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# Appendix A:

## Overview of Core Nutrition Messages and Supporting Content

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) core nutrition messages are designed to help program educators “speak with one voice” by communicating consistent messages that align with the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) and MyPlate. These messages use science-based approaches to help the target audience adopt healthy eating behaviors. The nutrition messages and related tips use evidence-based strategies that address barriers, improve skills, and increase self-efficacy for healthy eating. All of the materials, including the 29 messages, supporting tips and advice, photos, and sample communication tools, were tested with the target audience — low-income moms of 2-10 year olds and kids aged 8-10 years old. These resources focus on increasing consumption of low-fat milk (1% or less fat), whole grains, and fruits and vegetables among the target audience and promoting child feeding practices that foster healthy eating habits in young children.

The supporting content for each of the behaviors includes communication approaches that appeal to the audiences, such as:

- guidance in narrative, motivational mom-to-mom stories
- short bulleted lists of actionable tips
- questions and answers
- advice from trusted sources
- recipes
- interactive skill assessment tools
- fun, fantasy, challenges, and interactive activities to capture kids' attention

Both the messages and the supporting materials include the tested images. The photos and images help lure readers to the text, inspire them to read the information, and help them to visualize the benefits and see others implementing the behaviors. For information about the images, contact us at **NutritionMessages@fns.usda.gov**. These resources also reflect the tone, strategies, and language that resonated with mothers and kids during focus-group testing.

Nutritionists and other educators can use these messages to convey nutrition guidance on these topics in ways that moms comprehend and find relevant and motivating. For example, use the messages to help frame advice during educational and counseling sessions. Create new educational resources by combining a message with a few relevant tips or a moms' story to create attention-getting pamphlets, fact sheets, posters, bulletin boards, audiovisual and electronic tools, or digital presentations. Appendix D contains several tools FNS developed using some of the messages and supporting content, but there are many other ways you can use these resources to jump-start development of new resources for your audience. See the “Putting the Messages Into Practice” section of this guide for ideas on how to incorporate the messages and supporting content into your nutrition education activities and use them to inspire your audience. You can find additional ideas and samples of resources that States have developed using these messages in the Spotlight section at **<http://www.fns.usda.gov/core-nutrition>**.

# Appendix B:

## Messages and Supporting Content for Mothers

# Fruits and Vegetables Messages With Supporting Tips, Advice, and Guidance

Motivate mothers to make half their plates fruits and vegetables and help their kids do so too. Use the messages, tips, guidance, and photos to emphasize the importance of role modeling, keeping fruits and veggies accessible, and involving kids in food selection and preparation.



**Make half your plate  
fruits and vegetables.**

### Messages for Moms of Preschool Kids



**Let your kids be  
produce pickers.**  
Help them pick  
fruits and veggies



**They learn from  
watching you.**  
Eat fruits and  
veggies and your  
kids will too.

### Messages for Moms of Elementary School age Kids



**Want your kids to  
reach for a healthy  
snack?** Make sure  
fruits and veggies are  
in reach.



When they come home  
hungry, have fruits and  
veggies ready to eat.



**They take their lead  
from you.** Eat fruits  
and veggies and your  
kids will too.

## Supporting Content for Fruits and Vegetables

The tips, advice, and guidance provided below are shown with suggested messages. However, most of these materials can complement other fruits and vegetables messages as well. Use the approaches (stories, Q & A, and/or tips) that are most effective for your audience. See <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Files/Spotlight.pdf> for examples of materials and resources.

### Message:

They learn from watching you. Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.



### One Mom's Story:

My 3-year-old picks up on so much. She loves to copy what I do. Sometimes she will ask for a food she saw me eat. And I didn't even know she was watching me! So, I try to eat fruits and vegetables. That way she'll want them too. My doctor told me that kids learn eating habits when they are young. I want my child to learn to eat fruits and vegetables so she'll be healthy. It makes me feel good that I'm teaching her something she'll use for life.



### How can I help my child eat more fruits and vegetables?

- Eat together. Let your child see you enjoying fruits and vegetables at meals and snacks.
- Take it with you. Show your child how whole fruit is a great snack to eat at the park or in the shopping mall. Put apples, oranges, or bananas in your bag for quick snacks.
- Share the adventure. Try new fruits and vegetables together.
- Fix them together. Teach your child to tear lettuce or add veggie toppings to pizza.



### What kinds should we eat?

- Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables are all smart choices. Buy some of each to last until your next shopping trip.
- Frozen vegetables have as many vitamins and minerals as fresh. Choose packages that contain vegetables — and nothing else — no added fat, salt, or sugars.
- Buy canned fruits that are packed in “100% juice” or water.
- Rinse canned beans and vegetables with cold water to make them lower in salt
- Look for canned vegetables that say “No added salt” on the front of the can. Buy them when they go on sale.
- Cooked vegetables or ripe fruits that are cut into small pieces are easy for your child to eat.



### Message:

Let your kids be produce pickers. Help them pick fruits and veggies at the store.

### Helpful Tips

#### Q. How can I get my child to help with choosing fruits and vegetables?

##### A. Try some of these ideas:

- Before going to the market, look over the store flyer together. Ask them to pick out which fruits and vegetables to buy.
- Use games about fruits and vegetables to get kids excited about selecting them at the store.
- For example: Challenge your child to see how many colors he or she can include in fruit and vegetable choices. Different colors contain different nutrients. A mix of colors gives them the different vitamins and minerals they need to stay healthy.
- Encourage your child to choose from various forms of fruits and vegetables – canned, frozen, and fresh. They all contain important vitamins and minerals. Plus, canned and frozen forms last longer. Buy canned veggies without added salt and canned fruits without added sugar or packed in 100% fruit juice.
- Ask your kids to pick a fruit or **vegetable** for a snack or **dessert**.





### **One Mom's Story:**

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#### **Eating a Rainbow**

I know kids need a variety of foods to stay healthy, and I recently learned that eating different colored fruits and vegetables provides a wider variety of the nutrients we need. So, as a fun activity, when I take my kids to the farmers' market or grocery store, I ask each of them to pick out a different colored fruit or vegetable. They're more likely to try something new when they choose it themselves. And the more colors they try, the more nutrients they're likely to get. That's the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow!

### **Message:**

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When they come home hungry, have fruits and veggies ready to eat.



### **One Mom's Story:**

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#### **Healthy Snacks for Hungry Kids**

"I'm hungry." That's the first thing my kids say when they come through the door. I need something to feed them—fast. Sometimes they go to the kitchen and get their own snacks. I found that when I put fruits and vegetables in a place where my kids can see them, they eat them. Now I keep cut-up veggies on a low shelf in the fridge and a bowl of fresh fruit on the counter. When I don't have fresh fruits and veggies, I use canned or frozen. It takes a little planning, but it's worth it. I know fruits and vegetables help them stay healthy.

#### **Keep Fruits and Veggies Where They're Easy To See**

- Keep a bowl of washed fresh fruits on the kitchen table.
- Put washed and cut fruits and vegetables on a shelf in your refrigerator where your child can see them.

#### **Make-Ahead Fruit and Veggie Snacks From the Fridge**

- Toss veggies with cooked pasta and fat-free Italian dressing.
- Slice apples. Dip them in pineapple or orange juice to keep them from turning brown. Store apples in plastic snack bags or covered bowls in the fridge.
- Kids love to dip fresh veggies in low-fat ranch dressing. Cut up veggies. Store them near the dip on a low shelf in the fridge.

## Message:

Want your kids to reach for a healthy snack? Make sure fruits and veggies are in reach.

## Easy Recipes Moms and Kids Love!



### Dip-a-licious!

#### Fruit Wands With Pink Princess Dip or “Swamp Slime”

Put pieces of fruit on a toothpick, skewer, or straw.

Cover with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator until snack time.

Serve with low-fat strawberry (Princess Dip) or lime yogurt (Swamp Slime) for dipping.

### Happy Snack Packs

Fill small containers or snack bags with cut-up veggies.

Add a small container of fat-free ranch dressing for dipping.

Decorate the outside of the bags with stickers. Store in the refrigerator on a shelf where they are easy for your child to see.



### Dip Your Favorite Veggies in These Tasty Dips

(1 serving is 2 tablespoons of dip)

#### Honey-Mustard Dipping Sauce

1/4 cup fat-free plain yogurt

1/4 cup low-fat sour cream

2 teaspoons honey

2 teaspoons spicy brown mustard

Mix all ingredients together. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator.

Makes 4 servings.

#### Curry Dip

1 cup fat-free sour cream

1 cup fat-free plain yogurt

1 tablespoon curry powder

Mix all ingredients together. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator. Makes 16 servings.



#### Avocado Dip

2 medium ripe avocados

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1/4 cup salsa

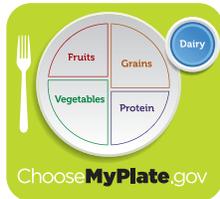
1/8 teaspoon salt

Peel and chop avocados. Toss avocado with lemon juice in small bowl. Add salsa and salt. Mash with a fork.

