



## POPULAR KIDS' SNACK FOODS A NUTRITION IN-SERVICE FOR STAFF

“In general my children refuse to eat anything that hasn't danced on television.”

~ Erma Bombeck



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## A lesson on exploring common snack foods marketed to children and how to inspire clients to make healthier choices.

- Who:** Participants: WIC Staff, range of 2-15 participants with a varying degree of maternal, infant and child nutrition knowledge and WIC experience.  
Leader: WIC RD/Nutritionist
- Why:** The market place has an ever changing variety of kids' snack foods. By familiarizing themselves with popular snack foods and factors that affect families' choices, WIC staff can better explore healthy snack choices with WIC families.
- When:** A monthly in-service that is designed to be 30 to 60 minutes - depending on the discussion and the number of staff attending.
- Where:** The session was designed for a WIC Classroom, meeting room or large office depending on the size of the group.
- What:** By the end of this session staff will have:
- Explored common kids' snack foods available in the marketplace.
  - Identified marketing strategies used to sell kids' snack foods.
  - Examined kids' snack food labels for kid-appeal, parent-appeal and nutritional content.
  - Practiced sharing information about snack food choices with WIC participants.
- Materials Needed:** Flip chart, easel, paper and markers  
Copies of:
- Popular Kids' Snack Foods In-service *Participant Copy*
  - Popular Kids' Snack Foods In-service *Feedback Form*
  - Popular Kids' Snack Foods Score Sheet (provided)
- Snack samples, labels or other packaging to use in Part 2. Suggestions on obtaining snacks or labels to review:
- Check to see if there is money available in WIC budget to purchase samples.
  - Prior to training ask participants to bring various "kids" snacks.

- Gather label information from products at grocery store.
- Obtain photos and label information from web sites.

Try the following:

<http://www.kraftfoods.com>

<http://www.generalmills.com>

**Potential Products:**

- Fruit snacks or fruit rolls
- Fruit cups (applesauce, diced fruits, gelatin with fruit, etc...)
- Pudding cups
- Crackers in various shapes (fish, bunnies, bears, etc...)
- Chips, cookies, snacks in multi (single-serve) packs
- Kids' packaged yogurt (Go-GURT® yogurt)
- String Cheese
- Portable fresh fruit
- Whole grain crackers portioned into plastic baggies

**Background** For review before leading group:

**Reading for Leaders:** The Washington State In-service: An Introduction to: Ask, Provide, Ask.

For further review and consult:

- *Pestering Parents: How Food Companies Market Obesity to Children*, Center for Science in the Public Interest, [www.cspinet.org/pesteringparents](http://www.cspinet.org/pesteringparents)
- Institute of Medicine. *Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity?* Washington DC: National Academies Press; 2005 [www.iom.edu/cms/3788/21939/31330.aspx](http://www.iom.edu/cms/3788/21939/31330.aspx)
- *Perspectives on Marketing, Self Regulation, and Childhood Obesity: A Report on a Joint Workshop*. Washington DC: Federal Trade Commission and US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2006 <http://www.ftc.gov/os/2006/05/PerspectivesOnMarketingSelf-Regulation%26ChildhoodObesityFTCandHHSReportonJointWorkshop.pdf>

- How:**
- Schedule in-service.
  - Review background information.
  - Review in-service *Leader Copy* (*italicized print indicates leader speaking*).
  - Prepare materials needed.
  - Have fun!

**Introduction / Warm-Up****5 minutes**

*Welcome! I will be the leader for this month's nutrition training. I encourage all of you to participate. Together we can explore our topic and discover strategies to support our WIC clients.*

*By the end of this session you will have:*

- *Explored common kids' snack foods available in the marketplace.*
- *Identified marketing strategies used to sell kids' snack foods.*
- *Examined kids' snack food labels for kid-appeal, parent-appeal and nutritional content.*
- *Practiced sharing information about snack food choices with WIC participants.*

*In pairs share what kids' snack foods you have noticed in the market and being consumed by children. We will hear your responses.*

Allow time for discussion then call group back.

Hear responses and record on flip chart.

You can categorize responses (sweets, salty, etc...).

Summarize responses.

