

Talk, Listen, Connect

Talk, Listen, Connect- Poster Session Guides

Session guides for topics using posters



PUBLIC HEALTH
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Table of Contents

Child

- Family Meals 1
 - You Eat. You Talk. You Listen 1

- Physical Activity 3
 - To Your Child You are the Greatest Show On Earth 3

- Fast Food 5
 - Balance Takes Practice 5

- Picky Eating 7
 - Resist the Food Fights 7

- Healthy Childhood Weight 11
 - Keeping Their Spirits Up Helps Keep Their Weight Down 11

- Introducing Vegetables 13
 - One of These Days the Vegetables Are Bound to Find Her Mouth 13

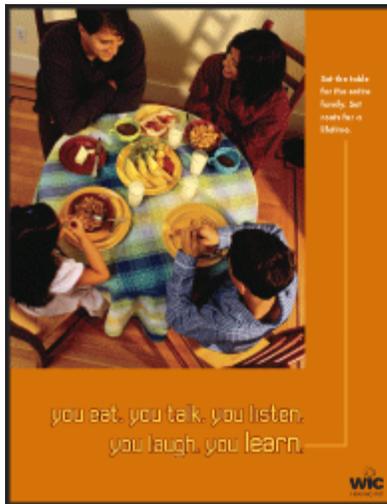
- Role Modeling 15
 - Meals are a Great Time to Play Follow the Leader 15

- Child Nutrition 17
 - Top 10 Ways to Grow Happy Kids 17

Pregnancy

- Breastfeeding 19
 - I Not Only Became a Mom, I Discovered a New Me 19

You eat. You talk. You listen...



What are key messages?

- Family meals provide emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual nourishment.
- Family meals connect families in a powerful way.

Supplies Needed: Poster

Open:

- What memories of family mealtime do you have from your childhood?
- What about eating together as a family is important to you?
- What is mealtime like for you?
- Describe your ideal mealtime with your family. What is one thing you could do to get closer to that vision?
- Suppose I could take out a prescription pad and write a prescription for something that would help protect your family. Would you be interested?
- (Show handout) The prescription I would write would be this: Eat meals together as a family. Eating together gives you and your children a sense of belonging, a connection that allows them to be strong when challenged.

Idea for a group:

- Have any of you played “Fly-on-the-Wall” before? It’s a fun game. Ready to play? Imagine you were a “Fly-on-the-Wall” during your most recent mealtime with your family. A fly-on-the-wall has a way of getting around and seeing things you might not see when you’re involved in a certain situation. What would you see or hear during mealtimes at your home?

Share and Connect:

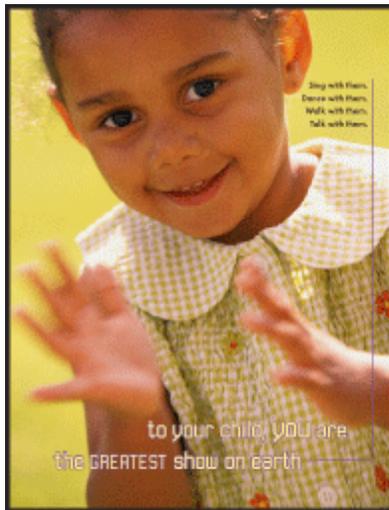
- How can busy parents find time to sit down and eat together with their families?
- What makes it difficult for your family to eat together?
- What can parents say and do at meals that give everyone, even babies, a chance to connect?
- Family meals can be stressful or fun in a busy day. What can parents do to make them peaceful, fun experiences for all?
- What memories of your family meals do you hope your children will cherish?

- Are there rituals or traditions that you could start today that might be something they will share with *their* children?
- What are some things that children can learn from family meals?
- How do you feel, as a parent, after connecting with your child in a powerful way?

Summarize and Act:

- Simply eating together as a family could actually change the direction of your child's and your family's life.
- What's for dinner at your house this week and who will be enjoying it with you?
- What are some things you can do this week to make eating together possible?
- What can you do to your schedule to make family meals more frequent?
- Of the things talked about today, what ideas will you try this week to make mealtimes more peaceful and fun for your family?

