

**Welcome to Core Nutrition Message Webinar**



**Helping  
Elementary-  
School Age  
Kids and  
Moms Make  
Healthier  
Food  
Choices**

**Sponsors:**

**Cooperative State Research Education & Extension Service  
Food and Nutrition Service**

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Office of Research and Analysis

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Nutritionist,  
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service  
Special Supplemental Food Programs Division  
(WIC)

**Hosts & Speakers**

#### Greetings

I am Helen Chipman your moderator for today's session. I am also National Program Leader Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES) USDA Families, 4-H and Nutrition Unit.

Let me start by introducing my co-hosts and speakers. I will keep this very brief, but the session overview provides more background information about speakers that you can review later.

The co-host today is:

Judy F. Wilson RD, MSPH  
Senior Nutrition Advisor  
Food and Nutrition Service  
Office of Research and Analysis  
and

Alicia White, RD, MS  
Nutritionist,  
Food and Nutrition Service  
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program Division (WIC)

Judy and Alicia were directly involved in developing the core nutrition messages. Judy created and obtained funding for this project and Alicia served as the project officer.

## Learning Objectives

- Communicate the rationale and describe the approach used in creating the core nutrition messages and supporting content.
- Use the messages and supporting content in theory-based nutrition education interventions and communications targeting mothers of elementary school children and children ages 8-10 years.
- Apply lessons learned from the focus group research to improve nutrition communications with low-income mothers and kids.
- Share and use the messages in collaborative activities.



After this session we want you to be able to:

Communicate the rationale for and describe the audience-centered approach used in creating the messages and supporting content.

Use the core nutrition messages and supporting content in theory-based nutrition education interventions and nutrition communication targeting mothers of elementary school children and children ages 8-10 years.

Apply lessons learned from the focus group research to improve nutrition promotion and communication activities for low-income mothers and kids.

Share and use the messages in your partnerships and collaboration activities to increase the Power of our joint efforts by communicating consistent messages.

Judy Wilson will now begin the discussion on today's topic.



**FNS Core Nutrition** *Messages*

Helping Elementary-School Kids and Moms Make Healthier Food Choices

## Overview & Background



**Speaker:**  
*Judy F. Wilson, RD, MSPH*  
**Senior Nutrition Advisor**  
**Food and Nutrition Service**  
**Office of Research and Evaluation**



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Thank you Helen. My thanks to all of you for joining us today and thanks to our colleagues at CSREES, for managing the technical arrangements and helping us to expand it so that we could reach more of you today.

## Overview of Today's Session



Maximizing the Message:  
Helping Moms and Kids Make Healthier Food Choices

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service



- Overview/Background of Core Message Initiative
- Message Development
- Picking Outlets for Messages
- Ways to Put the Messages into Practice
- Tour of the Web Pages
- Next Steps

Our session today is **“Helping Elementary-School Age Kids & Moms make Healthier Food Choices.”** I will start by providing an Overview of Core Message Initiative

- Background Information
- Why do we need the messages
- Behavior Outcomes, Audience
- Message Concepts

Alicia White will discuss Message development and testing including what we learned from moms in the focus groups with mothers of elementary-school age kids and kids 8-10 years old.

- She will also touch on communication channels and outlets for Helen will lead the discussion ways to Put the Messages into Practice-from our perspective and then we want to hear from you:
- We will take a Tour of the Web Pages so you know where to find products
- Touch on Next Steps
- and wrap up with a few reminders by 3:25.

# WHAT ARE THE FNS CORE NUTRITION MESSAGES?

*...actions designed to assist mothers and children in adopting specific diet-related behaviors*