Cover and store in the refrigerator. Makes 12 servings.

# Milk Messages With Supporting Tips, Advice, and Guidance

Use the messages, tips, guidance, and photos to capture the attention of moms and motivate them to make the “switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk” and other low-fat dairy foods and serve them as part of family meals and snacks.



**Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.**

## Messages for Moms of Preschool Kids



**There's no power like Mom Power.** You are a positive influence in your children's lives. Help them develop healthy eating habits for life. Offer them fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk and yogurt at meals and snacks.

*Note: This message is also for mothers of elementary school aged kids, who also found it engaging and relevant.*



**Mom is a child's first teacher.** You teach by doing. Every time you drink fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk, or eat low-fat yogurt, you're giving your kids a lesson in how to eat for better health. It's a lesson they can use for all their lives.



**Strong bodies need strong bones.** Give your preschooler fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk or yogurt at meals and snacks. They're packed with vitamins, minerals, and protein for strong, healthy bones.

## Messages for Moms of Elementary School Kids

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**Milk Matters.** Children of every age, and adults too, need the calcium, protein, and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth, and muscles. Serve fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk or yogurt at meals and snacks.



**They're still growing.** Help your kids grow strong. Serve fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk at meals.

## Supporting Content for Milk Messages

The tips, advice, and guidance provided below are shown with suggested messages. However, most of these materials can complement other milk messages as well. Use the approaches (stories, Q & A and/or tips) that are most effective for your audience. See <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Files/WholeGrainsSpotlight.pdf> for examples of materials and resources.

### Message:

**There's no power like Mom power.** You are a positive influence in your children's lives. Help them develop healthy eating habits for life. Offer them fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk and yogurt at meals and snacks.



### One Mom's Story:

#### Using "Mom Power" for Good

As a mom, it's my job to make sure my family gets the foods they need every day – like milk. That's why I serve fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk to my kids. I also keep low-fat or fat-free yogurt and cheese in the house for healthy snacks. This helps my kids eat better, develop healthy habits, and grow strong.



When it comes to keeping it fun, here are some ideas that work for us:

- **Keep fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk in the refrigerator for snacks.** A frosty glass of milk tastes great and is an easy way to refuel kids after play.
- **Make it special:** On cold days, we enjoy hot milk with cinnamon and a touch of vanilla extract.
- **Prepare snacks and meals together:** Once a week, the kids and I make smoothies. We blend together low-fat (1%) milk, their favorite fruits or 100% fruit juice, and fat-free yogurt.
- **Mix milk, cheese, and yogurt with other foods.** I put plain fat-free yogurt on baked potatoes. It tastes like sour cream and my kids don't know the difference. When I make oatmeal, I use low-fat (1%) milk instead of water for great taste and nutrition. Occasionally, I sprinkle low-fat cheese on foods like chicken, whole-grain noodles, and vegetables.

**Message:**

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**Milk matters.** Children of every age, and adults too, need the calcium, protein, and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth, and muscles. Serve fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk or yogurt at meals and snacks.

**Moms often ask:**

**Q. How much milk does my family need each day?**

**A: The amount of milk we need each day depends on age.**

Younger kids need 2 cups, while older kids and adults need 3 cups. Here are daily recommendations by age:



<b>Age</b>	<b>Daily Amount Recommended</b>
Children ages 2-3	2 cups
Children ages 4-8	2 ½ cups
Kids ages 9-18	3 cups
Adults	3 cups

**Q. Do my kids get enough milk at school?**

**A: Probably not.** Most kids only get 1 cup (8 ounces) of low-fat milk as part of a school lunch. So, to get the recommended amount of milk each day, many kids need to have some at home, too.



**Q. How can I help my family get the milk they need each day?**

**A:** Try to make milk a part of the meals and snacks kids have at home. A cold glass of milk goes great with dinner, and after school or play. Offer foods made from milk – like low-fat or fat-free yogurt – as snacks and desserts. Eight ounces of yogurt is about the same as a cup of milk. You can also try small amounts of low-fat cheese as snacks. About 1½ - 2 ounces of most types of hard cheese is about the same as a cup of milk. Try cutting an 8-ounce block of cheese into eight equal, bite-sized pieces—each piece will be approximately 1 ounce. Plus, a block of cheese is usually less costly than pre-sliced cheese. If you buy sliced cheese, count each slice as about 1/3 cup of milk. Here are other ideas – check each one after you try it.

Give Them the Milk They Need Check the ones you tried	Tried it!
Use fat-free or low-fat milk (1% fat) instead of water to make oatmeal and hot cereal for breakfast.	
Serve fat-free or low-fat yogurt as a snack. Mix it up with fruit and nuts.	
Try a grilled cheese sandwich made with low-fat cheese for breakfast.	
Make a dip for fruits or vegetables from fat-free or low-fat yogurt.	
Try chocolate or butterscotch pudding made from fat-free or low-fat milk.	

**Message:**

Mom is a child’s first teacher. You teach by doing. Every time you drink fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk, or eat low-fat yogurt, you’re giving your kids a lesson in how to eat for better health. It’s a lesson they can use for all their lives. [Note: This content also works well with other core milk messages, including “Milk matters” and “There’s no power like Mom Power.”]

**Fat-Free and Low-Fat (1%) Milk Have Nutrients Everyone Needs**

Did you know that milk is loaded with vitamins, minerals, and protein, with nine key nutrients? Better yet, fat-free and low-fat (1%) milk still deliver this nutrition, just without the extra fat that is in whole and reduced-fat (2%) milk. But many kids are not getting enough milk to keep their bodies growing strong. Here’s what fat-free and low-fat milk and the nutrients they contain can do for your family:

Milk helps muscles move and refuels muscles after play.

Fat-free and low-fat (1%) milk are heart-healthy.

Protein and other nutrients in milk help kids grow and build muscles and other tissue.



Your kids and you need calcium and vitamin D for strong bones.

The calcium in milk helps keep teeth strong for a beautiful smile.

Milk is loaded with nutrients such as potassium and phosphorus that kids and adults need for good health.

Flex your Mom Power and serve fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk or yogurt to your family for a lifetime of healthy eating. Studies show that adults who drink milk are less likely to have heart disease, type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.



### **Message:**

**Strong bodies need strong bones.** Give your preschooler fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk and yogurt at meals and snacks. They're packed with vitamins, calcium, and protein for strong, healthy bones.

### **Moms often ask:**

**Q: Does fat-free and low-fat (1%) milk deliver the same good nutrition as whole milk?**

**A: Yes.** Fat-free and low-fat (1%) milk contain the same vitamins and minerals, like calcium, potassium, magnesium, vitamin D, and others needed to keep the body growing strong and healthy.

**Q: Why should I switch from whole milk to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk?**

**A:** Fat-free and low-fat (1%) milk are better for the health of you and your children. They deliver the same nutrients as other milk without the saturated fat. The saturated fat in other milk increases the risk of heart disease. Plus, fat-free and low-fat milk have fewer calories. And controlling calorie intake helps manage body weight.



**Q: My family has been drinking whole milk for years. How will I get them to switch to low-fat milk?**

**A:** Try these tips to help make the switch to low-fat milk easy for you and your family:

- Take it slow. If your young child or family is drinking whole milk, first change to reduced-fat (2%) milk for a few weeks, then switch to low-fat (1%) milk. Later, you can try fat-free milk.
- Try low-fat yogurt. If some family members don't like milk, try offering low-fat or fat-free yogurt.
- Try different forms of low-fat cheese. There are many kinds you can try. For example, start with low-fat cheddar – it's delicious melted on a whole-wheat bagel with a little jam.



### **Message:**

**They're still growing.** Help your kids grow strong. Serve fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk at meals.

### **Moms often ask:**

#### **Q. Why is it important for my elementary child to drink milk?**

**A.** Like children of all ages, elementary kids are still growing. So it's important they drink the recommended amount of fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk to grow healthy and strong. For kids ages 9-13, that's about 3 cups of milk each day. And fat-free and low-fat (1%) fat milk contains nine key nutrients like calcium, protein, and vitamin D, just without the extra saturated fat.

#### **Q. How do I increase the amount of milk my child gets?**

**A.** Here are some tips moms can use to get their kids to drink more fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk:

- Serve fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk with meals and snacks.
- Put fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk at eye level in the refrigerator, so kids are more likely to see and ask for a glass or to have it poured over whole-grain cereal.
- Add milk to some of your child's favorite foods, such as soups and oatmeal. For example, make creamy tomato soup instead of classic tomato soup by adding 1% low-fat milk.
- Occasionally, let your kids have some flavored fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk. Compare nutrition labels at the store and choose flavored milks with the least amount of sugar.
- Enjoy a glass of low-fat milk or yogurt with your child. Or, make a parfait together by layering low-fat yogurt, your favorite fruit, and unsalted nuts or cereal. There are many types of low-fat milk foods, so there is something for everyone to enjoy.



## Message:

**There's no power like Mom power.** You are a positive influence in your children's lives. Help them develop healthy eating habits for life. Offer them fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk and yogurt at meals and snacks.

