



ENERGIZE YOUR LIFE!
EAT HEALTHY-BE ACTIVE

This newsletter is produced by the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington* to enhance communication and coordination among those who educate Washington families about nutrition and food. *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators* shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

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Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators can be sent to you electronically each month. There is no charge. To subscribe or unsubscribe, contact Christa Albice, WSU Puyallup, 253-445-4541, e-mail albice@wsu.edu.

To access past issues, go to <http://nutrition.wsu.edu/take5/index.html>.

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This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DSHS Community Service Office.

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This Month's Focus-
Behavior Change in Community Nutrition Education

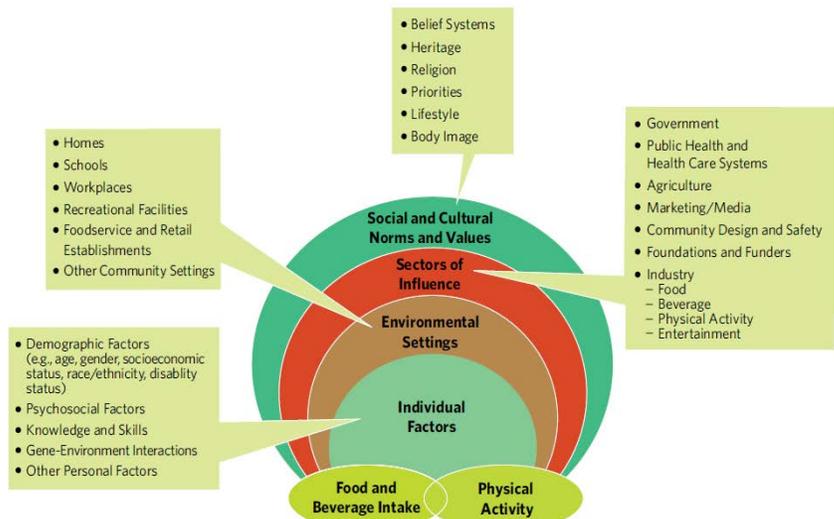
A goal for nutrition educators is not just to teach information but to help the people we serve make lasting positive changes in the way they eat. In this issue of *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators* we explore some of the current theories and programs that appear to do just that. The newsletter begins with remarks by Jill Armstrong Shultz, who has been involved in nutrition education research and teaching for many years at Washington State University and currently leads the WSU SNAP-Ed grant.

A Special Contribution to Energize Newsletter by Jill Armstrong Shultz

How do we design a nutrition education program to have influence on our audience, especially with respect to behavior change? Over decades of research, theories and models for dietary behavior change have been used to summarize what we know about determinants of eating behaviors, using the results to inform our best practices in nutrition education. A theory is a means of accumulating knowledge within an interpretable and testable framework. Theories evolve when we apply them in different ways, to different audiences. Some of the foundational work in behavioral nutrition came from research with at-risk groups, including adults trying to lose weight, diabetes patients learning diabetes self-management, and persons at risk for cancer. A better understanding of why individuals make behavior changes for better health helped us to improve education approaches to support the change, leading to greater recognition of nutrition education as public health promotion. We took some of our earliest theories from nursing researchers, who were trying to characterize patient response to health care, and from nutritional anthropologists, who were keen on identifying global explanations for why people eat the way they do.

Theoretical frameworks are prominent in current obesity prevention efforts. Examples are: The Social Ecological Model (SEM) that guides SNAP-Ed programming; recent healthy

DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS, 2010



eating messages developed for WIC mothers using Persuasion Principles; and Stages of Change used in developing fruit and vegetable promotion programs. At the 2004 National Obesity Prevention Conference, federal funding agencies (the USDA, NIH, Centers for Disease Control-CDC) gathered researchers and implementing agencies together to establish a national research track for prevention research. There was recognition that “Behavioral theories and conceptual models of behavior change can be drawn upon” to support needed lifestyle modification for obesity prevention [Strategic Plan for NIH Obesity Research]. However, a turning point in behavioral approaches was announced at the conference: since theories strictly focused on individual behavior change had not been successful in slowing the obesity epidemic, we should instead utilize frameworks that recognize interventions at the individual *and* environmental levels, so as to promote change beyond the individual in supporting and sustaining healthier lifestyles. (Contact: Jill Armstrong Shultz, PhD, Extension Specialist in Nutrition and Public Health, Human Nutrition, WSU Extension, CAHNRS, Washington State University, 509-335-6181, armstroj@wsu.edu)



