

NUTRI-NET NEWS

October 1999

MEDIA MATTERS

Are your nutrition brochures hitting the mark?

This newsletter is a service of the Nutrition Education Network of Wisconsin, funded by a grant from the Food Stamp Program, Food and Nutrition Service, United States Department of Agriculture, and administered through the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It is designed to enhance coordination and communication among agencies and organizations that educate Wisconsin's low income individuals and families about nutrition and food. *Nutri-Net News* shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

Text and Graphics: Manipulating Nutrition Brochures to Maximize Recall
Clark KL, AbuSubha R, von Eye A., Achterberg C., Health Education Research.
1999;14:555-564.

Ever wonder how to improve the effectiveness of your nutrition brochures?

Many of us are familiar with popular methods of "attention-grabbing" such as bold print, colorful graphics, highlighted text boxes, and bulleted lists. Ironically, many authors don't pay enough attention to the actual complexity of the content that is written. Are the words used concrete (table, apple) or abstract (nutrient, legume)?

Researchers at Pennsylvania State University found that if they altered the Dietary Guidelines to be less abstract, consumers improved some aspects of short-term information recall.

For example, they changed 'Fiber is represented by indigestible plant parts' to two sentences that are more concrete: 'Fiber is a popular word that refers to that part of the plant that humans cannot digest. It provides bulk in our stomachs and intestines, and when found in whole grain breads, causes us to chew food more slowly'. They also replaced geometric designs with food images to highlight main points.

To improve the retention rate of your nutrition brochure:

- Write with words that are concrete & descriptive. When possible provide a pictorial representation.
- Use corresponding graphics that have concrete images (pictures of food instead of abstract art).
- Increase exposure to information by providing additional cues that relate to this information (such as familiar examples).

Subscription Information

Nutri-Net News is published quarterly. It can be sent to you by mail or e-mail.

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Nutri-Net News

Factors Associated with Attendance in a Voluntary Nutrition Education Program

Dorothy Damron, MS; Patricia Langenberg, PhD; Jean Anliker, PhD, RD; Michael Ballesteros, MS; Robert Feldman, PhD, MA, MS; Stephan Havas, MD, MPH, MS.
American Journal of Health Promotion. 1999;13(5):268-275.

All of us have experienced the frustration of designing a nutrition education program and then not receiving the turn-out of participants for which we had hoped. Why didn't they come?

Researchers in Maryland recently assessed the factors associated with attendance of WIC nutrition education classes designed to increase fruit and vegetable consumption in low-income women. A total of 1528 women participated. Vouchers were given out at the time of the class in order to reduce the number of trips to WIC site.

Factors relating to Attendance

Those more likely to attend were:

- 30 years or older.
- Married.
- Caucasian
- Highschool or college educated.
- Not receiving food stamps (suggesting that income was a factor)
- Not pregnant

Other factors related to attendance rates can be attributed to withdrawal from WIC. Six months after enrollment, around the time of the 3rd session, 17% of the enrollees no longer participated in WIC.

Mobility of WIC participants also made it difficult to reach them with reminder calls and follow-up with post-intervention surveys. Close to 30% of the enrollees had at least one change of telephone status during the 6 months of the intervention.

Tools of the Trade

Reasons for Nonattendance

As part of the post-intervention survey, the researchers asked the enrollees for reasons why they didn't come to the sessions.

Women who came to **at least one** session most often reported:

- Conflict with work or school (32%)
- Conflict with other activities (17%)
- Transportation difficulties (17%)
- Family or personal sickness (14%)

Those women that **did not come to any** of the sessions most often reported:

- Conflict with work or school (39%)
- Child care difficulties (21%)
- Transportation difficulties (20%)
- Conflict with other activities (18%)
- Family or personal sickness (14%)

In focus groups, women who did not attend any session reported that they thought the sessions would be "boring" and "uninformative". They also thought they would have to make an extra trip to the WIC site for vouchers. Most reported scheduling conflicts and lack of interest as other reasons for not attending. Women who came to 2-3 sessions reported they liked sharing recipes, watching food demonstrations, and getting together with other mothers.

To increase attendance researchers suggest:

- Using flyers that state exactly what the program is about.
- Quoting program participants in the materials.
- Using a more "personal touch".

Nutri-Net News

Nutrient Intake of Food Bank Users is Related to Frequency of Food Bank Use, Household Size, Smoking, Education and Country of Birth

Linda Jacobs Starkey, Katherine Gray-Donald and Harriet V. Kuhnlein.
Journal of Nutrition 129: 883-889, 1999.