To Your Child You are the Greatest Show on Earth



What are the key messages?

- Embrace the joys of parenting.
- Children need and want to be with their parents.
- Parents are role models for their children.
- Being active together is a great way to spend more time with your children.

Supplies Needed: Poster

Open:

- Suppose a pregnant woman asked you for advice on raising children. What advice would you share with her? (Allow time for reflection and sharing.)
- (Show picture on handout to the group.) Everyday, children are watching their parents, hoping to be exactly like them. It is humbling and amazing to realize the power parents have to change or impact their children. To your child, you are the greatest show on earth. How does knowing you are the center of your child's universe make you feel?
- What positive habits do you hope your children will learn from you?

Share and Connect:

- How important do you feel it is for your child to learn the joy of being active?
- What special gifts/memories related to eating or activity would you like to give your child?
- How can parents moderate TV time to leave more time for having fun as a family?
- Parents tell me family activities that appear simple and common—like taking a walk together or eating as a family—have important emotional and health benefits. What emotional benefits do children get from being active as a family? What emotional benefits do children get from eating together as a family?
- How would your child's life be better if she learned to love being active? How would your child's life be different if he developed a life-long love of fruits and vegetables?
- How would you feel as a parent if your child grew up to be an active, fit, healthy and happy adult because of what you did today?

Summarize and Act:

1. What will you do this week to be the greatest show on earth for your child?
2. What will you do this week to help your child?

Imagine that a young child—about four years old—and his mother are at a fast food restaurant. He asks for a hamburger, soda and large French fries. Mom smiles and orders a hamburger, milk and apples. The boy protests. Mom explains that she loves him very much and wants the best for him. Children have an amazing ability to learn lessons from parents. What lessons might this young child learn from a mother who insists that her child drink milk instead of soda, and eat apples instead of French fries?

Sample responses:

- Mom cares very much about me and is willing to stand up to my protests because she wants the best for me. I may not tell mom, but I like knowing that she cares for me.
 - Mom is fun. She lets us eat out at fun fast food restaurants, but makes sure we are eating foods that are good for us. She thinks about everything because she is a great mom!
 - Mom knows what is best for me.
- It is important to do what is right, even if it doesn't feel good at the moment.
 - We started with a fill-in-the-blank activity. Let's end with one, but with a new twist:
 - When I give my child a love of milk instead of soda, I will feel_____.
 - When I give my children a desire for fruit instead of sweet desserts, I will feel_____.
 - When I give my children a love of vegetables instead of an obsession for French fries, I will feel_____.

Summarize and Act:

- What will you do next time you go to a fast food restaurant to keep the balance?
- If you do eat more fast food than you think you should, what fun things can you do with your family to balance it out?

Resist the Food Fights



What are the key messages?

- Children will stop insisting on the same foods over and over if parents ignore their demands.

Supplies Needed: Poster

Open:

- Do you remember any foods that you wanted to eat all the time when you were little? What were they?
- Have any of your children insisted on the same food over and over? How does this make you feel?

Idea for a group:

Let's start with the story of two moms. Both mothers face the same challenge but choose to handle it in different ways. Hear how mother #1 handles a child who insists on eating only one food item meal after meal. The children in this story love peanut butter sandwiches and insist on eating them every meal for weeks. Here is how Mother #1 handles the situation: (Read the following story.)

Story #1

Child (C) /Mother (M)

- C: I want a peanut butter sandwich.
M: You had a peanut butter sandwich for breakfast today and for every meal yesterday. You're getting grilled cheese instead.
C: I want a peanut butter sandwich.
M: I said no. Didn't you hear me?
C: I want a peanut butter sandwich.
M: Eating the same food every day for all three meals is not healthy. You need to eat the foods I give you.
C: I won't eat anything but a peanut butter sandwich.
M: Then you'll go straight to your room.
C: I want a peanut butter sandwich. I won't eat anything else.
M: OK, I will give you a peanut butter sandwich. But you have to eat something different at dinner.

- How do you think this mom feels about her situation?
- What do you think will happen at the next meal with this mother and child?
What should the mother have done differently?
- Now, let's see how a different mother handled the same situation. (Read the following story.)

