Feeding for Healthy Eating

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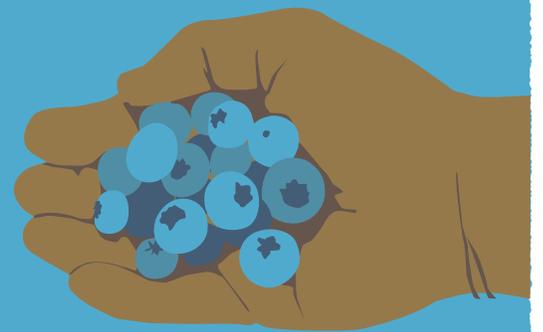Feeding for Healthy Eating

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Feeding for Healthy Eating

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in Feeding for Healthy Eating (FHE). FHE is different from other nutrition education curricula in that the focus is on how to feed young children, not what to feed them. FHE participants learn about the importance of feeding practices and the skills necessary to help their preschool-aged children develop healthy eating habits. FHE is designed to be used with the parents of two to five year old children.

Participants in this program will learn:

•how to feed their preschool-aged children so that their children learn to enjoy healthy foods and

•the impact of their own eating habits and how they feed their children on their children's consumption of healthy foods.

Feeding for Healthy Eating is designed around the USDA's core nutrition messages concerning child feeding and provides a dynamic way for nutrition educators to share these messages with parents. For more information on the core nutrition messages, see page 3.

Feeding for Healthy Eating uses a dialogue learning approach to teach participants. This approach to teaching allows the educator to engage participants from a wide variety of educational backgrounds. It is especially effective with participants who have struggled in traditional classroom settings. Dialogue learning also helps individuals make personal meaning of the course material, creating a greater chance to elicit behavior change. With Feeding for Healthy Eating, participants have many opportunities to discuss the course material and consider how to make changes in their lives. For more information on dialogue learning, please see page 4.

Background Information - Parental Feeding

The importance of parental feeding practices – the attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and decisions parents make with regard to what, when, and how to feed their children – has been widely recognized. Parental feeding practices have been found to impact young children's food preferences and consumption as well as the eating habits they develop and carry into later childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. For instance, parents who role model healthy eating habits are more likely to have children who consume healthy foods and are more willing to try new foods.[1, 2, 3]

Families that eat dinner together tend to have healthier diets.[4, 5,6] Additionally, research has shown that the use of pressure and rewards to encourage young children to consume healthy foods, does not increase consumption of healthy foods. In fact, using an unhealthy food as a reward for eating a healthy food may increase preference for the unhealthy food.[3, 7, 8]

There is additional information about parental feeding practices at the beginning of each individual FHE session.

You can also find additional information about feeding practices on the following websites:

www.healthychildren.org
This website is sponsored by the American Academy of Pediatrics and provides information about feeding children of all ages, including preschool-aged children.

www.eatright.org/Public/content aspx?id=5529
This website is sponsored by the American Dietetic Association and provides information about feeding children of all ages. Among other things, it includes information about portion sizes for young children.

Sources

1. Fisher JO, Mitchell DC, Smiciklas-Wright H, Birch LL. Maternal milk consumption predicts the tradeoff between milk and soft drinks in young girls' diets. J Nutr. 2001;131:246-250.

2. Gregory JE, Paxton SJ, Brozovic AM. Maternal feeding practices, child eating behaviour and body mass index in preschool-aged children: A prospective analysis. IJBNPA. 2010;7:55-65.

3. Gregory JE, Paxton SJ, Brozovic AM. Maternal feeding practices predict fruit and vegetable consumption in young children. Results of a 12-month longitudinal study. Appetite. 2011;57:167-172.

4. Gillman MW, Rifas-Shiman SL, Frazier AL, Rockett HR, Camargo CA Jr, Field AE, Berkey CS, Colditz GA. Family dinner and diet quality among older children and adolescents. Arch Fam Med. 2000;9:235-240

5. Neumark-Sztainer D, Hannan PJ, Story M, Croll J, Perry C. Family meal patterns: Associations with sociodemographic characteristics and improved dietary intake among adolescents. J Am Diet Assoc. 2003;103:317-322.

6. Coon KA, Goldberg J, Rogers BL, Tucker KL. Relationships between use of television during meals and children's food consumption patterns. Pediatrics. 2001;107:E7.

