

Facilitated Group Discussion Plan

Topic: Fruits & Veggies-More Matters®

Target Group: WIC Participants, Parents, Child Care Providers

Objective for the Session: Class members will explore ways to add more fruits and veggies into everyday meals. They will identify the benefits of having a variety of fruits and veggies.

Icebreaker: Class members will introduce themselves. Optional Activity: Have class members write down everything that they ate yesterday and everything that their children ate.

Discussion questions:

1. What are the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables?
 - a. Contain essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber your body needs to be healthy
 - b. May reduce risk of chronic diseases, including stroke, cardiovascular diseases, and certain cancers
 - c. Fruits and vegetables (with the exception of olives, avocados, and coconut) are naturally low in fat
 - d. Substituting fruits and vegetables for higher-calorie foods can be part of weight loss
 - e. Every fruit and vegetable offers different nutrients, tastes and textures. For the best health, try new fruits and vegetables often.

2. Does it matter which form fruits and veggies come in (fresh, frozen, canned, dried, or 100% fruit juice)?
 - a. All forms count toward your fruit and vegetable goal
 - b. Look for canned fruit without added sugar or syrups and vegetables without added salt, butter, or cream sauces
 - c. While 100% juice can count towards your intake, most of your choices should be whole or cut-up fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, or dried). These fruit choices are better options because they contain dietary fiber. (½ cup (4 fluid ounces) of 100% fruit juice does count as ½ cup of fruit in meeting your needs).

3. Did you know that most Americans do not eat the recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables per day? What are some barriers that you can think of and how can you get around them?
 - a. Time
 - i. Grab and go foods: fresh apples, ripe plums, pears, grapes, carrots, and celery. Have these foods washed and ready for eating on your refrigerator shelf. For a quick snack for kids, have an apple already cut or carrots in a little bag.

- ii. Dried fruit like raisins, apricots, cranberries and others: Add to salads, mix with nuts, or add to cottage cheese or yogurt
 - iii. Vegetable and fruit juice – remember $\frac{3}{4}$ cup = adult serving. (Encourage limited fruit juice intake)
 - iv. Stock up on frozen vegetables- they are easy to heat in the microwave and great to add to canned soup or casseroles
 - v. Canned fruit in the fridge ready to add to cereal or as the start of a fruit salad
 - vi. Roasting is a quick, easy way to bring out the best flavors of vegetables such as carrots, eggplant, red peppers, squash, onions, sweet potatoes, and mushrooms
 - vii. Use fruit chutneys or fruit such as pineapple, apple, or papaya to complement meat dishes
 - viii. Blend it. Use any combination of fresh, frozen or canned fruit to make a smoothie.
- b. Cost
- i. Buy fruits in season.
 - ii. Discount/bulk- Costco, Sams Club, or case lot sales, etc. Learn to freeze or can fruits and vegetables you can't eat before they go bad.
 - iii. Compare price of fruit or vegetable pound per pound with typical junk food like cookies or chips. Example: One pound of oranges costs around \$0.99 where as a package (18oz) of Oreo's costs \$3.99. Use advertisements to support idea.
 - iv. Canned or frozen vegetables are usually cheaper.
- c. My kids won't eat vegetables
- i. Encourage parents to shop with their children in the produce department to get kids interested. Talk about shape color and maybe whether the fruit or vegetable comes from "a tree or in the ground?"
 - ii. Include children in the cooking experience like grating or chopping the fruit or vegetable. *If kids are involved in the food preparation they usually will eat it.*
 - iii. Keep offering small portions even if they don't eat it
4. Even eating one more fruit or vegetable per day has shown to have benefits. How can you get one more a day?
- a. Fruit on cereal or in the morning
 - b. Dried fruit on oatmeal or for a snack
 - c. Fruits and veggies for snacks
 - d. A side for meals
 - e. Add extra vegetables to soups, casseroles or other dishes
5. Optional Activity: Look at what you and your kids ate yesterday. How can you add one more fruit or vegetable in the day? What about 2 or 3?

Factual Messages:

1. A growing body of research shows that fruits and vegetables are critical to good health. To get the amount that's recommended, most people need to increase the amount of fruits and vegetables they currently eat every day.
2. Busy lives can benefit from food that is nutritious, yet easy to eat on-the-go, like fresh fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables are a natural source of energy and give the body many nutrients you need to keep going.
3. Fruits and vegetables come in great colors and flavors, but their real beauty lies in what's inside. Fruits and vegetables are great sources of many vitamins, minerals and other natural substances that may help protect you from chronic diseases.
4. To get a healthy variety, think color. Eating fruits and vegetables of different colors gives your body a wide range of valuable nutrients, like fiber, folate, potassium, and vitamins A and C. Some examples include green spinach, orange sweet potatoes, black beans, yellow corn, purple plums, red watermelon, and white onions. For more variety, try new fruits and vegetables regularly.
5. Fruits and vegetables are only good for you if you eat them.

Summarize Key Discussion Points/Suggestions: Ask participants what they have learned from the discussion and how they are going to incorporate that into everyday meals. Have participants write down 1-2 goals. This could be a new fruit or vegetable they are going to try, a barrier that they are going to get over or a meal or snack that they are going to focus on getting another serving of fruit or vegetables.

Evaluation: Participants will also set 1-2 goals for incorporating more fruits and vegetables into their everyday meals and snacks. **Optional Activity:** They will identify places on their 24-hour recall sheet where they could have another serving of fruits and vegetables.

Materials Needed: Sheet of paper to write down a 24-hour recall and goals. Pens or pencils.

References:

Adapted from Nevada WIC lesson plan- *5 A Day the Color Way*. Available at http://www.wicworks.ca.gov/education/nutrition/lessonPlans/lessonPlans_healthNutrition.htm. Accessed on February 27, 2008.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005*. 6th Edition, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 2005.

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