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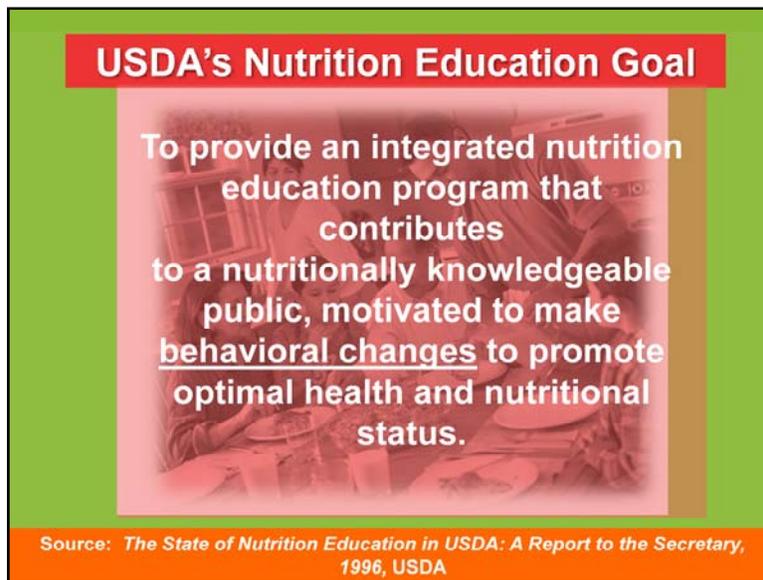
*The Core Messages are nutrition communication tools- they convey actions designed to assist low-income mothers and children in making specific diet related changes.*

*These message have been consumer tested for clarity and relevance.*

It is important to understand the Core Messages are not a campaign, intervention, or education materials, rather they are tools that nutrition educators in USDA programs can use to **develop** and **enhance** nutrition education activities and communication resources. We encourage you to use the messages as part of comprehensive and multi-level, interventions.



Now lets look at why we developed the messages.



There are many common links between the federal nutrition programs beginning with the **USDA's Nutrition Education Goal** which is "to provide an integrated nutrition education program that contributes to a nutritionally knowledgeable public, motivated to make behavioral changes to promote optimal health and nutritional status."

2. We also share the common USDA strategic goal "**Improving the Nation's Nutrition and Health.**"
3. We serve many of the same people and communities.

# Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs

*Reach 1 in 5 Americans*



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Each year, the federal nutrition assistance programs reach 1 in 5 Americans and the numbers are growing.

As such, our programs provide an excellent opportunity to reach children and low income people in ways that motivate and assist them in putting dietary guidance into practice.

## Core Messages

*Allow us to make a bigger impact together!*

- Core messages and related tips are consumer tested
- Accurate, easy-to-read & relevant
- Support nutrition education priorities and policies
- Approved by DHHS/USDA DGWG
- Support national and USDA goals (HP2010)

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Many states do not have the funding or staff to develop and test messages because it is a time consuming and expensive process.

The core messages help to bridge that gap, by providing educators with consumer tested messages and supporting content that are personally relevant, doable and resonate with the target audience.

The messages can help consumers take small steps to put the DGA and MyPyramid into action. The messages:

- ✦ Support Program-based nutrition education and policies
- ✦ Have been approved by the joint USDA/DHHS Dietary Guidelines Working Group
- ✦ Support material and USDA goals as well as priorities of the Agencies

## Core Nutrition Messages

- Helps Nutrition educators “Speak with one Voice.”
- Maximize Message Impact
- Promote Consistent Behaviors
- Deliver more comprehensive interventions that have greater reach and intensity
- Connect multiple programs



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Together, the USDA Nutrition Assistance Programs spent over \$750 M in 2008.

States contributed millions more.

Over the past 5 years, FNS has worked to advance more collaborative and integrated NE across the nutrition programs. The core messages support these efforts and help us to “Speak with one Voice.”

We reach millions of low-income people each year – and together we can increase the visibility and repetition of our messages and **maximize our impact** when we deliver **consistent, accurate, and consumer-tested messages** as part of science-based interventions and educational programs. This also helps us to connect what we do for consumers.



The target audience for the messages are:

Low-income moms of Preschool children.

- The group we covered last week
- Moms of Elementary school kids & kids 8-10 years.

### **So, why did we select these audiences?**

1. These audiences are served by most nutrition assistance programs. The NIH Pink Book-Making Health Communication Programs Work, emphasizes the need to select an audience that is large enough that changing their behavior make a contribution to your goal.
2. Mothers and children are the **largest group reached** by these programs. Over 3.7 women 18-50 in SNAP household w/kids 3-10 year old; 2.2 WIC Moms, and over 23 M kids 6-11 in NSLP.
3. Parents are key role models for kids and mothers are still the primary gatekeepers of foods eaten at home and key caregivers of kids.
4. When all of our programs communicate the core messages we can reach more moms and kids, reach them more often, and in more locations with consistent and reinforcing messages that increase our ability to “make a difference.”