[Note: This content also works well with other core milk messages, including "Milk matters" and "There's no power like Mom Power."]



### One Mom's Story:

#### Fat-free and Low-fat (1%) Milk Are Healthier Than Whole Milk. Who Knew?

Milk helps kids grow strong. So it's important to me that my kids get the milk they need every day. I used to believe that fat-free and low-fat milk were not as healthy as whole milk. Then I learned that they have the same calcium, protein, vitamin D, and other nutrients, just less fat. The saturated fat in other milk increases the risk of heart disease. So, my pediatrician told me that after age 2, kids don't need that fat. That's why I made the transition to low-fat (1%) milk. First I switched to 2% milk, then after a couple of weeks I switched to 1%. The kids didn't even notice.



### One Mom's Story:

#### Making the Switch to Fat-Free or Low-Fat (1%) Milk

My little girl is growing up so fast! She just had her second birthday. Last week, her doctor told me I should change her milk to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk. He said that now that she is 2, the saturated fat in whole milk is no longer recommended, and that saturated fat increases the risk of heart disease. He explained that fat-free and low-fat milk have the same vitamins and minerals as whole milk – just without the fat. It's also the same milk she will get at school when she is older. Since everyone in my family is 2 or older now, I'm buying 1% fat milk for the whole family. I'll try fat-free milk after we get used to drinking low-fat milk. I like knowing that fat-free and low-fat milk can help keep our hearts healthy. It also feels good to know I'm helping my daughter learn a healthy habit.

## Message:

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**Milk matters.** Children of every age, and adults too, need the calcium, protein, and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth, and muscles. Serve fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk or yogurt at meals and snacks.



### Fuel Their Day With Milk!

As a mom, I want to make sure my kids get the fuel they need to grow strong, stay healthy, and power their day. That's why I have fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk on hand. It gives everyone in our family the calcium, protein, and vitamin D we need, without the extra fat from whole milk. Sometimes they like to mix it up, so I keep low-fat milk products, like fat-free yogurt and low-fat cheese, in the fridge, too. I like to think of low-fat milk, cheese, and yogurt as healthy fuel for my family.

### Here are some ways we use it to fuel our day:

- **Keep it quick and easy**

- Pour fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk over whole-grain cereal. Or, melt a slice of low-fat mozzarella cheese on toasted whole-wheat bread for a quick and easy breakfast.
- Keep fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk in the refrigerator. A cold glass of milk is a tasty way to quench your kids' thirst after play or school. And milk is a healthy way to replace some of the fluids lost during the day.
- Pair their favorite fruit with low-fat cheese and whole-grain crackers for a quick and easy snack.

- **Make it fun**

- Put out different kinds of low-fat yogurt, fruit, and whole-grain cereal on the table. Let your kids get creative and make their own combination. They'll love the healthy snack they made all by themselves and sharing the recipe with their friends. Cut up and put their favorite fruit in a bowl.
- Add low-fat milk with a touch of vanilla extract. Then add whole-grain cereal on top for some crunch. Your kids will love this tasty and healthy snack.



# Whole Grains Messages With Supporting Tips, Advice, and Guidance

The following messages, tips, advice, and guidance address the confusion that many mothers revealed regarding the health benefits of whole grains, how to identify them, and ways to make them a part of meals and snacks their families enjoy. Use these resources to inspire mothers to make half their grains whole grains and increase their confidence in serving whole grains as a regular part of family meals and snacks.



**Make at least half of your grains whole.**

## Messages for Moms of Preschool Kids



**Happy Kids, Happy Tummies.** Serve your little ones whole-grain versions of their favorite bread, cereal, or pasta. It's a simple way to help them eat more whole grains. And, eating more whole grains that are higher in fiber can make potty time easier, too.



**Whole grains make a difference.**

Whole grains help keep your heart healthy and are good for digestion and a healthy weight. Choose foods with “100% whole wheat” or “100% whole grains” on the label. Or check the ingredient list to see if the word “whole” is before the first ingredient listed (for example, whole wheat flour). If it is, it’s whole-grain.

*[Note: This message is also for mothers of elementary school aged kids, who also found it engaging and relevant.]*



**Start them early with whole grains.** It's easy to get your kids in the habit of eating and enjoying whole grains if you start when they are young. Whole grains give your kids B vitamins, minerals, and fiber to help them be strong and healthy.

## Messages for Moms of Elementary School Kids



**Give yourself and those you love the goodness of whole grains. Make at least half of the grains** you eat whole grains – such as bread, tortillas, pasta, and cereals. Whole grains are good for your heart and digestion, and can help you maintain a healthy weight and good overall health.

*[Note: This message is also for mothers of preschool kids, who also found it engaging and relevant.]*



**Start every day the whole grain way.** Help your kids get their day off to a healthy start. Serve whole-grain versions of cereal, bread, tortillas, or pancakes at breakfast. Whole grains give your kids B vitamins, minerals, and fiber to help them feel full longer so they stay alert to concentrate at school.

## Supporting Content for Whole Grains

The tips, advice, and guidance provided below are shown with suggested messages. However, most of these materials can complement other whole grains messages as well. Select and use the approaches (stories, Q & A, and/or tips) that are most effective for your audience. See <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Files/Spotlight.pdf> for examples of materials and resources.

### Message:

Give yourself and those you love the goodness of whole grains. Make at least half of the grains you eat whole grains – such as bread, tortillas, pasta, and cereals. Whole grains are good for your heart and digestion, and can help you maintain a healthy weight and good overall health.



### How To Tell If It Is a Whole Grain?

Make sure you buy the real thing. It's worth it to know that your family will get the healthy goodness of whole grains. Because some foods that seem to be whole grains may not be, it's important to know what to look for. Here are some tips that work:

- **Choose foods that are naturally whole grains:** Some foods are always whole grains, like oatmeal, brown rice, wild rice, and popcorn.

- **Check the information on the package:** Buy bread, cereal, tortillas, and pasta with “100% Whole Grain” or “100% Whole Wheat” on the package.

Foods with the following words on the label are usually not 100% whole-grain products.

- 100% wheat
- Multi-grain
- Contains whole grain
- 7 grains
- Cracked wheat
- Made with whole grains
- Made with whole wheat
- Bran



- Check the ingredient list: Take a few seconds to see if the food is made from whole grains. Look for the word “whole” before the first ingredient. Some examples of whole-grain ingredients include:

- whole-grain barley
- whole-grain corn
- whole oats
- whole rye
- whole wheat
- wild rice
- brown rice
- buckwheat
- bulgur
- graham flour
- oatmeal
- quinoa
- rolled oats

Colors can be misleading. Foods like breads, pasta, rice, and tortillas that are dark in color may not be 100% whole-grain foods. And, some lighter color grain foods may be 100% whole-grain foods, such as “100% White Whole Wheat” bread. To make sure a food is a whole-grain food, check the ingredients using the tips.

Use this table to assess whether moms can identify whole grain foods!

<b>Give It a Try!</b> Can you tell which food is a whole grain food based on the ingredients? Look for the word "whole" before the first ingredient.	
	<b>A) Bread</b> Ingredients: Wheat Flour, Malted Barley Flour, Niacin, Iron, Riboflavin, Folic Acid
	<b>B) Tortilla</b> Ingredients: Whole Wheat Flour, Soybean Oil, Salt, Corn, Starch, Wheat Starch
	<b>C) Dry Cereal</b> Ingredients: Whole Corn Meal, Whole Grain Oats, Corn Starch, Canola Oil, Cinnamon, Brown Sugar
	<b>D) Cracker</b> Ingredients: Whole Grain Brown Rice Flour, Sesame Seeds, Potato Starch, Safflower Oil, Quinoa Seeds, Flax Seeds, Salt
	<b>E) Roll</b> Ingredients: Unbleached Enriched Wheat Flour, Sugar, Salt, Soybean Oil, Oat Bran, Yellow Corn Meal, Salt, Barley, Rye

Answer: b, c, and d are whole-grain foods because they list 'whole' grains.

## Message:

**Whole grains make a difference.** Whole grains help keep your heart healthy and are good for digestion and a healthy weight. Choose foods with “100% whole wheat” or “100% whole grains” on the label. Or check the ingredient list to see if the word “whole” is before the first ingredient listed (for example, whole-wheat flour). If it is, it’s whole-grain.

(Note: This content also works well with the message, “Give yourself and those you love the goodness of whole grains.”)

## Whole Grains and Your Family’s Health

Whole grains are rich sources of vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients that help keep your kids healthy and strong. Make sure your kids get the goodness of this “whole” nutrition every day. Here is just some of what whole grains can do for your kids:

Whole grains help fuel kids’ days by providing and helping them maintain energy.

The fiber in whole-grain foods keeps your kids feeling full longer, and that can help with a healthy body weight.



The minerals in whole grains help maintain normal muscles, nerves and a healthy immune system.

Whole grains have B vitamins for healthy red blood cells. They also help manage healthy blood glucose (sugar).

Whole grains are good for digestion and general health.

