

**Peer-Review of EFNEP Curricula
Revised for the 2005 Dietary Guidelines
and MyPyramid**

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The Colorado Adult EFNEP Curricula Peer-Review Project

The recent revision of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and development of MyPyramid rendered nutrition education materials out-of-date. Thus, the education materials used for programs such as Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) needed to be revised or replaced. The purpose of this project was to identify curricula that were either currently under revision or recently developed, appropriate for Adult EFNEP audiences. Once identified, these curricula were reviewed for possible future use with adult EFNEP audiences.

Results derived from a national EFNEP survey conducted with state-level EFNEP coordinators prior to the on-set of the Colorado EFNEP Curriculum Review Project yielded a list of 18 states with potentially appropriate curricula. The first step of the project was to develop a web-based survey assessing characteristics of these 18 curricula (see Appendix A for the survey and cover letter). Of the 18 states invited to respond to the survey, 12 states responded. Based on the responses to the web-based survey, eight curricula were chosen for review. Once the results were received, permission to include curricula in the review process was requested and granted from the eight states.

Copies of each of the eight curricula were requested for the review process. Eleven reviewers were involved in the peer-review process. Four of the reviewers were from the Food Science and Human Nutrition Department (FSHN) at Colorado State University (CSU). The other eight reviewers were from land-grant universities and were dispersed across the country, serving to give a cross-regional perspective. All reviewers involved work with either EFNEP or FSNE and thus have experience with limited resource audiences.

The reviewers used two review assessment tools in the peer-review process. The first tool was developed at CSU and was used to evaluate lesson topics and desired content (see Appendix B). The second tool was adapted from the Iowa State University Extension Program's *Guide to Evaluating Written Nutrition Education Materials*. This tool was used to assess readability, content, and design (see Appendix C).

The reviewers within the FSHN department at CSU each were responsible for reviewing two curricula. The out-of-state reviewers each received one curriculum to review. Thus, two reviewers, one within the FSHN department at CSU, and one out-of-state reviewer reviewed each curriculum.

The results of the web-based survey and peer-review are depicted in the following tables and summaries: Table 1 is a summary of the results of the web-based survey; Table 2 indicates which topics are included in each curriculum. It is important to note that these are topics, not necessarily lessons. Table 3 summarizes the reviewers' answers from the review tool designed to assess readability, content, and design; and lastly, the paragraphs following the tables provide detail about which components were available for review from each curriculum and a summary of strengths and limitations, as noted by the reviewers, from each curriculum.

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Table 1: Survey Results for Specific States

State and Title of Curricula	Revised* or Rewritten**	Available in Spanish	Theory Based	Length of Lesson	Visuals Included	Lesson Order	Lesson Plan Detail
FL Nutrition Essentials	Revised	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
IL Building a Healthy Lifestyle	Revised	Yes	Adult Learning Theory	30 min.	-Table-top diagrams -Handouts	Taught in any order	Very detailed
IA Build a Healthy Diet	Revised	Yes	Adult Learning Theory	60 min.	-Posters -Table-top diagrams -Handouts	Taught in any order	Very detailed
MA Choices: Steps to Health	Revised	Yes	-Social Learning Theory -Stages of Change	60 min.	-Posters -Table-top diagrams -Handouts	Taught in any order	Moderate detail
MI Eating Right is Basic	Revised	No	No data	45 min.	-Handouts -PowerPoint	Taught in any order	Moderate detail
NC Families – Eating Smart and Moving More	Rewritten	Yes	-Transth. Model -Social Cognitive Theory	60 min. or 30 min.	-Table-top diagrams -Handouts -PowerPoint	Taught in any order	Moderate detail
WI Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program	Revised	Yes	No response	Varies	-Booklets	Taught in any order	Minimal detail
WY Cent\$ible Nutrition Program	Revised	No	Social Cognitive Theory	60 min.	-Table-top diagrams	Taught in any order	Very detailed

*Revised = Curricula updated with information relevant to the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines* and MyPyramid

**Rewritten = Major revision of curriculum format, content, visuals, and/or lesson plans

NR-No response; the survey was not fully completed by respondents of this curriculum

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Table 2: Topics Addressed in Each Reviewed Curriculum

	MyPyramid	Grains	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk	Meat & Beans	Physical Activity	Food Safety	Label Reading	Food Budgeting/Shopping	Meal Planning	Eating Breakfast	Snacks	Prenatal Nutrition	Breast vs. Bottle	Feeding Children (1-3)	Feeding Preschoolers (3-5)	2005 Dietary Guidelines	Salt Intake	Fat Intake	Portion Size	Variety	Eating Away from Home
FL	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
IL	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
IA	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
MA	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
MI		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
NC			•	•			•	•	•	•	•					•			•	•	•	•	•
WI		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•			•	•	•	•
WY	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

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Table 3: Readability, Content, and Design of the Reviewed Curricula

	FL	IL	IA	MA	MI	NC	WI	WY
Clear Purpose	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
Appropriate Word Use	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
Appropriate Sentence Structure	Yes/Yes	No/No	Yes/Yes	No/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
Appropriate Paragraph Structure	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
Appropriate Overall Organization	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/No	Yes/Yes
Appropriate Tone	Yes/Yes	No/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
Accurate Information	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
Appropriate Information	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/No	Yes/Yes
Target Audience	Yes/No	No/No	Yes/Yes	No/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/No
Useful Information	No/No	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/No
Recipes Included	No/No	No/No	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/No	Yes/Yes	Yes/No
Appropriate Use of Color	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/No	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/No	N/A
Readable Type Size and Style	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes
Appropriate Illustrations	N/A	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/Yes	Yes/No
Appropriate Tables, Charts, and Graphs	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	N/A / NA	No/No	Yes/Yes
Organized, Balanced Layout	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	No/No	Yes/Yes
Appeal to Participants	Yes/Yes	No/No	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes/No	Yes/Yes

Both reviewers' answers are included for each curriculum.
Please see Part II: EFNEP Curriculum Review (Appendix C); the tool used to review readability, content, and design, for a complete description of each category.

