

I. Speaking With One Voice

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers 15 nutrition assistance programs. In Fiscal Year 2008, an estimated \$750 million in Federal funds was spent providing much needed nutrition education to program participants, empowering low-income families and children to use their food benefits to make healthful food choices. States also contribute millions to support this effort. Together, we can get the most out of this investment by *maximizing our nutrition messages*.

People are bombarded by various messages every day. How can we make sure our messages are heard, remembered, and effective in compelling the families we serve to take action? We can increase the visibility and repetition of our messages by “speaking with one voice.” We maximize our message impact when all FNS programs work together to deliver consistent, accurate, and consumer-tested messages. Together, we can make a greater difference.

This guide presents core nutrition messages and supporting content (e.g., bulleted tips, recipes, and stories) that are specifically designed for the low-income mothers and children. These messages are based upon the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MyPlate* and support program policies and food packages.

Low-income mothers and children have guided the development of these messages—discover what they had to say about these new resources inside this publication.

We invite you to use the core messages in your nutrition education efforts to help mothers take incremental steps towards adapting the recommended eating patterns. Collaborating with others in your community to promote the core messages can take this effort to “speak with one voice” one step further. Other organizations may also be able to address broader environmental changes that make it easier for mothers and children to make healthy food choices. Inside this guide, we have provided tips for putting the core messages into practice, and we hope you'll share your ideas with us.