Adults benefit from whole grains, too. Eating whole-grain foods that are high in fiber can help protect against heart disease, reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes, support a healthy body weight, and is good for overall health. That’s the goodness of whole grains.

## Message:

### **Give yourself and those you love the goodness of whole grains.**

Make at least half of the grains you eat whole grains – such as bread, tortillas, pasta, and cereals. Whole grains are good for your heart and digestion, and can help you maintain a healthy weight and good overall health.

## **Whole Grains: How Much Is Enough Each Day?**

### **Q. How much whole grains should my family eat every day?**

**A:** In general, most family members need to eat about 6-8 ounces of grains daily, such as bread, cereal, rice, pasta, and tortillas. Younger kids (age 8 or less) need a little less – about 3-5 ounces. A good rule of thumb is that at least half of these grains should be whole grains. So, that's about 3 ounces of whole grains for adults each day, and 1 ½ to 2 ½ ounces for younger kids age 8 years or less. (Some active children may need more calories and therefore more grains.)



### **Q. What counts as an ounce of whole grains?**

**A:** Here are a few easy examples:

- 1 regular slice of whole-grain bread
- 1 cup dry ready-to-eat whole-grain cereal flakes
- ½ cup of cooked brown or wild rice, oatmeal, or whole-grain pasta
- 1 whole-grain tortilla (6" diameter)
- 1 pancake (5" diameter) made with whole-grain flour
- A small whole-grain muffin

### **Q. How can I fit the recommended amount of whole grains into my family's day?**

**A:** Here are some easy ways to include whole-grain foods in your meals throughout the day. Each food shows the amount and the number of ounces of whole grains it equals. Remember that children age 8 or less need a total of about 3-5 ounces of grains each day, so make half of these (about 1 ½ to 2 ½ ounces) whole grains!\* The total amount of grains adults and older kids need is about 6-8 ounces so they need about 3 – 3 ½ ounces of whole grains each day.

Ideas for Including Whole Grains at Every Meal			
Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One cup of whole-wheat cereal flakes (1 ounce) with fat-free or low-fat milk</li> <li>• ½ cup cooked oatmeal (1 ounce) topped with a favorite fruit and a little sugar or honey</li> <li>• One regular slice of whole-grain toast (1 ounce) with a slice of low-fat cheese</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two regular slices of whole-wheat bread (2 ounces) as part of a sandwich (each regular slice of bread is one ounce)</li> <li>• One small whole-grain tortilla (1 ounce) sprinkled with low-fat cheese and veggies</li> <li>• 1/2 cup cooked brown rice (1 ounce) with stir fry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five whole-grain crackers (1 ounce) with low-fat cheese and apple slices</li> <li>• Three cups of popped corn ** (1 ounce)</li> <li>• 1/2 cup of dry whole-grain cereal flakes (1/2 ounce) mixed into low-fat yogurt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One cup of cooked brown or wild rice (2 ounces) with chili and beans</li> <li>• One cup of cooked whole-grain pasta (2 ounces) with tomato sauce</li> <li>• One small whole-grain dinner roll (1 ounce)</li> </ul>

(Some active children may need more calories and therefore more grains.)  
 \*\* Popped corn is a choking risk for children under 4 years old.

## Message:

**Start them early with whole grains.** It's easy to get your kids in the habit of eating and enjoying whole grains if you start when they are young. Whole grains give your kids B vitamins, minerals, and fiber to help them be strong and healthy.



### Fitting Whole Grains Into Your Preschooler's Day

Little ones, like adults, need to eat whole grains every day as part of an overall healthy diet. When you introduce whole-grain foods to children when they are young, it helps them learn to love them. And, it's easy to make whole-grain foods a part of tasty meals and snacks. Here are ways to fit whole grains into your preschooler's day:

#### Start the Day the Whole-Grain Way

- **Cereal Mixer** – Combine two or three of their favorite whole-grain cereals with different shapes. Talk about the shapes to help them learn to name them.
- **Oatmeal Topper** – Top it with a favorite fruit and spices. Wake and Make Burrito – Stuff a whole-grain tortilla with chopped veggies, scrambled eggs, and low-fat cheese.



#### Create Fun Snacks

- **Pre-Pack Your Snacks** – Pack a sandwich bag with a little whole-grain dry cereal for your kids to eat at the park, mall, or grocery store.
- **Crack Them Up** – Serve whole-grain crackers with soup or salads for lunch. Serve them with low-fat cheese and a slice of tomato on top for a quick snack.

#### Make Quick and Easy Meals With Whole Grains

- **Pick a Pita for Lunch** – Spread a whole-grain pita with low-fat cottage cheese and stuff it with chopped veggies. Warm and serve!
- **Make a Healthy Pizza** – Top a whole-grain tortilla or English muffin with fresh tomato slices, low-fat cheese, leftover chicken or other lean meat, and pizza spices. Heat and serve!
- **Pass the Pasta** – Try different shapes and colors of whole-wheat pasta. Sprinkle it with a little olive oil and low-fat cheese. Add chopped veggies and spices or tomato sauce for a quick lunch or dinner. Use whole-grain pasta for your macaroni and cheese recipes and other family favorites, too.

- **Peanut Butter and Banana On a Roll** – Spread 1 tablespoon of peanut butter on a slice of 100% whole-grain bread or whole-grain tortilla. Add ½ of a banana and roll it up. Your kids will love it.
- **Quick Quesadilla** – Place one slice of low-fat cheese on a whole-wheat tortilla. Add chopped onions, peppers, or other colorful veggies and microwave (45-60 seconds) until the cheese melts.
- **Sneak Attack** – Add oatmeal, cooked brown rice, whole corn meal, or whole-wheat bread crumbs to casseroles. You can also use ½ whole-wheat flour and ½ all-purpose flour when making pancakes or muffins.

### Offer Something Sweet

- **Make It a Whole-Grain Sundae** – Sprinkle crushed whole-grain cereal over a small scoop of frozen yogurt and top with berries or other fruits.
- **Try Sweet Toast** – Top a toasted piece of whole-grain bread with cinnamon, ½ teaspoon of sugar, and applesauce.

### Message:

**Happy kids. Happy tummies.** Serve your little ones whole-grain versions of their favorite bread, cereal, or pasta. It's a simple way to help them eat more whole grains. And, eating more whole grains that are higher in fiber can make potty time easier.



### One Mom's Story:

#### Keeping My Kids Happy, Healthy and Regular With Whole Grains

I used to think eating healthy was so hard. But, some of the best advice, like eating whole grains, is easier than I thought. Whole grains are good for digestion. And, because they have lots of fiber, they make potty time easier for my kids. I look at the ingredients and buy whole-grain crackers, bread, pasta, dry cereals, and tortillas with the word “whole” before the first ingredient. I get brown rice and oatmeal too, since they're naturally whole-grain and easy to find. Sure it might take me a few extra minutes at the store to make sure I'm buying whole grains, but it's worth it to see my kids happy, healthy, and regular.

## Message:

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Give yourself and those you love the goodness of whole grains. Make at least half of the grains you eat whole grains – such as bread, tortillas, pasta and cereals. Whole grains are good for your heart and digestion, and can help you maintain a healthy weight and good overall health.



## One Mom's Story:

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### Discovering the Goodness of Whole Grains

When I asked my doctor what simple change I could make in my diet to improve my health, she said, "Switch to whole-grain versions of foods like bread, cereal, pasta, and crackers. Whole grains will help your family have a healthy heart and body weight and better digestion. They also can help reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. That means better overall health for the whole family." So, I started thinking about the grains my family eats, especially the kids. I decided it was worth it to make a few small changes for our health. Now I'm buying oatmeal, brown rice, whole-grain cereals, and 100% whole-grain bread. To be honest, making the switch was easier than I thought. It took a little time, but now we are all enjoying the goodness of whole grains.

# Child Feeding Messages With Supporting Tips, Advice, and Guidance

Use these messages and actionable tips to increase mothers' skills, confidence, and motivation in fostering healthy eating patterns in their young children by modeling healthy eating, making family meals more enjoyable, supporting independent eating decisions, etc. These resources are designed for mothers of children ages 2-5 years old.



## Developing Healthy Eating Habits

### Messages for Moms of Preschool Kids



**Cook together.  
Eat together.  
Talk together.  
Make mealtime  
a family time.**



**Make meals  
and memories  
together.** It's a  
lesson they'll use  
for life!

**Enjoy each other while enjoying family meals.** Keep mealtime relaxed to nourish the body and help your family make stronger connections. Let your little ones select which foods to put on their plates and how much to eat from the healthy choices you provide.



## Division of Feeding Responsibility

**Let them learn by serving themselves.** Let your kids serve themselves at dinner. Teach them to take small amounts at first. Assure them they can get more if they're still hungry.



**Feed their independent spirit at meal times.** Each meal with your preschoolers is a chance to help them grow and learn to make some decisions on their own. Encourage them to make their own food choices from the healthy foods you offer. Start early and you'll help them build healthy eating habits for life.



**Sometimes new foods take time.** Kids don't always take to new foods right away. Offer new fruits and vegetables many times, served a variety of ways. Give your kids just a taste at first and be patient with them.