Story #2

Child /Mother

- C: I want a peanut butter sandwich.
- M: I know you love peanut butter, but doesn't this look good? I made this yummy grilled cheese sandwich...and I have these delicious apple slices.
- C: I want a peanut butter sandwich.
- M: I'll put your grilled cheese sandwiches and apples here. I bet the apple slices would taste great dipped in peanut butter.
- C: I want a peanut butter sandwich.
- M: Why don't you try what you have on your plate? If you don't like it, you don't have to finish it.
- C: I want a peanut butter sandwich. (Ignores demand.)
I want a peanut butter sandwich.
- M: Sister Sally, you seem to really like those apple slices. Does the grilled cheese taste good?
- C: I want a peanut butter sandwich.
- M: Let's go to the park and play a little while. I'll let you climb the slide by yourself today.

- How do you think this mom feels about her situation?
- What did Mother #2 do differently to handle the same situation? How do you feel about how she handled this situation?
- Which child will likely be willing to try a different food at the next meal? Why?

Sample responses:

- Behaviors that get attention continue.
- Behaviors that are ignored stop.
- Positive attention to the desired behavior helps end the negative behaviors.
- Mother acknowledges and praises Sally for trying new foods.
- The child was trying to show his independence and the mother provided another way of being independent. (Allowing the child to climb the slide by himself at the park.)

Share and Connect:

- How will you feel when your child tries a new food that you've been offering for a while?
And likes it?
- What are a parent's responsibilities when faced with a picky eater?
- What is it like for you when your child is picky?
- What are some ways that parents can get children to try new foods?

Sample responses:

- Encourage, but don't force, kids to try new foods.
 - Offer new foods alongside favorite foods.
 - Offer a small amount of each food on the plate.
 - Keep trying...children's preferences change over time.
- What may happen when parents ignore a problem behavior—like demanding the same food over and over?

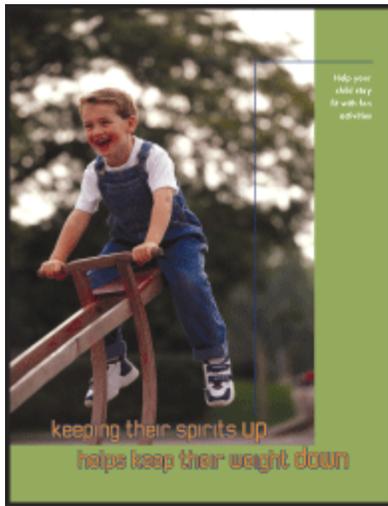
Sample responses:

- The behavior may get worse before it gets better. The child is accustomed to getting attention for the behavior and may temporarily increase it before eventually decreasing it.
 - Eventually, the behavior goes away when attention to it ceases.
- Why do children ask for the same foods over and over?
 - Why is it a good idea to not make a big deal out of picky eating?
 - Children have little control over their lives. The food they eat may be one thing that they can control. What can you do to allow a child to have a part in deciding what to eat?

Summarize & Act:

- Which behaviors will you give positive attention to this week?
- Which behaviors will you ignore this week?
- What is one thing you'll try this week to introduce a new food to your child?

Keeping Their Spirits Up Helps Keep Their Weight Down



What are the key messages?

- Active play helps children keep fit.
- Parents help children develop a love for active play.

Supplies Needed: Poster

Open:

- Parents constantly struggle to provide what their children need. What do you think are the key things children need to be happy and healthy throughout life?
- What do you do to spend time with your child? How do you think spending time together benefits you and your child?

Share and Connect:

- You don't have to spend much time with toddlers to know they are often born with a love of being active. Why do some children become less active as they get older?

Sample responses:

- Limited space for active play.
 - Unsafe neighborhoods for children to play outside.
 - Elimination of playground time at child care centers and schools.
 - Parents are too busy to take children to parks and open play areas.
 - More TV and computer/video time.
- Television and computers occupy children so parents can get work done. What would it be like for you if your child watched less TV?
 - Parents know to love their child and make them feel secure, valuable and trusting. They also know what foods grow healthy children, but what can parents do to help their children develop a love of being active?