Example of Power of Influence “Likeability” – photos and personal tidbits about WIC staff. Photo courtesy of Brean Cassidy, Lincoln County Public Health Department.

Power of Influence and WIC – Several months ago, staff with the Washington State WIC Nutrition Program attended training on using Robert Cialdini’s “Power of Influence” theory with their clients, and “local staff just ate this up” according to Jacqueline Beard of the state WIC office. At that training, speaker Pam McCarthy applied to WIC its six principles to influence clients, build trust, and ultimately change behavior. The Power of Influence uses basic concepts about how everyone makes choices. The principles include:

1. Likeability: We go along with people we like.
2. Reciprocity: We want to give back what is given to us.
3. Commitment: We do things consistent with what we commit to, either verbally or in writing.
4. Consensus: We like to do what we see others who are like us do.
5. Authority (credibility): We follow those we respect. We believe and trust those who acknowledge weakness in their argument.
6. Scarcity: We see what’s less available as more valuable.

WIC staff are putting these principles to use and have been enjoying the results, in part because it allows them to connect emotionally with clients. Jacqueline shared this comment from one staff member, “I have worked in nutrition for many years. The Power of Influence has taken me to a higher level. I feel I am a better counselor and I find more joy in my work.” But do the principles change behavior? In a study applying the principles with the Chickasaw Nation WIC Program, breastfeeding increased by 20%. To learn more about this approach, Jacqueline suggests these resources:

- A poignant video showing the incredible power of words: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TXf4euWtvE.
- A short video explains the six principles: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFdCzN7RYbw&list=UU8IMseLCZx2BZe3thxHXnog&index=1&feature=plcp.
- Book by Robert B. Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*.
- Website for We Influence Change describing the changes that took place in the Chickasaw Nation WIC, including video clips of WIC staff talking about their experiences using the principles: www.wicinfluence.com/wicinfluence.com/Home.html.

(Contact: Jacqueline Beard, RD, CD, Manager, Training, Development, and Enrichment Team, Washington State Department of Health, Office of Nutrition Services – WIC, 360-236-3656 or 800-841-1410 ext 3656, Jacqueline.beard@doh.wa.gov.)

Be a Food Hero! – Sharing delicious, healthful, easy-to-prepare recipes can be one effective way to help people eat more nutritious foods. A good source for recipes on a budget is a website produced by our neighbors to the south at Oregon State University. At www.foodhero.org, users can search for recipes in English or in Spanish, by prep time (under 30 minutes) or by category (such as kid-friendly or low-sodium). One section enables a user to look up a recipe by main ingredient so that they can use foods that they have on hand.

Project GLAD – Nutrition educators have been using training from Project GLAD™ and integrating the teaching strategies into lessons about nutrition. Educators use strategies that promote English language acquisition and literacy. A strong feature of this model is its respect for diversity not only in language and ethnicity but also in thinking, learning, and personal experiences. For a useful video explaining Project GLAD showing its application with children in elementary school classrooms, see <http://curriculumreform.wikispaces.com/Guided+Language+Acquisition+Design>. The GLAD model was developed through California’s Orange County Department of Education, and is used in Oregon and Washington state classrooms. WSU Food \$ense educators in King County use GLAD strategies in all curriculums taught in grades K-6. For example, the Food, Fun and Reading Curricula has been adapted to use narrative input charts which are interactive and provide opportunity for students to acquire new language skills. Info at www.projectglad.com (Contact: Maggie Grate, Food \$ense Program Manager, WSU Extension King County, 206-205-6224, maggie.grate@wsu.edu.)

