Understanding Multi-Level Programming
The 2010 Dietary Guidelines state that a coordinated system-wide approach is needed to reverse the current national environment that promotes caloric overconsumption, discourages physical activity, and includes concurrent dramatic increases in the rates of overweight and obesity and poor health outcomes. A multi-level program encompasses a system-wide approach and includes comprehensive evidence-based activities occurring at multiple complementary levels based on the social ecological model.

The Nutrition Education and the Social Ecological Model
Nutrition education can be defined as any combination of educational strategies designed to facilitate voluntary adoption of food choices and other food- and nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being (Contento et al., 1995; Society for Nutrition Education, 1995, 2006; American Dietetic Association, 2003). To facilitate voluntary adoption of behavior change, nutrition education at the individual level should be delivered alongside strategies that help make the healthy choice the easy choice, such as supportive environments and community settings, and policy change (Figure 1).

![Figure 1: Behavior change facilitators](image-url)
The social ecological model (Figure 2) illustrates how all sectors of society, including individuals and families, environmental and community settings and establishments, policy makers, and social and cultural norms combine to shape an individual’s food and physical activity choices.

**Figure 2: Social Ecological Framework for Nutrition and Physical Activity Decisions**
The examples in the table below were created to demonstrate coordinated multi-level program approaches to support you in your FY15 narrative plans and are not necessarily comprehensive of all possible approaches. The table uses the socio-ecological model to identify the various levels of influence on behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEM Level</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Environmental and Community Settings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potential WNEP</td>
<td>Direct education area</td>
<td>Strategies to support availability, accessibility, quality of food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Direct or in-direct education to families and peers</td>
<td>and physical activity opportunities aligned with direct education efforts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults (WIC)</td>
<td>Display or group lesson on fruits &amp; veggies</td>
<td>Work with coalition to support point of purchase prompts for healthy food</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Grocery tours that include choosing and using fruits &amp; veggies</td>
<td>items (example: healthy choice check-out aisle; highlighting WIC eligible foods; packaging fruits &amp; veggies in easy-to-buy amounts such as $2 or $3, place “we accept Food Share” signs near healthier food items)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Involving kids/family members/peer groups in choosing and preparing fruits &amp; veggies</td>
<td>Work with grocers/retailers who offer incentives on healthy products for FoodShare and WIC users</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Lessons on fruits &amp; veggies</td>
<td>Work with partners to support farm-to-school, school gardens &amp; garden education, healthy vending in schools, fundraisers and concession stands</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Parents utilize FYI sites/Food $ense for Families newsletters</td>
<td>At SNAP-Ed-eligible schools:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents participate in SNAP-Ed direct or indirect education that reinforce lessons taught to children</td>
<td>• Attend and/or participate in activities supporting the school wellness committee</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage implementation of healthy school breakfast, summer meals, and after school snacks</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Deliver nutrition education alongside Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Work with coalitions and school wellness committee to encourage safe routes to school</td>
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Planning: Multi-level nutrition education programs
The following program planning process might be helpful to consider a coordinated multi-level programming approach in FY15 and beyond. **General things to keep in mind:**

- Plan with intention. Nutrition education activities occurring at each of the levels of the socio-ecological model should build off of each other. Plan your programs so that the work of the WNEP coordinator and educator(s) are coordinated and complementary.

- Be strategic. Multi-level programming may allow us to enhance impact and effectiveness of our nutrition education efforts, but it also means that we may need to cut down on other programming efforts. Consider how our relationships with partners and other county/community efforts can expand program reach.

1) **Determine situation statement and target audience**
- Review data and indicators for state and county. Possible data sources include:
  - Wisconsin Food Security Project [http://foodsecurity.wisc.edu/](http://foodsecurity.wisc.edu/)
  - County Health Rankings [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org)
- Review state level priorities for healthy living (nutrition/physical activity). Examples might include:
  - Family Living Programs Healthy Living Team Plan [http://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/flpteams/](http://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/flpteams/)
- Review County Health Improvement Plan findings
- Review prior programming data and outcomes
- Consider how individuals’ family members/peers could be a target audience

2) **Identify partners & settings serving or reaching specific target audience**
Potential examples of sources of partner/setting information:
- Census tract poverty/race/ethnicity data mapping project
- County office colleagues
- Local coalition partners
- Other partners working with family members/peer groups
- County needs/assets assessments or plans

3) **Identify nutrition education messages**
Potential sources of guidance on nutrition education messages:
- SNAP-Ed guidance
- FNS Core Nutrition Messages for Mothers and Children
- WNEP logic models
- DPI Model Academic Standards for Nutrition and Planning Curriculum in Nutrition
4) Determine evidence-based complementary strategies at various levels of social ecological model

Centers for Disease Control
http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/community.html
http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/communityStrategies.html
http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/family.html

What Works for Health County Health Rankings: Diet & Exercise
http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/programs/all/all/60

Wisconsin Department of Health Services – Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention Program
http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/physical-activity/

Family Living Program 2013 Speaker Handouts and Materials on Public Values of Families and Programming with a Systems Frame
http://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/impacting-families-communities-conf/speaker-handouts/
Note: The following two pages are for your use only. The questions are complementary to those you will see on your Form D for FY15.

Guiding questions: Building a multi-level program

Refer to planning Step 1: What do you know about your county needs? State needs?

➢ What more do you need to know? Where might you go to get that information?

➢ What target audience(s) (i.e. youth, parents, WIC moms, etc.) could you reach with your programming to address these needs?

Refer to planning Step 2: How can you most effectively reach your target audience(s)?

➢ Which partners could you engage to reach your target audience(s)?
  o At the individual level? (i.e. teachers – in classroom, WIC clinic, Head Start, etc.)

  o At the environmental level? (i.e. school wellness councils, healthy living coalitions, grocers, worksites, social services agencies, etc.)

Refer to planning Step 3: Identify which messages from Dietary Guidelines will be taught through direct or in-direct education efforts. (Fruits, Vegetables, Whole Grains, etc.)

Refer to planning Step 4: What complementary environmental and community level strategies are aligned with the direct and in-direct messages delivered to your target audience(s)? These strategies are designed to make the healthy choice the easy choice.
Preparing for FY15 and Beyond – COORDINATOR’S MEETING ACTIVITY
Using page three of this document as a guide, identify ways you might develop a multi-level program with existing educational projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brief description of Educational Project</th>
<th>Current partners</th>
<th>Possible additional partners</th>
<th>Environmental and community level strategies</th>
<th>Brief description of how direct education efforts are coordinated and complementary to environmental strategies</th>
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