Sample responses:

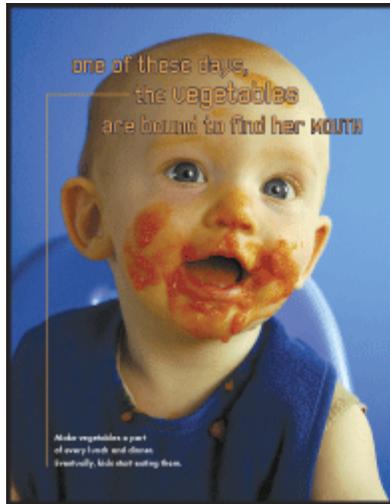
- Be active with them.
- Make wonderful memories of being active together so activity is associated with positive memories.

- Be a good role model.
 - Let them know that you crave the great feeling that comes with being active.
 - Establish family traditions around activity like a nightly walk around the block.
 - Take daily walks after dinner where families share values and dreams.
 - Take children to parks and areas where they can run.
-
- What kinds of physical activities do you do with your children (indoor and outdoor)?
 - How will *your child's life* be better if he has a love of being active and it continues throughout his life?
 - How will *your life* be better if you have a love of being active and it continues throughout your life?
 - How will you feel when you and your child can enjoy being active together?

Summarize and Act:

- What will you and your child do this week to be active together?
- If the weather or a busy schedule gets in your way of being active with your child this week, what will you do?

One of These Days the Vegetables Are Bound to Find Her Mouth



What are the key messages?

- Getting children to develop a love of vegetables takes time.
- Successful parents keep trying.

Supplies Needed: Poster

Open:

- Tell me about some successes you've had in your life. Has there been a time when you weren't successful at first, but you did eventually succeed? How did that feel?
- Tell me about a success you've had with your child that you never thought you could achieve. How hard was it at the beginning? How did it feel to be successful?

Share and Connect:

- What would make you feel successful about feeding your child fruits and vegetables?
- What are some of the barriers that keep you from reaching your goal of having your children love vegetables?
- What are important lessons that parents teach toddlers and young children that require continued attention and reinforcement over time?

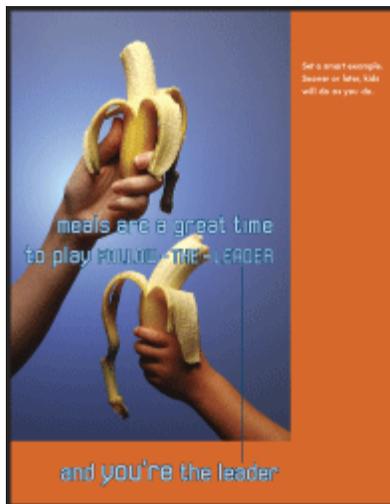
Sample responses:

- Teaching them to say "please" and "thank you."
 - Teaching them to keep their fingers out of electrical circuits.
 - Teaching them not to hit.
- What do you do when the child doesn't understand the lesson the first time?
 - How do you stay focused on your goals if you do not achieve them right away?
 - When your child understands the lesson, how do you feel about yourself as a parent?
 - How is getting your child to love vegetables an important life lesson?
 - How will you feel when your child loves vegetables?

Summarize and Act:

- What is one idea you have to get your child to eat more fruits and vegetables this week?
- What will you say to yourself if your child chooses not to eat his vegetables this week?
- What positive words could you say to yourself to keep trying and not give up?

Meals are a Great Time to Play Follow the Leader



What is the key message?
Parents are influential for children, especially in forming eating and activity habits.

Supplies Needed: Poster

Open:

- Ask participants to put their right hand out to the side and their thumb and forefinger together. (You do the same.) Direct them to put their hand on their chin while you put your hand to your ear. Most people will follow your actions rather than your words.