OUR MISSION: *The Nutrition Education Network* coordinates nutrition education efforts to communicate consistent, positive and relevant messages to increase awareness of healthful and enjoyable eating among low-income families. *Energize* is one way that *the Network* shares information and resources to accomplish this mission.

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Does the Web Work? How does web-based education compare with in-person education for low-income adults? To find out, researchers in Indiana tried the same three lessons (fruits and vegetables, Nutrition Facts label reading, and whole grains) with a web-based group and in-person groups. Both groups improved their nutrition behaviors after the lessons, and the results were essentially the same, except for one area. That was the use of the Nutrition Facts label, which the researchers determined might need more in-person explanation. It had been thought that there was a “digital divide” separating low-income people from access to computers. That divide is gradually decreasing and the authors of the study think that web-based interventions for low-income populations could broaden the reach of delivery of nutrition education and possibly decrease costs. (Neuenschwander LM et al, “Comparison of a web-based vs in-person nutrition education program for low-income adults.” *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 113(1):120-126, January 2013.)

LOCAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Local Conference on Preventing Obesity in Young Children – Nutrition educators working with the preschool population and families with young children will come away with practical tools and resources from a conference on April 3 in Seattle. “Healthy habits for healthy kids: Practical approaches to preventing childhood obesity” targets WIC providers, early learning childcare providers, and healthcare practitioners in its day-long event. Keynote speakers include Margo Wootan from Center for Science in the Public Interest, and Dayle Hayes, a dietitian with many years of experience developing nutrition education tools. Other expert speakers will address issues on establishing healthy eating habits and behaviors to help maintain a healthy weight. The training by Nutrition First costs \$145 for non-members and scholarships are available. Info at: www.nutritionfirstwa.org/events.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Low-Cost MyPlate Materials – Colorful pamphlets, stickers, pocket cards, wristbands, notepads, magnets, and more are available through Journeyworks. Using graphics directly from USDA’s MyPlate, the educational tools target kids and adults, and some are available in Spanish. Many can be customized with your agency’s information. The leaflet, “Healthy eating on a budget” includes a simple checklist to make economical and healthful choices when preparing for a shopping trip. “Put me on your kids’ plate: Tips for parents” offers easy and do-able suggestions for offering nutritious foods that kids will like to eat. Info at: www.journeyworks.com.

WASHINGTON GROWN

Grow Your Own Herbs and Veggies – After our long, gray winter, springtime has arrived, and is a good time to plant seeds indoors that can be transplanted later. Before long, the ground will be warmer and those little seedlings and plant starts can be moved outdoors to pots on a balcony or deck or in the ground. As you and your clients think about what to plant, consider the plants that you enjoy eating but might be costly to purchase at the supermarket. Good bets are herbs and lettuce varieties because home-grown varieties save money and don’t take much space. And what could be more convenient than walking out the door to pick leaves for a salad or sandwich? SNAP benefits (formerly called food stamps) may be used to purchase seeds and plants for the household to eat. Info at: www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailers/eligible.htm.



EAT TOGETHER EAT BETTER – Family Meals Focus

Because our readers have told us that Family Meals is a hot topic, in the May 2011 issue we began a small section on recent news relating to this topic and our long-standing signature program, Eat Together, Eat Better.

Family Meals – A Comparison of Three Countries – Children in the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain have one thing in common: they think that eating in company, with family or friends, is much more enjoyable than eating alone. But while kids in Spain and Italy tend to eat with the rest of the family, those in the UK are more likely to eat alone or with the television for company. Whether a child eats with parents can make a difference in the nutritional quality of their diets, according to a study by Kellogg’s. Children in Italy enjoy the broadest range of foods and had the most sophisticated understanding of healthy eating. They learn from their parents what foods are good for them. In Spain, children understand what variety and balance in the diet mean. In all countries, children trust their mothers as the nutrition expert and role model for their own eating habits. (Source: Kellogg’s UK.)

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