

Toolkit #2

How To Talk About Milk

Whole milk will no longer be available for children (C2-C4) and women starting October 1, 2009. Some of our clients may not like the change, so it is important we help them through this transition to change the “norm” of milk in the WIC program.

You can also help your staff prepare for this change by empowering them with some language to produce a positive, collaborative discussion. On the second page of this toolkit, please find language and tips that can be copied and distributed to staff as “cheat sheets.”

It is recommended you practice using these with staff so they feel empowered and prepared. We want to avoid negative or hostile language, so practicing a new way of talking and thinking is important.

Language to encourage staff to **avoid** when discussing the transition to milk:

- “You have to do it if you want to get WIC checks. You don’t have a choice.”
- “The computer won’t let me put anything else in.”
- “Look how big he is. He needs lowfat milk.”
- “You need to start using lowfat milk right away.”
- “It’s not my fault. USDA says we have to. I would give it to you if I could.”
- “It’s not up to me. If you don’t want the milk, just don’t buy it.”

On the next two pages, please find a cheat sheet for your staff. Again, the most important part is practice so that everyone feels comfortable with these new rules.



WIC is Good Nutrition!

That's why on October 1, 2009, WIC will only provide 1% and skim milk to women and children ages two and older. Whole milk will no longer be available.

This is an exciting opportunity for us to change behavior by changing the environment. In other words, when we help clients successfully transition to and accept fat-free and lowfat milk and provide them with it, they can better protect the health and wellbeing of their families.

Some ways to open the conversation:



❖ As you may know, we are getting a lot of exciting new foods in October. You will be able to buy whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, jarred baby food fruits and veggies, and even soy milk with your WIC checks. Another change to our program is that we will provide only nonfat and 1% milk starting October 1st. What do you think about this?

❖ I'm here to help you take care of your family's nutrition, and it's great that you want to protect their futures by coming to WIC. I want to talk about another thing that might help you protect their future, switching the whole family to nonfat or 1% milk. How do you feel about this?



❖ WIC is changing some of the foods we offer because we want to help our moms eat as healthy as possible during their pregnancies and afterwards, as they're taking care of their new babies. One of these changes is the milk we provide. We really want our clients to enjoy lowfat and fat-free milk, which as you may know has all of the vitamins and minerals but none of the fat. Have you ever tried lowfat or fat-free milk?

We can help our clients get used to the transition by starting now and starting slowly. Slowly tapering down from whole or 2% to 1% or skim may be easier on the taste buds than changing quickly.



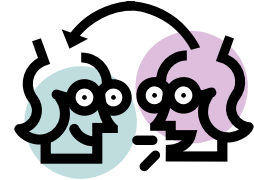
Ways to talk about transition:

❖ Change can be hard, and yet it can be really good in the end. Do you remember when helped your son move from the bottle to the cup? Your persistence paid off, and now he is healthier for it. You can be proud that your son will have a nice smile. This is the same idea. I want to help you make this transition slowly so that everyone gets used to it, and I want to give you some great ideas that will help along the way. Do you think you're up to it?



- ❖ It sounds like you are anxious about trying something new. The good thing is you're in charge, and it's your kitchen. If you can slowly get used to something new and can show your kids that you enjoy it, they will be more likely to try it too. Do you have experience with your kids wanting to eat or drink what you have? This is the same idea.

What to do if the client gets upset?



- 1. Listen.**
- 2. Reflect.**
 - It sounds like you are really upset about this.
 - So you aren't too excited because you don't like lowfat milk.
 - You're afraid that your kids won't drink it.
- 3. Empathize.**
 - Many moms are very worried when they do new things because they feel their kids won't accept anything new.
 - Change is hard for everyone, especially when you have three young children!
 - Some of my clients have said the same thing. I want you to know you're not alone.
- 4. Ask permission to give some information.**
 - Is it OK if I give you some tips that might help?
 - Do you mind if we talk a little bit about what could make this easier for your family?
- 5. Provide additional emotion-based information.**
 - Switching to lowfat or fat-free milk is a great step in protecting your family's health and helping them grow strong. Some times our taste buds just have to get used to new things, and slowly switching to lowfat milk may be easier than doing the switch all at once. What do you think about this?
 - It sounds like you just want to be a good mom and make sure your kids are getting good nutrition. I want to help you do that, and I think that if we work together and do this slowly, your kids won't even notice the difference! Let's talk about transitioning slowly, switching milk caps, combining it with their favorite foods (smoothies, cereal)...
- 6. Check-in.**
 - After talking about all of this, what do you think now?
 - Do you feel any better about this change?

****If the situation escalates and the client is very upset, utilize your supervisor's help.****