**Patience works better than pressure.** Offer your children new foods. Then, let them choose how much to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy new foods when eating them is their own choice. It also teaches them how to be independent.



### Think beyond a single meal.

Keep in mind what your child eats over time. Meals and healthy snacks give children several chances every day to eat a variety of foods. If your child eats only a little or nothing at one meal, don't worry. He'll make up for it with other meals and snacks to get what he needs for good health over time



**Let go a little to gain a lot.** It's natural for moms to worry about their preschoolers' eating habits. Offer healthy foods and let your kids choose from them. They'll be more likely to enjoy mealtime and eat enough, so everyone is happier.



## Supporting Content for Child Feeding Messages

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The tips, advice, and guidance provided below are shown with suggested messages. However, most of these materials can complement other child feeding messages as well. Use the approaches (stories, Q&A, and/or tips) that are most effective for your audience. See the “Spotlight” section at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/core-nutrition> for examples of materials and resources.

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### Message:

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Enjoy each other while enjoying family meals. Keep mealtime relaxed to nourish the body and help your family make stronger connections. Let your little ones select which foods to put on their plates and how much to eat from the healthy choices you provide.

### Lead the Way: Creating a Relaxed Mealtime Experience

In our home, we have two rules when it comes to mealtime: eat as a family whenever we can and keep it relaxed. Since we started eating together more often, our family is getting closer all the time. We talk, we laugh, and my little ones are choosing healthy foods. Plus, their table manners are improving! Here's what we do to make meals more relaxed around our home:

- **Remove distractions.** We turn off the television and computer, and avoid talking on the phone or texting, so our attention is on each other.
- **Talk to each other.** We focus our conversation on what we did during the day. We talk about what made us laugh or what we did for fun. For example, we ask, “What was the best part of your day today?”
- **Pass on traditions.** I tell the kids about the “good old days,” foods mom and grandma made that we loved to eat.
- **Let kids make choices.** We set a healthy table and let everyone, including the kids, make choices about what they want and how much to eat.
- **Let everyone help.** Kids learn by doing. So, the little one might get the napkins and older kids might help with fixing foods and clean-up.

## Message:

**Feed their independent spirit at mealtimes.** Each meal with your preschooler is a chance to help them grow and learn to make some decisions on their own. Encourage them to make their own food choices from the healthy foods you offer. Start early and you'll help them build healthy eating habits for life.



### Feeding Kids' Independence at Mealtime

Young children are fast learners, so it's a great time to help them develop healthy eating habits. Healthy eating means eating a variety of foods from all food groups. It also means eating fewer foods with added sugar, salt, and solid fat. With a little planning, you can give your child more opportunities to grow and learn to make healthy eating choices. Think of this as planning for everyone in your family. And remember, you don't have to do everything at once. Try adding one new idea at a time, then build from there.

### Helpful Tips:

- **Set a regular schedule for meal times.** Young children need routines to practice new skills, like trying healthy foods.
- **Keep healthy snacks available.** Place them in a drawer or on a shelf that young kids can reach. When you say it's OK, your kids can choose their own healthy snack.
- **Help your children feel more independent.** Let them pick from healthy food choices you offer. For example, they can choose between an apple or orange and a whole-wheat pita with salsa for a snack.
- **Make finger foods.** Prepare foods that kids can eat with their fingers, such as vegetable or fruit chunks. Kids love to dip, so serve finger foods with a dip like yogurt or dressing. Bite-sized pieces of foods (no larger than ½ inch) are easier for small kids to handle and help to avoid choking.
- **Make healthy eating fun.** Fun ideas get kids excited to try new fruits and vegetables. Make an open-face sandwich by laying a slice of low-fat cheese on whole-wheat bread. Add sliced tomatoes for eyes and a strip of bell pepper for a smile.
- **Eat with your children.** They are more likely to try new foods if they see you eating and enjoying them.
- **Take them shopping.** Ask your kids to pick a new fruit or vegetable that they want to try for dinner.
- **Involve the kids.** As your kids grow, let them help prepare, serve, and clean up after the meal. For example, kids can help by measuring, adding ingredients, stirring, washing veggies, etc. Kids learn by doing, and being involved helps them be more confident and develop motor skills.



## Message:

**Let go a little to gain a lot.** It's natural for moms to worry about their preschoolers' eating habits. Offer healthy foods and let your kids choose from them. They'll be more likely to enjoy mealtime and eat enough, so everyone is happier.



## One Mom's Story:

### The Big Pay Off

The other day, I overheard my 4-year-old daughter telling her friends, "At dinner, my mom lets me pick the foods I want and then I put them on my plate!" She was so proud of herself, and I was, too. I recently learned that letting kids choose from healthy food options helps them develop good eating habits and become more independent. I was having problems getting her to try different foods, so I decided to try letting her pick what to eat. Now she says, "Let me take a little of that squash, too, Mommy." She also helps to plan and make dinner one night a week. She loves being Mommy's helper and does a great job, too!



## Q: Why should I let my kids make decisions about which foods and how much to eat?

**A:** Here are a few of the many reasons:

### It helps moms:

- Make meal time more pleasant for everyone.
- Eliminate 'power struggles' and arguments about eating.

### It helps kids:

- Gain confidence.
- Become more independent as they adjust to preschool.
- Sense when they are hungry and when they are full.
- Learn to eat healthy now and for life.

## Q: How can I help my kids form healthy eating habits and learn new skills?

**A:** Try these tips:

- Get them involved in preparing meals.
- Set a positive example. Offer the same foods to everyone.
- Set regular times for meals and snacks.

- Let kids pick what to eat and serve themselves from the meals you provide.
- Trust your kids to eat enough of the right foods over time.
- Slow down, relax, and enjoy each other's company at mealtime.



### Message:

**Think beyond a single meal. Keep in mind what your child eats over time.** Meals and healthy snacks give children several chances every day to eat a variety of foods. If your child eats only a little or nothing at one meal, don't worry. He'll make up for it with other meals and snacks to get what he needs for good health over time.

### Advice From a Nutritionist

As a nutritionist, I work with a lot of moms who are concerned about whether their child is getting enough of the right foods to grow and develop well. I tell them to look at what their child has eaten during the last couple of days, not just one meal. You see, kids' appetites vary. For any given meal, a young child might eat very little or nothing at all. And that's completely normal. It's also normal for children to go through a period where they'll only eat one food. Try to be patient and continue to offer healthy meals and snacks that include foods like low-fat (1%) milk, yogurt, lean meats, fruits, veggies, and whole-grain foods. That's how you can make sure that, over time, your little ones are getting the nutrients they need.



### One Mom's Story:

#### Enjoying Family Mealtime

We didn't always sit down as a family to eat our meals. But, a few months ago our family made the decision to enjoy mealtime by eating together. You wouldn't believe what this has done for our family. We're closer now than ever before. We talk. We listen. Our kids are getting better at talking to people and their manners are improving. We let the little ones serve themselves from the foods I provide and they're starting to make healthier food choices. It's simple. When our family eats a relaxed, healthy meal together, everyone benefits.



- We enjoy each other more.
- Kids serve themselves from the healthy choices we offer.
- As parents, we learn what our children like and dislike.
- Kids decide how much food to eat so they begin to learn the right portion size for their bodies.
- Kids learn to try new foods on their own because they weren't forced to eat them.



### **Try this:**

At family mealtime, have questions for everyone to answer, for example:

- What is your favorite food tonight? Where do you think this food was made/grown/raised?
- What new food did you try today? Where did you eat it? How did it taste?
- What was the best part of your day?

### **Message:**

**Sometimes new foods take time.** Kids don't always take to new foods right away. Offer new fruits and vegetables many times, served a variety of ways. Give your kids just a taste at first and be patient with them.

### **Help your child learn to love a variety of foods.**

Offer and encourage your kids to taste new foods. When they do, reward them with praise instead of treats.

### **Kids learn to like new foods by:**

- Having them offered over and over
- Having them served with familiar foods
- Seeing friends, older kids, and grown-ups eating these foods
- Tasting them prepared in different ways
- Choosing foods to try themselves
- Starting with small amounts



### **Offer a new food many times. Keep trying.**

Try offering new foods prepared in different ways. You can serve fruits and vegetables raw with a dip. You can also steam, roast, and bake vegetables — even some fruits. For example, try warming fruits like apples, pears, and peaches for about a minute or so for a softer texture. Try it with canned, frozen, or fresh fruit — just look for canned or frozen fruits without added sugar or packed in 100% fruit juice.

Many young children need to be offered a new food several times before they will try it and learn to like it. So, offer a small amount. If you keep offering a new food, eventually your kids will give it a try.



### Message:

**Patience works better than pressure.** Offer your children new foods. Then, let them choose how much to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy new foods when eating them is their own choice. It also teaches them how to be independent.

### Moms often ask:

#### **Q. How do I know my kids are getting enough food and nutrition?**

**A.** Young children eat when they are hungry and usually stop when they are full. It's also helpful to know that before eating, their stomachs are about the size of their fist. So what may not look like much food to you may actually be just right for their small stomachs.