7. Savage JS, Fisher JO, Birch LL. Parental influence on eating behavior: Conception to adolescence. J L Med & Ethics. 2007;35:22-34.

8. Newman J, Taylor A. Effect of a means-end contingency on young children's food preferences. J Exp Child Psychol. 1992;64:200–216.

Feeding for Healthy Eating is designed to disseminate the USDA's core nutrition messages about parental feeding practices. The core nutrition messages were designed for use by nutrition educators working with the 15 USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) programs. The idea behind these messages is that FNS nutrition education will have the greatest impact if all educators deliver the same messages about healthy eating and feeding young children. These consumer-tested, simple, and easily implemented core nutrition messages can help parents improve their feeding practices and their children's diets.

There are eleven child feeding messages for parents of preschool-aged children that focus on three main areas: **role modeling, cooking and eating together,** and **the division of feeding responsibilities**. Each FHE session is designed to promote one or more of the core messages.

USDA Core Nutrition Messages

Role Modeling Messages
1. They learn from watching you. Eat fruits and veggies and your kids will too.

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

Cooking and Eating Together Messages
3. Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time.

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

Division of Feeding Responsibility Messages
5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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 meal time and eat enough, so everyone is happier.

9. 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.

10. Enjoy each other while enjoying family meals. Keep meal time 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.

11. 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.

For Additional Information on the USDA core nutrition messages, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/default.html

A dialogue learning approach to teaching provides an alternative to instructional methods where participants sit quietly and listen to their instructors. Dialogue learning, as the name suggests, encourages participants to learn, understand, and internalize information by talking to one another in a non-threatening environment.

The overall goal of dialogue learning is to elicit behavior change by creating an environment where participants feel comfortable discussing course material with one another in a way that helps them understand and be able to apply the material.

Discussed below are the components of dialogue learning that are used in this curriculum.

1. Open questions are a great way to encourage dialogue. Open questions cannot be answered with one-word answers and generally do not have right or wrong answers. Rather, they require participants to thoughtfully consider the question and form a detailed answer. Below are some examples of open questions and their opposite, closed questions.

Open questions that promote discussion:
• What are some of the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables?
• Why do you enjoy family dinners?
• What are some of the benefits of cooking with your children?

Closed questions that stifle discussion:
• Do you like fruits and vegetables?
• What are fruits and vegetables?
• Do you eat dinner with your family?
• Do you let your children help you cook?

2. Anchor, Add, Apply, and **Away** activities make sessions interactive and informative. You will use anchor, add, apply, and away activities during each session.

• **Anchor** activities connect the topic to the participants' lives and help them understand its relevance.
• **Add** activities provide new information.
• **Apply** activities give participants an opportunity to practice using the information presented in the session. By allowing participants to practice using the new information, these activities help participants understand and apply the material.
• **Away** activities encourage participants to take the new information with them when they leave the session and apply it to their everyday lives.

3. The VOICE guidelines, created by Joye Norris, define five things you can do to create an environment where participants are encouraged to talk to one another and feel comfortable sharing their ideas.

V=Voice by Choice. This is a promise that you make to your participants that you will not force them to speak. Tell your participants that you will not call on them and you will not go around the room asking for answers. Stick to this rule, even if it means you ask a question and no one offers an answer.

O=One, two, three, four, five seconds. Wait a full five seconds after asking a question (even if people raise their hands before five seconds have passed). Waiting allows participants time to prepare an answer. Remember, it takes longer to prepare an answer to open questions than to closed questions. While waiting, make eye contact with your participants. Tell them at the beginning of the program that you are going to wait after asking questions. Invite them to answer your questions with language such as "Who would like to share?" or "I invite someone to give us an example." If no one answers after five seconds, either rephrase the question or move on to the next question or activity.

I=Inclusion. Make everyone feel included. If someone has trouble with some of the material, make sure he or she has plenty of time to practice it. Do not penalize participants for asking questions or expressing confusion. If someone arrives late, ask the other participants to catch him or her up, rather than making him or her feel uncomfortable for being late. Similarly, if someone has to step out for a minute, have someone catch him or her up when they return.

C=Considerate. Tell participants that you will be considerate of them and expect them to be considerate of each other. This includes letting everyone talk, starting and ending on time, and returning from breaks on time.