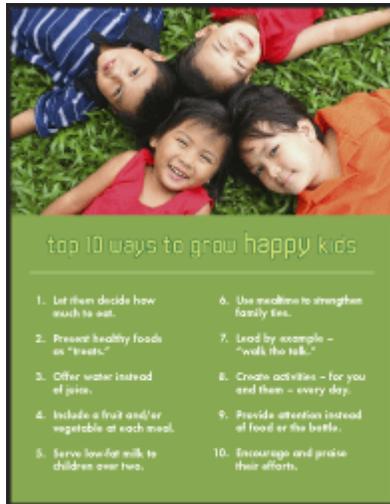
Share and Connect:

- Ask parents if they think children learn more from observing or listening to their parents. As illustrated in the opening activity, most people follow actions instead of words. Assure them that they are their child's number one teacher. Studies show that children and parents tend to eat the same types of food and have similar activity levels.
- Ask parents to generate a list of "best eating practices" for parents and children. Write their suggestions on a flip chart. Next, ask them to suggest "best activity practices" for parents and children.
- Ask parents to share one thing they are doing and one thing they would like to do from the best practice list. Next shift to things they would like to change about themselves so that their children can catch them in the act of modeling good choices. Ask parents to share tips on how best to achieve that "best practice."

Summarize and Act:

- Ask parents to consider what they can do today that will allow their child to have a better tomorrow.

Top 10 Ways to Grow Happy Kids



What are the key messages?

- Parental actions have a great impact on their child's life.
- Small, everyday actions can have a big return in terms of a child's health and happiness.

Supplies Needed: Poster

Open:

- If you were to offer advice to a new mother, what things would you tell her are important for "growing" a healthy child?
- What advice was offered to you when you became a mother?
- Idea for a group:
- Once upon a time, there were three men breaking stones. A passerby asked: "What are you doing?"
"Breaking this darn rock," replied the first man.
"Making a living," replied the second.
"Building a beautiful home," beamed the third.

The man continued down the road where he saw three parents preparing food for their children. He asked: "What are you doing?"

"Making food for my children to eat," replied the first mother.

"Making food so my child will be full," replied the second.

"Growing a happy, healthy child," beamed the third.

- What is the difference between the three parents? (Attitude.)
- Which parent is likely to take the time to eat as a family, offer veggies with each meal and make sure their children drink water or milk instead of soda?

Share and Connect:

- What things can you do to "grow a happy, healthy child?"
- (Offer handout and ask them to read the "Top 10 ways to grow happy kids.") What do you feel is the most important of the ten listed ways to grow a healthy, happy child? What's missing from this list?
- How can parents grow happy kids by doing these small things everyday?

- What are the challenges that prevent parents and children from eating healthy foods every day? How have you solved those challenges?
- How do children benefit when parents offer healthy foods consistently?
- How do you feel when you offer healthy foods to your child?
- How do you feel when your child happily eats the healthy foods you've prepared?
- How do you think healthy eating is related to a child's happiness?

Summarize and Act:

- What will you do this week to help your child grow happy?

I Not Only Became a Mom, I Discovered a New Me



What are the key messages?

- Motherhood changes everything. Bonding with your baby changes you in a powerful way that inspires you to be the best you can be.
- Breastfeeding may seem impossible until you gaze into your baby's eyes for the first time.

- Give breastfeeding a try.
- Breastfeeding is the normal method to feed an infant.

Supplies Needed: Poster

Open:

- We all learn something new about ourselves almost everyday. What have you learned about yourself in the past months that has caught you by surprise? Delighted you? Made you proud of yourself?
- In what ways are you stronger than you thought?
- How do you feel about the way you have changed?

Share and Connect:

- What things about motherhood worry you?
- What things do you feel confident about?
- What feelings or thoughts do you have about feeding your new baby?
- How do you feel when you see a mom breastfeeding her baby?
- Some people feel breastfeeding is a gift a mother gives her baby, but mothers who breastfeed feel that the baby gives *them* the gift. How do you feel about breastfeeding?
- How might breastfeeding change you and your baby? (Affirm all feelings.)
- How might your life be more complicated if you do not breastfeed your baby?
- How might your baby's life be impacted if you formula feed?

Summarize and Act:

- How can you focus on breastfeeding as a way to bond with your miracle?
- What will you have to do now to be ready for breastfeeding when your baby arrives?
- What people will you need to tell about your plan to breastfeed?
- Who will support you and your decision?
- What will you say to influence others to support you in your breastfeeding decision?