#### **Q. What can I do to help my children develop healthy eating habits?**

**A.** It can take patience, but try some of these tips. They've worked for many moms.

- 1. Offer young kids the same healthy foods the rest of the family is having.** Your child may not care for all that's offered, and that's okay. Kids eat better when they have the freedom to select what to eat from what you offer.
- 2. Try to set regular times for meals and snacks.** A daily routine of regular meal times and snack times promotes good eating habits. It helps kids learn there is always another chance for them to eat what they need.
- 3. Lay out a variety of healthy foods and then let kids serve themselves.** Children learn and gain confidence when they are allowed to make choices about what to eat. And remember, a serving size for young kids is smaller than for teens or an adult.
- 4. Listen to them when they say they are full. Young kids will eat the amount they need.** Toddlers have a strong sense of hunger, appetite, and fullness, so they are likely to stop eating when they are full rather than when the food is gone. And, children's appetite can vary — sometimes they won't eat much and other times they will want seconds.



### **Message:**

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**Let them learn by serving themselves.** Let your kids serve themselves at dinner. Teach them to take small amounts at first. Assure them they can get more if they're still hungry.

**Your kids will learn many useful life lessons when you let them serve themselves at mealtime:**

- They learn to make decisions about which foods and how much to put on their plates.
- They learn to be more aware of when they are hungry and when they are full.
- They further develop their fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.
- They learn to share, take turns, and be responsible for their choices.

**Try these tips to make serving themselves an even better experience.**

- Use small bowls so your kids can see the food, and use serving utensils they can hold easily in their little hands.
- Hold the serving bowls for them to make it easier to scoop up the food.
- Be patient! Your kids are learning, so be ready to wipe up a few spills.
- Encourage and praise your children when they serve themselves.

### **Message:**

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Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time.



**It takes a little work to bring everyone together for meals. But it's worth it and the whole family eats better.**

- Start eating meals together as a family when your kids are young. This way, it becomes a habit.
- Plan when you will eat together as a family. Write it on your calendar.
- You may not be able to eat together every day, but aim to have family meals at least four times a week.



### How to make family meals happy

- Focus on the meal and each other. Turn off the television. Take phone calls later.
- Talk about fun and happy things. Try to make meals a stress-free time.
- Encourage your child to try foods. But, don't lecture or force your child to eat.

### Fast family meals

- Cook it fast on busy nights. Try stir-fried meat and vegetables, quick soups, or sandwiches.
- Do some tasks the day before. Wash and cut vegetables or make a fruit salad. Cook lean ground beef or turkey for burritos or chili. Store everything in the fridge until ready to use.
- Find quick and tasty recipes that don't cost a lot to make at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/QuickandEasy/smartstartrecipes.htm>



### Talk to me!

- What made you feel really happy today?
- What did you have to eat at lunch today?
- What's your favorite veggie? Why?
- Tell me one thing you learned today.
- What made you laugh today?



### **Message:**

Make meals and memories together. It's a lesson they'll use for life.

**Teach your kids to create healthy meals. It's a lesson they'll use for life.** Kids like to try foods they help make. It's a great way to encourage your child to eat fruits and vegetables. They feel good about doing something "grown-up." Give them small jobs to do. Praise their efforts. Their smiles will light up your kitchen.

Kids love helping in the kitchen. Parents love knowing that their child is also learning skills they'll use for life. Help teach them to follow instructions, count, and more!



### **Prepare fruits and veggies together.**

Children learn about fruits and vegetables when they help make them. And all of that mixing, mashing, and measuring makes them want to taste what they are making. It's a great trick for helping your "picky eater" try fruits and vegetables.

On busy weeknights...Cooking together can mean more "mommy and me" time on busy days.

- Ask your child to help with easy tasks, like adding veggie toppings to a cheese pizza.
- Let your child choose which veggies to add to soup. Only an adult should heat and stir hot soup.
- Make sandwiches together.



### **Make some meals special.**

- Have a color contest and see how many green, red, yellow, and orange fruits and vegetables you can include in one meal.
- Name a food your child helps create. Make a big deal of serving "Karla's Salad" or "Corey's Sweet Potatoes" for dinner.
- Try a "Make Your Own" night. Let your family put together its own soft tacos, sandwiches, pizza, or salads.
- Place the ingredients within easy reach and let the fun begin.

**Cooking Together Activities by Age:**

2-year-olds	3-year-olds	4-5-year-olds
<p>Make “faces” out of pieces of fruits and vegetables.</p> <p>Scrub vegetables or fruits.</p> <p>Tear lettuce or greens.</p> <p>Snap green beans.</p> 	<p>Add ingredients.</p> <p>Stir.</p> <p>Spread peanut butter or other spreads.</p> <p>Shake a drink in a sealed container.</p> <p>Knead bread dough.</p> 	<p>Peel and mix some fruits and vegetables.</p> <p>Peel hard boiled eggs.</p> <p>Cut soft fruits with a plastic knife.</p> <p>Only adults should use sharp knives. Wipe off counters.</p> <p>Mash soft fruits, vegetables, and beans.</p> <p>Measure dry ingredients.</p> <p>Measure liquids with help.</p> 

Note: Additional messages for mothers of preschool children can be found in the fruit and vegetable, whole-grain, and milk sections.

## Appendix C:

### Messages and Supporting Content for Kids Ages 8-10 Years Old

# Milk, Fruits, and Vegetables Messages and Supporting Activities for Kids!



These kid-friendly messages and activity sheets engage and motivate kids by appealing to their desires to have energy for play and sports. Use these resources to tap into kids' sense of fun and fantasy. Capture their attention and let them learn while having fun by encouraging kids to play the Track and Field Fuel Up Challenge Game (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/multimedia/games/trackandfield/index.html>) See communication tools for more information.

#### Messages for 8- to 10-Year-Old Kids

- 1 Eat smart to play hard. Drink milk at meals.
- 2 Fuel up with milk at meals. And soar through your day like a rocket ship.
- 3 Snack like a super hero. Power up with fruit and yogurt.
- 4 Eat smart to play hard. Eat fruits and veggies at meals and snacks.
- 5 Fuel up with fruits and veggies. And soar through your day like a rocket ship.



# Fuel up with milk at meals.

# And soar through your day like a rocket ship.



Make fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk your rocket fuel.

Want to grow big and strong like an astronaut? You need milk to help build muscles and to provide fuel for your fun. Try these tips:

- Power up with breakfast. Drink a glass of low-fat milk with your food.
- Drink milk with snacks. Have a glass of low-fat milk at snacks to refuel your energy.
- Lunch, dinner, be a winner. Drink low-fat milk with meals.
- Play hard. Then renew your energy with a glass of low-fat milk.

## FUEL FOR YOUR BRAIN

**1: How many cups of milk per day does it take to fill your tank?**

You can get the answer by solving these questions:

What's  $1 + 1.5 =$  \_\_\_ ➔ That's how much you need if you are 8

What's  $4 - 1 =$  \_\_\_ ➔ That's how much you need if you are 9 or 10

**2: If you're looking for rocket fuel, what galaxy would you visit?**

- a. Whirlpool Galaxy      b. Milky Way Galaxy      c. Bode's Galaxy      d. Sculptor Galaxy

Milk gives you energy, so you can take off for the stars!

**3: What kind of cheese has craters like the moon?**

- a. Swiss Cheese      b. Blue Cheese      c. Macaroni & Cheese      d. Sharp Cheese



# Eat smart to play hard.

# Eat fruits and veggies at meals and snacks.

Fruits and veggies give you energy to help you be a champion when you run and play. Eat them every day at meals, snacks, or for dessert. Ask mom or dad to help you make this recipe and share it with your family and friends. Don't have or like pineapple? Be creative! Use whatever fruits you have at home.



## "THE TRYING GAME"

Have you ever tried Amazing asparagus, Exciting eggplant, Peppy peppers, Spunky sweet potatoes, or Tangy mango? There are so many tasty fruits and vegetables, it's fun to see, touch, taste, and smell new ones you've never had before.

Use this chart to write about and draw the new fruits and vegetables you try. Can't think of any? Ask your family and friends to tell you their favorites and try some of those. You can even have a contest with your friends to see who is the Champion at trying new fruits and veggies.

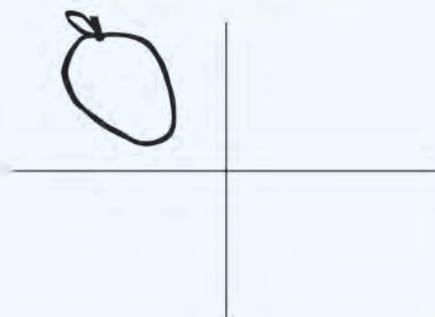
My new fruit or vegetable

How does it taste, smell, feel?