**Part 1****5 minutes****Marketing strategies that sell**

*Listen as we read the following information regarding marketing.*

*Note what is surprising to you.*

*Marketing professionals use a variety of strategies to influence consumer preferences, stimulate consumer demand, promote frequency of purchases, build brand awareness and brand loyalty, encourage potential or existing customers to try new products, and increase sales.*

*Marketers segment target audiences by age, gender, and race/ethnicity to build brand awareness and brand loyalty early in life that will be sustained into adulthood. Children and youth represent an important demographic market because they are potential customers, they influence purchases made by parents and households (the nag factor), and they are the future adult market.*

*Food manufacturers and chain restaurants use aggressive and sophisticated marketing techniques to attract children's attention, manipulate their food choices and prompt them to pester their parents.*

*Companies design their packages to stand out and appeal to children, carefully choosing the color, the product name, ease of use of the packaging, portion size and use of cartoon or other characters. Advertising and marketing aimed at children often utilize television and movie characters, star musicians and athletes, taking advantage of children's familiarity with, affection for or admiration of them.*

*Who would like to share what they found surprising?*

**Part 2****15 minutes****Scoring kids' snack foods**

*Point of purchase advertising is the information attached to or on a product for the purpose of naming it, describing its use, its ingredients, its manufacturer and the like. Point of purchase advertising can be very powerful*

*Divide into groups of two or three.*

Hand out snack food samples and/or labels.

Hand out Popular Kids' snacks score sheet.

*Using the chart, analyze your product(s) for its point of purchase advertising. Note the "kid-appeal" (color, graphics, toy or brand association) "parent-appeal" (health and nutrition benefits, price...) and nutrition facts about the product. Each group will share their score sheet findings on their product.*

Allow time for analysis.

Call group back.

Hear each groups "report" on their product.

**Part 3****10 minutes****Using Ask, Provide, Ask**

*Using Ask, Provide, Ask, practice exploring with a client about what snacks are a part of their child's intake and what healthy snacks might work for their family. Divide into pairs and decide who will be the client and who will be the staff person.*

*We will share some of your discussions.*

*Ask...Ask what the client knows, or would like to know*

*Provide...Offer information in a neutral, nonjudgmental manner*

*Ask...Ask about the client's thought, feelings, and reactions*

*You may wish to start with one of the following "Ask" statements:*

- *What type of snacks do you typically give your child?*
- *What is important to you when choosing your child's snacks?*
- *When it comes to the snacks you provide to your child, what would be the most helpful to know more about?*

Call group back.

*Who would like to share some of their discussions?*

*What aspects of this in-service will you use in working with your clients?*

<b>Closing</b>	<b>1 minute</b>
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*Thanks for participating today. We heard some great discussion and ideas that will help us to better serve our WIC clients.*

*Please fill out a feed-back form – your input is greatly appreciated.*

Collect Feedback Forms.

Make any notes you have as a leader.

Review participants' Feedback Forms.

Document this training.



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### Learning Objectives

By the end of this session you will have:

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- Examined kids' snack food labels for kid-appeal, parent-appeal and nutritional content.
- Practiced sharing information about snack food choices with WIC participants.

In pairs share what kids' snack foods you have noticed in the market and being consumed by children. We will hear your responses.

### Part 1

#### Marketing strategies that sell

Note what is surprising to you.

Marketing professionals use a variety of strategies to influence consumer preferences, stimulate consumer demand, promote frequency of purchases, build brand awareness and brand loyalty, encourage potential or existing customers to try new products, and increase sales.

Marketers segment target audiences by age, gender, and race/ethnicity to build brand awareness and brand loyalty early in life that will be sustained into adulthood. Children and youth represent an important demographic market because they are potential customers, they influence purchases made by parents and households (the nag factor), and they are the future adult market.

Food manufacturers and chain restaurants use aggressive and sophisticated marketing techniques to attract children's attention, manipulate their food choices and prompt them to pester their parents.

Companies design their packages to stand out and appeal to children, carefully choosing the color, the product name, ease of use of the packaging, portion size and use of cartoon or other characters. Advertising and marketing aimed at children often utilize television and movie characters, star musicians and athletes taking advantage of children's familiarity with, affection for or admiration of them.

**Part 2****Scoring kids' snack foods**

Using the chart analyze your product(s) for its Point of Purchase advertising. Note the "kid-appeal" (color, graphics, toy or brand association) "parent-appeal" (health and nutrition benefits, price, etc...) and actual nutrition facts about the product.

Each group will share their score sheet findings on their product.

**Part 3****Using Ask, Provide, Ask**

Using Ask, Provide, Ask, practice exploring with a client about what snacks are a part of their child's intake and what healthy snacks might work for their family. Divide into pairs and decide who will be the client and who will be the staff person.

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You may wish to start with one of the following "Ask" statements:

- What type of snacks do you typically give your child?
- What is important to you when choosing your child's snacks?
- When it comes to the snacks you provide to your child, what would be the most helpful to know more about?

Who would like to share some of their discussions?

What aspects of this in-service will you use in working with your clients?

**Closing**

Thanks for participating today.

Please fill out a Feedback Form – your input is greatly appreciated!

## Popular Kids' Snack Foods Score Sheet

Product	Kid-appeal*	Parent-appeal*	Nutrition Facts*

*Kid-appeal\**- color, graphics, toy or brand association

*Parent-appeal\** - health and nutrition benefits, price

*Nutrition Facts\**- nutrition label and ingredient list





