

WNEP Education with Parent Groups recommendations October 2014

FoodShare-eligible parents (or primary caregivers of children) are a key audience for WNEP because education with parents has the potential to affect not only the parents themselves but also their children. Challenges to engage parents in direct education include parents' busy schedules, lack of child care or transportation and competing priorities. Experienced Nutrition Educators have found that parents are more likely to attend sessions that are fun and meet their needs, and where partner agencies actively encourage parents to participate or where partner agencies have ready-made groups.

Direct education with parents may be provided through a long (6 to 8 lessons) or short (2 to 4 lessons) series, single lessons or mini lessons. Lesson series are more likely to change behavior than single lessons. However lesson series, especially long series, often are not practical for parents.

Recommended curricula (including individual lessons), and coordination with multi-level efforts

All WNEP education should use a recommended curriculum and be coordinated with at least one other obesity prevention effort. *Research indicates that an effective obesity prevention program takes a comprehensive approach* (2014 SNAP-Ed Toolkit). Examples of other collaborative efforts in which WNEP may be involved include:

- Engaging partners in conversations about getting EBT at farmers' markets or incentive programs to purchase fruits and vegetables with SNAP benefits.
- Efforts to get fresh produce and other healthy food options available at food pantries.
- Promoting the use of school meal programs.

Curricula for WNEP include SNAP-Ed key behavioral outcomes. They have been chosen for statewide use based on the evidence of a theoretical base and/or pilot testing. These curricula incorporate learning approaches that are appropriate for adults with life experience and knowledge. They include activities that appeal to adult audiences such as discussions with other parents and being engaged with the lesson.

SNAP-Ed Key Behavioral Outcomes:

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables, at least half your grains whole grains, and switch to low-fat milk and milk products.
- Increase physical activity and reduce time spent in sedentary behaviors as part of a healthy lifestyle; and,
- Balance food and physical activity.

Curriculum (author)	Brief description	Behaviors addressed	Evaluation	Notes
Loving Your Family, Feeding Their Future (USDA) http://snap.nal.usda.gov/resource-library/nutrition-education-materials-fns/loving-your-family-feeding-their-future	4 lessons, may be used individually or as a series of lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruits & vegetables • Physical activity (PA) • Healthy meals & meal planning • Family meals • Portion awareness 	None at this time specific to curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit & vegetable sampling • Portion awareness 	Available in English and Spanish Scheduled to be updated “soon”
Feeding for Healthy Eating (Maryland SNAP-Ed) http://md.nutrition-ed.org/ [This curriculum replaces Raising Healthy Eaters (RHE) because it is updated; still OK to use RHE as series]	Series of 6 lessons; each lesson is 30-45 minutes in length; teach as a 6-lesson series at this time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruits & vegetables • Role modeling • Cooking with children • Family meals • Parent’s role and child’s role in the feeding relationship 	Draft evaluation is being pilot tested in FY15	Pilot testing of single lessons and a short series of these lessons is being done in FY15 Available in English & Spanish
Money for Food (MFF) (WNEP) http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/teach/mff/index.cfm	12 lessons, may be used individually or as a series of 4-6 lessons*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meal planning • Saving money on foods 	Included in curriculum; enter results into WNEP evaluation database	Available in English and Spanish
Sisters in Health (Cornell University Extension) http://dSPACE.library.cornell.edu/handle/1813/3901	Choose a short (2-4 lessons) or long series of lessons from 10 lessons in this curriculum; do not use as single lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruits & vegetables • Food preparation • Label reading • Feeding children • Eating out 	Included in curriculum	Becoming dated but content is still relevant for parents Available in English and Spanish
Single lesson	Brief description	Behaviors addressed	Evaluation	Notes
Cooking Matters at the Store (Share Our Strengths, Cooking Matters) http://cookingmatters.org/at-the-store	Education provided with grocery store tour; plan for 60-90 minutes for this lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading labels • Unit pricing • Making healthy food choices 	Included with lesson (send copies of evaluation to Gayle Coleman)	Optional \$10 challenge is recommended but WNEP funds cannot be used for the \$10 grocery cards

*If you plan to do a short or long series of lessons using MFF, see page vi of the Full Money for Food Curriculum to determine which lessons fit with which topics. If you would like a mix of topics, choose one from each topic. Choose lessons based on the needs and interests of learners.

Mini lessons and indirect education

Mini lessons (10 to 15 minute lessons) with parents may be appropriate in some situations such as curriculum night at schools. These mini lessons provide an opportunity for parents to meet Nutrition Educators and offer a small amount of content for parents who are difficult to reach in longer lessons. Mini lessons also provide opportunities to recruit parents for longer lessons. WNEP does not have a “curriculum” of mini lessons at this time. Use displays, flip charts and similar short lessons recommended for WNEP for use at WIC and/or food pantries.

Indirect education can expand direct education. Encourage parents to connect with the Food \$ense FYI site (available in English and Spanish). Encourage parents to connect with the Family Living Programs (FLP) Facebook page and other FLP indirect education resources such as the Money Smart in Head Start newsletters or Parenting the Preschooler FYI site.

Educational reinforcements and food tasting

Educational reinforcement item might help learners implement a behavior or remind them of a behavior change. For example, an educator might provide an inexpensive measuring cup to remind learners about portion awareness. If using educational reinforcement items remember that all items purchased for use in WNEP educational programming must be necessary and reasonable, and need to be obviously and directly related to the topic taught. Think about the reinforcement items as things that are essential to the lesson and have an educational message. Do not use educational reinforcements with mini lessons.

Adults like getting and tasting samples of recipes. However, providing tastes of recipes may not be practical. If you use food samples be sure to follow “Food Purchases in WNEP” guidelines, which can be found on the WNEP website. Do not offer tasting samples with mini lessons.