Draw a picture of it

mango

sweet



### Champion's POWER Packed Snack—makes 4 servings

- 2 cups canned crushed pineapple packed in juice
- 1 cup fresh or frozen berries, thawed
- 1 firm medium banana, peeled and sliced

- 1 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1/3 cup raisins

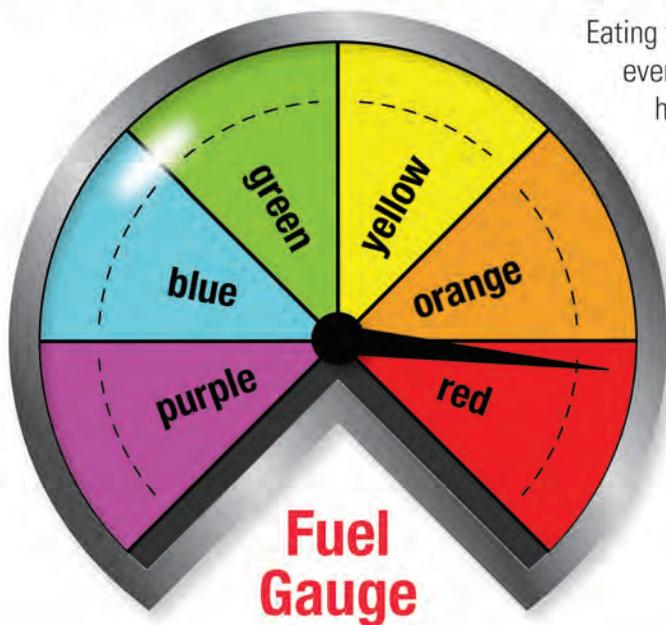
Have fun putting a layer of pineapple, berries, yogurt, banana slices, and raisins into each of 4 glasses.

Fuel up with  
fruits and veggies

And soar through  
your day like a  
rocket ship!



## GET READY FOR LIFTOFF



Eating fruits and vegetables of every color in the rainbow can help give you the different vitamins and minerals you need to soar through your day.

**Write the name of a fruit or veggie on the dotted lines in the fuel gauge that matches each color.**

## JOKES:

SuperKids love to laugh. Try these jokes with your friends.

**Q:** Why aren't bananas ever lonely?  
**A:** Because they come in bunches.

**Q:** What fruit always travels in groups of two?  
**A:** Pears

**Q:** What did the apple skin say to the apple?  
**A:** I've got you covered.

**Q:** What does corn say when it's picked?  
**A:** Ouch! My ears.

**HA HA ROFL!**  
**HA HA HA!**

**LOL!**

# Snack Like a super hero.

# Power up with fruit and yogurt.

## BE "SUPER" AT THE SUPERMARKET.

Help your family do the grocery shopping. Make your own list of the low-fat yogurt and other foods, like fruits, that keep Super Heroes strong. When you go to the store, say: "Guess what mom? I want to try something that's good for me." Or, "Believe it or not, I want to try a healthy snack." Then ask your Mom, Dad, or grandparent if you can pick out those foods yourself.

When you get home, ask if you can make your own Super Powerful Snacks, such as:

- **Muscle Popping Pops:** For a "cool snack," place your favorite fat-free or low-fat yogurt into an ice cube tray and freeze it. Grab a spoon and enjoy!
- **Super Smoothie:** In your favorite Super Hero glass, mix together plain low-fat yogurt with crushed fresh or frozen berries.



Match  
these words to the  
rap below:  
fruit, teeth, orange,  
yogurt, milk

## HERO RAP

Now listen up and I'll be brief.

**Calcium** builds strong bones and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Vitamin C** helps scratches heal.

So grab an \_\_\_\_\_ and give it a peel.

For muscles to grow like you've never seen,

Drink low-fat \_\_\_\_\_ for its **protein**.

Mix low-fat yogurt with \_\_\_\_\_ to see

How sweet and tasty **Vitamin D** can be.

Eat fruits and low-fat \_\_\_\_\_ each day

For the Super Kid energy

To keep rappin' away!

## Appendix D:

### Online Communication Tools for Mothers and Elementary School Age Kids

# Online Videos, and Video Game

Increase the number of times your audiences hear and experience your messages by placing a link to these interactive, online tools on your Web site, in blogs, and in electronic and print communications. The tools convey messages and select tips that support and help moms and kids to apply current nutrition guidelines. The content of these tools come from the core messages and related tips, advice, and guidance to address the “what,” “why,” and “how” elements relevant to each behavior. These are examples of a few of the many tools you can create for your audiences using these tested resources. To access these tools, go to [http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/online\\_communication\\_tools\\_page.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/online_communication_tools_page.htm).

#### **Communication Tools**

These ready-to-go resources for moms deliver small but important components of the messages, actionable tips, and advice on each of the topics. Each of the tools conveys information mothers indicated as important to them, such as meal preparation tips and ideas, health and nutrition benefits that underscore why they should adopt a specific behavior, and options that provide flexibility to fit their lifestyles.

## Videos

These short videos feature a mother addressing each of the topics using a mother-to-mother conversational style that personalizes the information and connects with the audience. The videos are online for viewing. You can also add a direct link to the videos on your Web site. Limited supplies of the videos are available to program staff in DVD format. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/core-nutrition/online-communication-tools>



Whole Grains



Child Feeding



Milk



## Communication Tools for Kids Ages 8-10 Years Old

The **Track and Field Fuel Up Challenge Game** leverages the messages and supporting content in ways that appeal to and challenge kids. It uses an engaging approach that allows kids to have fun while learning about making healthier choices such as low-fat milk, fruits and vegetables, and whole-grain foods. In this interactive game, kids go for the gold by responding to time-sensitive questions that help improve their knowledge, motivation, and skills in making healthier choices. The kids compete in four Track and Field events by responding to random questions about healthy eating. The faster the kids answer correctly, the more skill their player has in his or her event. The game gets kids moving by nudging them to get up, celebrate, and warm up to prepare for the next event. Players answering all four questions correctly get a gold trophy. The online game is a Flash-based application. There is also a separate text-based HTML application. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/core-nutrition/online-communication-tools>



## Appendix E:

### Resources Using the FNS Core Nutrition Messages

# Examples of How To Use the Core Nutrition Messages

Let your creativity soar! Use the tested messages, tips, and advice to jumpstart the developmental process for new nutrition education resources and to update ongoing efforts. Together with MyPlate, these resources help communicate the Dietary Guidelines for Americans in ways that are both motivational and easy to understand. The messages can be the main focus of your communication (such as on billboards) or can be integrated with materials that are broader in scope (for instance, a nutrition curriculum). Mix and match messages and supporting content to customize materials to meet your clients' needs. You can use these resources in many types of education materials, including print, video, digital media, and Web-based education resources, and integrate them into group discussions and presentations. The following examples illustrate some of the many ways you can use the messages and supporting content to create communication tools to inspire your audience to choose healthier foods.



Michigan Nutrition Network included messages in the Kid Approved: Healthy Snacks recipe book. Also see billboards in Chapter 5.

## Confetti Bean Salsa

Serving size: ½ cup  
Servings per recipe: 6

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 can (15 oz) red or black beans
- 1 can (11 oz) corn
- ½ small green pepper, chopped.
- 1 cup Salsa

### DIRECTIONS

1. Drain corn and black beans. Set aside.
2. Chop green pepper.
3. Mix all ingredients in a bowl and serve.
4. Refrigerate any leftovers.

**TOTAL TIME: 5 MINUTES    PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES**

**Prep Tip:** To avoid having to chop the green pepper you can look for Spanish or Mexican corn at the store. This corn has red and green peppers chopped and mixed with it already.

**Nutrition Tip:** To reduce the sodium in this recipe, rinse the canned foods after draining them.



*They learn from watching you. Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will, too.*

### Nutrition Information per Serving:

- 90 calories
- 0 g fat
- 19 g carbohydrate
- 4 g protein
- 4 g fiber
- 450 mg sodium

Team Nutrition, USDA uses a variety of messages, tips, and narratives in the resources available at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov>. Below are examples:

**Meet MyPlate**

The **MyPlate** picture reminds us to eat foods from all five food groups for good health: Vegetables, Fruits, Grains, Protein, and Dairy. Foods from each of these groups provide nutrition the body needs.

Most people do not eat enough fruits and vegetables. The amount of fruits and vegetables a person needs to eat each day depends on age, gender, and physical activity level. A 10-year-old girl or boy who gets about 30-60 minutes of physical activity each day needs 2½ cups of vegetables and 1½ cups of fruit each day. An active 11-year-old girl or boy who gets more than 60 minutes of physical activity each day needs more: 2½ to 3 cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit. You can learn about how much of each food group you or a family member needs at <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>.

Children and adults need to eat many types of vegetables during the week. Eating a variety helps the body get the nutrients it needs for good health. Most people do not eat enough dark-green, red, and orange vegetables, and beans and peas. Has your family eaten any of these vegetables this week?