Communication research also emphasizes the importance of segmenting your target group in order to create messages and strategies that are attuned to the needs and wants of the intended group.

## Key Behaviors Addressed

- Moms and kids eat recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables
- Moms eat and prepare foods with their 2-5 yrs old kids more often.
- Moms allow their 2-5 yrs olds to decide whether and how much to eat
- Kids consume recommended amounts of milk & milk products, selecting primarily low- and fat-free options.



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We used a collaborative process in developing the messages that involved both internal and external nutrition and communications experts from both federal and State levels and academia. Alicia will discuss this in more detail later.

This workgroup helped to select the target audience as well as the key behaviors based in part on:

- National priorities and research findings about modifiable social and personal characteristics.
- What is reasonable and realistic to achieve with the selected target audience.
- Whether the audience would benefit the messages-that is are they already engaged in the behavior and if not , are there significant health benefits related to the behaviors.

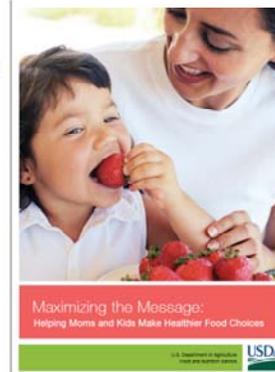
We know that milk intake among all children has dropped significantly and that fruit and vegetable intake is far below the national goal for all groups including low –income populations.

# FNS Core Nutrition *Messages: The Products*

## Guidebook

### Maximizing the Message: Helping Moms and Kids Make Healthier Food Choices

- 16 Core Messages
  - 7 for moms of preschoolers
  - 4 for moms of 6-10 yr old kids
  - 5 for 8-10 yrs old kids
- Supporting Content on 3 Topics
- Research Findings
- Implementation & Evaluation Guidance



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Maximizing the Message, is a guidebook for nutritionists and other health communication professionals. It presents the core nutrition messages and supporting content. Inside this guide, you will find background information, a brief summary of the developmental process and research findings, as well as suggestions and tips for putting the core messages into practice. It also discusses potential communication channels and evaluation.

It contains the:

- 16 Core Messages
- Supporting Content
- Summary of Research
- Evaluation Guidance

## About the Supporting Content...

- Narratives (Mom Stories), Bulleted Tips, and Recipes
- Topics:
  - Role Modeling
  - Cooking and Eating Together
  - Making Fruits and Vegetables Available and Accessible at Home
- Can be used in print materials, for classroom discussions, in anticipatory guidance and more.



Supporting Content includes encouragement to facilitate behavior change. Content is provided in various forms, such as a narrative story by a mother, recipes and short bulleted lists.

This content reflects language that resonated with mothers during our focus group testing. See “Putting the Messages Into Practice” (page 16 of the guide) for ideas on how to incorporate the messages and supporting content into your nutrition education activities.

# Messages for Mothers of Preschoolers

## Messages Concepts:

- Role Modeling-Eating Fruits and Vegetables
- Cooking and Eating Together
- Division of Feeding Responsibility
  - Letting Children Serve Themselves
  - Offering New Foods



# Messages for Mothers of Elementary School Age Children

## Availability and Accessibility

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Low-fat/Fat-free Milk



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## Messages for 8 to 10 Year Old Children

Promote

Consumption of:

- Fruits and Vegetables
- Low-fat/Fat-free Milk



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Messages for moms and kids are complimentary and reinforcing.

## FNS Core Nutrition Messages

- ✿ Focus on behavioral outcomes
- ✿ Have associated content appropriate for multiple communication methods
- ✿ Resonate with and appeal to the target audience
- ✿ Reflect and amplify the current DGA
- ✿ Have applications across FNS programs



motivational behaviorally focused  
consistent  
relevant compelling  
repeated often attention-getting  
multiple channels



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**In summary, the core messages:**

- Focus on behavioral outcomes
- Have associated content appropriate for multiple communication methods
- Resonate and were tested with the target audience
- Where cleared through the Federal DGWG process
- Have applications across FNS programs and come with a “USERS Guide.”

The research and testing involved in the development of these messages have also provided us valuable insight into **how to reach program participants in a way that is motivating and compelling.**

Alicia White will now talk about the developmental process, findings from the focus groups, how we used the findings to develop the message, and implications of the findings to nutrition practice.