth, 2010). Specifically, participation in focus groups often requires parents to obtain childcare and/or cover transportation costs, which can be prohibitively expensive for low-income families. The monetary incentive of \$50 was selected to offset these potential costs to participants (See Attachment G, Incentive Justification, for further details).

Consent

Consent forms for parents (see Attachment B) will be obtained during the recruitment process. These forms are modeled after those previously approved by OMB under "Formative Research About FNS Curriculum Messages for 5th and 6th Grades (control number: 0584-0523, ICR 201207-0584-007), with the only modifications reflecting the content of the focus groups. Parent consent materials will be made available in Spanish for Spanish-speaking parents. Focus group respondents will be informed that the sessions are recorded.

The following measures will be taken to keep information secure: 1) full names will never be used on any focus group materials; 2) transcripts and reports will not contain any personally identifying information and will be stored on a password-protected server; and 3) direct quotes

that appear in final reports will not be attributed to any individual. All analyses will be conducted and reported in the aggregate.

Data Analysis

Parent focus groups will be audio- or videorecorded, and information gathered will inform the development of the Infographic and Parent Handout. Codes, representing new insights and relevant opinions, will be identified by multiple trained coders using inductive thematic analysis (e.g. Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012) and discussed in qualitative debriefing sessions. Differences will be assessed across groups, locations, and audiences will be noted as appropriate. Findings will be considered descriptive and directional, but not definitive. No attempt will be made to generalize findings as nationally representative or statistically valid.

Outcomes/Findings

Information and formative input gathered from specific target audiences through the research will help identify messages and content that is most effective at motivating the target audience to take action. FNS may decide to publish summary research findings either electronically or in print, but such documents will not include information that personally identifies any of the research participants.

8. Confidentiality:

Using the *Agreement on Security of Comments Form* participants will be informed of confidentiality and privacy act provisions before responding to the screener. Participants' names will not be divulged in any focus group reports except as otherwise required by law. 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.

9. Federal Costs: \$63,413.68

10. Research Tools/Instruments:

- Attachment A: Screener for Parents/Caregivers (English and Spanish)
- Attachment B: Consent Form for Parents/Caregivers (English and Spanish)
- Attachment C: Moderator's Guide for Parent/Caregiver Focus Groups (English and Spanish)
- Attachment D: Worksheet for Parent/Caregiver Focus Groups (English and Spanish)
- Attachment E: Parent Handout (English and Spanish)
- Attachment F: Infographic (English and Spanish)
- Attachment G: Incentive Justification