<b>Dark-Green Vegetables</b>	<b>Red and Orange Vegetables</b>	<b>Beans and Peas</b>
Broccoli	Acorn squash	Black beans
Collard greens	Butternut squash	Black-eyed peas
Kale	Carrots	Garbanzo beans (chickpeas)
Leaf lettuce	Pumpkin	Kidney beans
Mustard greens	Red bell peppers	Lentils
Romaine lettuce	Sweet potatoes	Pinto beans
Spinach	Turnips	Soy beans
		White beans

**“I’m hungry.”**  
That’s the first thing my kids say when they come through the door. They go straight into the kitchen to get their own snacks. Whatever my kids see, they eat. So I keep cut-up veggies on a low shelf in the fridge and fresh fruit on the counter. If I don’t have fresh produce, I use canned or frozen. It takes a little planning, but it’s worth it. ☺☺

**Make half your plate fruits and vegetables is an easy way to remember to include these foods at meals. Fruits and vegetables also make great snacks.**

**Tips for Families With School-Age Children**

**Make half your plate fruits and vegetables—on a budget**

- Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables are all smart choices. Look for sales and buy some of each to last until your next shopping trip.
- Choose frozen vegetables that do not have added fat, salt, or sugars.
- Buy canned fruits packed in “100% juice” or water.
- Look for canned vegetables that say “No added salt.”

**Start every day the whole-grain way**

- Serve whole-grain versions of cereal, bread, or pancakes at breakfast.
- Whole grains with more fiber will help your kids feel fuller longer so they stay alert in school.
- Choose foods with “100% whole wheat” or “100% whole grains” on the label. Or check the ingredient list to see if the word “whole” is before the first ingredient listed (for example, whole-wheat flour). If it is, it’s whole grain.

**Milk matters**

Children of every age, and adults too, need the calcium, protein, and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth, and muscles.

- Drink fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk at meals.
- If you’re lactose intolerant, try lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk or calcium-fortified soy beverages.

**Try These Kid-Friendly Snack Ideas:**

**Fruit Swords With Yogurt Dip**

- Put pieces of fruit on a toothpick, skewer, or straw.
- Cover with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator until snack time.
- Serve with low-fat strawberry (Strawberry Dip) or lime (Lime Dip) yogurt for dipping.

**Happy Snack Packs**

- Fill small containers or snack bags with cut-up veggies.
- Add a small container of fat-free ranch dressing for dipping.
- Decorate the outside of the bags with stickers.
- Store in the refrigerator on a shelf where they are easy for your child to see.

Above left: MyPlate at Home

Above: Dig In! at Home

Left: Garden Detective News

New Hampshire used the “They’re still growing” milk message in the newsletter that was mailed to about 36,000 SNAP households.

**Milk ...the Best Choice for Kids**

You know milk is good for babies and toddlers. Did you know It's equally as important for elementary school-aged children?

Milk helps growing children form strong bones and teeth. It's also good for their growing muscles. When children drink plenty of milk their risk for osteoporosis when they grow up is lower.

**They're still growing.**  
**Help your kids grow strong.**  
**Serve fat-free or low-fat milk at meals.**

**What kind of milk should you serve?**  
 There are lots of types of milk. Fat-free and low-fat milk are the healthiest.

- **Fat-free milk** is also called skim milk or non-fat milk. All of the fat is removed from the milk, leaving behind the healthy nutrients.
- **Low-fat milk** is also called 1% milk. "One percent" refers to the amount of fat in the milk. Most of the fat has been removed from the milk. Only 1% of the milk is made of fat.
- **There is also 2% milk.** It has double the fat of 1% milk. But it has less fat than whole milk.
- **Whole milk** has the most fat. 3.5% of the milk is fat.

**Mealtime is Family Time**

**Children learn from watching you**

Eat fruits and veggies and they will too

- Eat breakfast and they will too

**Make mealtime family time**

- Cook together
- Eat together
- Talk together

Pennsylvania SNAP-Ed developed slide presentations that incorporated the FNS Core Messages for Moms of Preschoolers. These slides can be used in groups and viewed online.

**ChooseMyPlate.gov** “Health and Nutrition Information for Preschoolers” page contains several of the child feeding messages and tips.



*They learn from watching you.  
Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.*

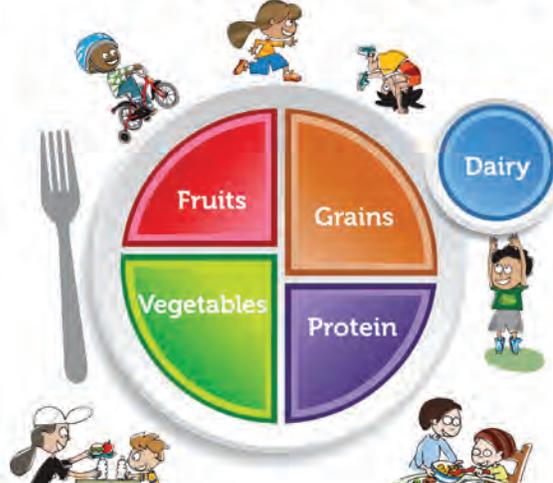


*Patience works better than pressure. Offer your children a variety of foods. Then let them choose how much to eat.*

**WIC** included child feeding messages in “Healthy Eating for Preschoolers” tip sheets available on the WICWorks Web site. <http://wicworks.nal.usda.gov/topics-z/myplate-resources>

## Healthy Eating for preschoolers





**ChooseMyPlate.gov**

**Get your child on the path to healthy eating.**

*Focus on the meal and each other.*  
Your child learns by watching you. Children are likely to copy your table manners, your likes and dislikes, and your willingness to try new foods.

*Offer a variety of healthy foods.*  
Let your child choose how much to eat. Children are more likely to enjoy a food when eating it is their own choice.

*Be patient with your child.*  
Sometimes new foods take time. Give children a taste at first and be patient with them. Offer new foods many times.

*Let your children serve themselves.*  
Teach your children to take small amounts at first. Let them know they can get more if they are still hungry.

*Cook together.*

*Eat together.*

*Talk together.*

*Make meal time family time.*





U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service

FNS-451  
October 2012  
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Virginia paired messages with inspiring photos to create a slide show for digital photo displays. Also see Calendar in Chapter 5.



New Mexico SNAP-Ed produced Spanish versions of the videos for whole grains, low-fat milk, and child feeding and a new video on fruits and vegetables that convey the core messages. They developed a series of Spanish and English posters that include the messages. These materials are part of a social marketing campaign the State is developing.



Above: New Mexico SNAP-Ed produced videos using fruit and vegetable messages in Spanish and English. <http://prc-snap-ed.org/>.



New Mexico SNAP-Ed produced both English and Spanish posters, available at <http://prc-snap-ed.org/>.



Social media is an effective way to reach your audience with reinforcing messages. See examples below. Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, and blogs (see the core message Training materials page for more).



FNS developed fact sheets, recipes, videos, rollover widgets, and an online game. These resources are available for mothers on the Especially for Moms Web page at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/core-nutrition/especially-moms>.

## Start them early with Whole Grains

**Start them while they're young.**

When you introduce whole-grain foods to children when they are young, it helps them learn to love them.

**Start the day the whole grain way.**

- **Cereal Mixer** – Combine two or three of their favorite whole-grain cereals with different shapes. Talk about the shapes to help them learn to name them.
- **Oatmeal Topper** – Top it with a favorite fruit and spices.
- **Wake and Make Burrito** – Stuff a whole-grain tortilla with chopped veggies, scrambled eggs and low-fat cheese.

**Quick Fact**  
Whole grains are rich sources of vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients that help keep your kids healthy and strong.

## Create Fun Snacks

- **Pre-pack Your Snacks** – Pack a sandwich bag with a little whole-grain dry cereal for your kids to eat at the park, mall or grocery store.
- **Crack Them Up** – Serve whole-grain crackers with soup or salads for lunch. Serve them with low-fat cheese and a slice of tomato on top for a quick snack.

**Quick Fact**  
These foods are always whole grain. Oatmeal, brown rice, wild rice, pop corn.

## Make Quick and Easy Meals with Whole Grains

- **Make a Healthy Pizza** – Top a whole-grain tortilla or English muffin with fresh tomato slices, low-fat cheese, leftover chicken or other lean meat and pizza spices. Heat and serve!
- **Pass the Pasta** – Try different shapes and colors of whole-wheat pasta. Sprinkle it with a little olive oil and low-fat cheese. Add chopped veggies and spices or tomato sauce for a quick lunch or dinner. Use whole-grain pasta for your macaroni and cheese recipes and other family favorites, too.

**Quick Fact: How to tell if it's a whole grain?** Check the ingredient list. Take a few seconds to see if the food is made from whole grains. Look for the word "whole" before the first ingredient.

Think out of the box! Messages, tips, and photos can fit in unexpected places.



Above: Alabama put messages on WIC checks.



They learn from watching you.

Eat more fruit and veggies and they will too.



This material was funded by the State of Michigan with federal funds from the United States Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program by way of the Michigan Nutrition Network at the Michigan Fitness Foundation. These restrictions are published from disseminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. People who need help buying nutritious food for a better diet call the toll free Michigan Food Assistance Program Hotline: (800) 438-6633.

Right: Michigan Nutrition Network put messages on farmers market token bags.