E=Encouragement. Tell participants that everyone is encouraged to ask questions and add to the conversation.

4. Affirm participants' responses to your questions. After someone speaks, thank them by name for their comment, then say why you are thanking them. For example, "Thank you for that comment Martha; I'm glad you shared that. That's an example of a healthy diet."

Try to avoid praising participants with words such as "good" or "excellent." If you use praises too often, the words will lose their meaning and participants will ignore them. Hearing that the first response was "excellent" may make another person doubt and not share their answer. Be sure to affirm all responses to show that you listen to and value the participants' contributions.

Remember, the overall goal of the dialogue learning approach is to give participants a space where they feel comfortable speaking with each other about the course material. Avoid quizzing them or putting them on the spot.

5. Time management is important. You are given a certain amount of time for each section. You will want to manage your time carefully. When you let participants talk with one another, be careful to stop them when the time for that activity has passed. If you let participants talk for too long, they get bored and you will lose the energy in the room. You also risk not being able to finish all of the planned activities.

A dialogue learning approach to teaching may be different from how you have taught in the past, so you may have to practice it for a while before you feel completely comfortable.

Additional Dialogue Learning Resources

Norris JA. *Ya Gotta Have Heart! A Community Educator's Guide to Facilitation Practices.* North Myrtle Beach, SC: Learning by Dialogue; 2008.

Norris JA. *From Telling to Teaching: A Dialogue Approach to Adult Learning.* North Myrtle Beach, SC: Learning by Dialogue; 2003.

Dr. Norris's books provide an easy-to-read summary of dialogue learning's main concepts. She also provides useful examples and tips from her many years using dialogue learning.

Vella J. On Teaching and Learning: Putting the Principles and Practices of Dialogue Education into Action. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 2007.

Vella J. Dialogue Education at Work: A Case Book. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 2004.

Vella J. Taking Learning to Task: Creating Strategies for Teaching Adults. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 2001.

Dr. Vella's books provide a more in-depth explanation of the theory behind dialogue learning and its components. Her books also offer several examples and tips for putting dialogue learning into practice.

FHE is designed for use with low-income parents of preschool-aged children (2-5 years old). The curriculum is six sessions long, and each session requires 45 minutes. Additional activities (see pages 50-55) can be added to lengthen each session. These sessions work best with between 6 and 15 participants.

Organization of the Sessions

Each session contains the following information and materials:

Core Messages. The USDA core nutrition message(s) that the session directly addresses.

Background Information and Sources for Additional Information. A summary of the literature supporting the session's core nutrition message(s) and sources for this information. This information provides a rationale for each core nutrition message and will help the educator answer participants' questions. The Sources for Additional Information are for the educator's use and are not to be shared with participants.

Session Overview. A brief summary of the information participants will learn during the session.

Dialogue Learning Tips. General tips for using a dialogue learning approach.

Time Required. An estimate of the time required to complete the session. Please note that times may vary based on class participation.

Bring with you. A checklist of items needed for each session. Expect to spend a few minutes the day before you teach gathering these items. Generally, these items can be found around your office or home or can be purchased inexpensively.

Before the participants arrive. A checklist for classroom set-up. Arrive at least fifteen minutes early for each class to allow adequate time to set up. In addition, arriving early will allow you to greet each participant and make them feel welcome.

Welcome and Overview. Suggestions for welcoming participants and orienting them to the discussion for the session.

Lesson. Instructions for an Anchor, Add, Apply and Away activity. These activities introduce new material to the participants, connect the material to their lives, and give them an opportunity to apply what they have learned. This is the most important part of the session.

Closer. Suggestions for how to end the session and say goodbye to participants.

Follow-up. Details about text or email messages that can be sent to reinforce the material that was covered during the session and remind them about the next session.

Sign-In Sheet. A sign-in sheet that is used to collect contact information so that text or email messages can be sent to participants.

Participant Handout. A handout that is meant to be given to the participants to take home. These handouts should be printed back-to-front on one piece of paper and in color.

Educator Handout. A handout that you can use while teaching the session. Educator handouts include all of the information on the participant handout as well as additional information about the session for the educator.

Session Poster. A poster that displays the core message(s) for the session. During the session you will display and refer to the poster. The poster should be printed in color and should be at least 8.5" X 11" big. Laminating the posters will allow for easy reuse.