Emergency food assistance usage is steadily on the increase throughout all of North America. Does the nutrient quality of the diet change during the month for people who are accessing food banks on a regular basis? What factors determine this?

Canadian researchers looked at the diet quality of 428 local food banks users on four different occasions during the course of one month. Five important correlates of nutrient intake were determined: frequency of food bank use, household size, smoking, education and country of birth.

Specific objectives of the Canadian group included:

- To assess the average diet over a month to determine correlates of poor overall intake
- To describe any decline in intake over the income month and determine for which clients this decline was most pronounced
- To describe the characteristics of clients who had the most highly variable diet possibly reflecting food insecurity

Results

The energy (calorie) intake of the food bank users was not different from that of the general population. However, the mean intake of milk products (and calcium) was both lower than the general population's mean intake and lower than Canada's Recommended Nutrient Intake for calcium.

Factors that correlated with other specific nutrients included:

- Men had higher intakes of energy and all nutrients except vitamins A and C
- Clients not born in Canada had higher intakes of folate and vitamin C
- Education was positively correlated with folate, vitamins A and C
- More people in the household meant lower intakes of folate, vitamin A, iron and thiamin
- More frequent users of the food bank had lower intakes of folate, protein, vitamin C, calcium, magnesium and zinc
- Smokers had lower intakes of folate, protein, vitamin C, iron and thiamin


Food Stamp Campaign

The USDA has recently launched an educational campaign to increase participation in the Food Stamp population.

Educational materials such as posters, brochures, and flyers are available in both English and Spanish.

For more information about the USDA Food Stamp Campaign and to view materials visit the web site below:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/fsp-outreach1/>



EXTRA!
EXTRA!

Nutri-Net News

JUMP 'N JIVE...Come Alive With Fruit! is in full swing in Dane and Rock Counties during the months of September and October. To refresh your memory, this social marketing and nutrition education campaign promoting fruit/juice at breakfast is currently being piloted in the above two counties. Billboards displaying the colorful swing dancing fruit can be viewed in the Madison, Janesville, and the Beloit areas.

Nutrition educators from WNEP, WIC, Elderly Nutrition, schools and Head Start from the Dane and Rock counties are enthusiastically promoting **JUMP 'N JIVE** through local nutrition activities and educational materials. Committees from the May 21st campaign workshop (see July's *Nutri-Net News*) developed tipsheets, interactive display kits and food demonstration ideas. Following is a brief description of the above promotional materials.

Tipsheets:

Six different tipsheets match the fruits found on the billboards: apples, pears, bananas, peaches, kiwifruits, and oranges/orange juice. They cover topics specific to that fruit: How to Buy (apples), How to Store (apples), Quick & Easy Tips, and a breakfast recipe.

Interactive display kits:

Include three display ideas; Make a Breakfast, Name That Fruit, and Which Costs \$5?

Fruit demonstration packet:

Six different food demonstration ideas, one each for apples, pears, bananas, peaches, kiwifruits, and oranges/orange juice.

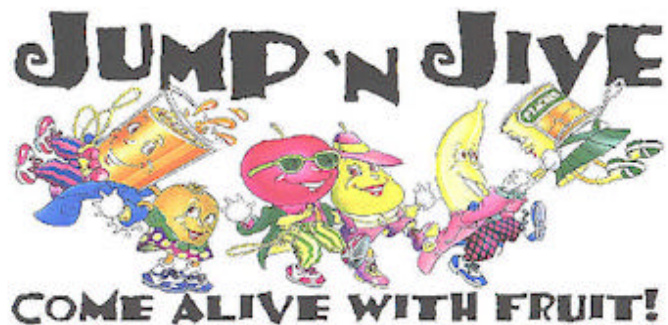
In addition, the message delivery is being augmented by school lunch menu backs, posters, newsletters, newspaper articles, fruit costumes, balloons and stickers.

Network Update

Outcome data collection from the campaign activities/materials, interviews with participants, and case studies of agency collaborators will provide the basis for evaluation. This evaluation will help in determining the degree to which social marketing, combined with community based education, is successful in promoting more healthful eating behaviors. The Network and local collaborating partners can use this information to make decisions on allocating resources and to provide direction for future programming, i.e., expanding the campaign to other counties.

Interested in receiving a free copy of the **JUMP 'N JIVE** tipsheets? Send an addressed, stamped business-size envelope to:

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OUR MISSION:

The Nutrition Education Network of Wisconsin facilitates collaborative planning of nutrition education programs at the state and local levels. We promote healthful and enjoyable eating so that Wisconsin's low income individuals and families receive consistent, positive, relevant, accurate, and effective nutrition messages.

Nutri-Net News is one way that the Network shares information and resources to accomplish this mission.