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Florida EFNEP professionals in Florida are in the process of revising their EFNEP curriculum, *Nutrition Essentials*; therefore, only one lesson was available to review. The lesson reviewed is on MyPyramid. All other topics marked in Table 2 were either addressed throughout the MyPyramid lesson or noted in a list of topics to be included in the final revised version.

Reviewers reported the following strengths of the lesson: active involvement of participants, handouts that review and reinforce the material, good overall design, and coverage of basic nutrition messages.

Weaknesses identified by the reviewers based on review of the one lesson available at the time of the review included potential failure to target the intended audience, inappropriate word usage for target audience, and use of out-dated nutrition terms such as serving size, which is not used in the *2005 Dietary Guidelines*. Review of additional lessons in the Florida curriculum would generate a more complete picture of the curriculum.

Reviewer's suggestions on improvements that could be made to the curriculum included using portion size rather than serving size. Reviewers also suggested pictures of commonly known inanimate objects should be used to convey portion size.

Illinois The curriculum *Building a Healthy Lifestyle* is from the University of Illinois. EFNEP professionals at the University of Illinois are in the process of revising their curriculum; therefore, only five lessons were available for review. The five lessons reviewed cover the topics of grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, and meat and beans. Other topics marked in Table 2 are addressed within these five lessons or were provided in a list of topics to be included in the final revised version.

Strengths of the curriculum identified by the reviewers included accurate and complete content of the main topics addressed in the five lessons, useful lesson plans, and overall appropriate design.

Reviewers' comments concerning the weaknesses of the curriculum included no specific target audience identified, limited active involvement of participants, and incomplete coverage of important topics such as portion size. Review of the entire curriculum may help to attenuate some of these weaknesses.

Reviewer's suggestions for improvement to the curriculum included increasing active involvement of participants and explaining the background knowledge in more detail.

Iowa The curriculum from Iowa is called *Build a Healthy Diet*. All but one of the lessons reviewed were from the "old" curriculum because revisions were not complete at the time of the review. The MyPyramid lesson was the one revised lesson reviewed. The revisions will be limited to adjusting for the *2005 Dietary Guidelines* and MyPyramid, so a review of the old curriculum with the revisions in mind should serve to provide an idea of how the revised curriculum will appear.

Reviewers' comments concerning the strengths of the curriculum included the complete and accurate coverage of MyPyramid, grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, meat and beans, and physical activity. Other strengths are the inclusion of recipes, active involvement of participants, and thorough lesson plans.

Weaknesses identified by the reviewers included that some of the topics are not covered completely and accurately. In addition, no specific audience is targeted, the reading level may not be appropriate for a low-literacy audience, and some

typographical errors were found. A review of all curriculum materials after the revisions are complete would give a complete and accurate picture of the curriculum.

Suggestions on improvement to the curricula made by the reviewers included less lecture, more active involvement of participants, and more emphasis on portion size. Reviewers also suggested that changes could be made to format to make the materials more user-friendly.

Massachusetts The Massachusetts' curriculum is called *CHOICES: Steps to Health*. EFNEP professionals are in the process of revising the curriculum to conform with the *2005 Dietary Guidelines* and MyPyramid, while keeping format and packaging very similar to the “old” curriculum. The reviewers looked at the “old” curriculum keeping in mind that revisions would reflect the *2005 Dietary Guidelines* and MyPyramid.

According to the reviewers, strengths of the curriculum included appropriate reading and comprehension level for low-literacy audiences, inclusion of appropriate recipes, useful lesson plans, favorable design, active involvement of the participants, and accurate and complete information.

Reviewers suggest improvements to the curriculum such as separation of the food budgeting/meal planning/shopping lesson into multiple lessons, separation of the fruit/vegetable lesson into multiple lessons, and inclusion of topics such as snacks and eating breakfast.

Michigan The curriculum currently used in Michigan is called *Eating Right is Basic (ERIB)*. EFNEP professionals are in the process of revising the curriculum to update for the *2005 Dietary Guidelines* and MyPyramid. Revisions made to this

curriculum will include only updates for the *2005 Dietary Guidelines* and MyPyramid; thus, keeping in mind the revisions to be made, reviewers looked at the “old” curriculum.

According to the reviewers, *ERIB* is a high-quality curriculum with many strengths. The content of all lessons is accurate and complete, the illustrations reinforce the material and are appropriate for target audiences, lesson plans and objectives are complete and useful, and presentation of the material encourages participation and conveys messages in a fun and easy way.

Suggestions by the reviewers for improvement included weaving more cultural diversity into the materials, defining difficult words such as anti-oxidant, and including active participation in all lessons.

North Carolina EFNEP professionals and colleagues in North Carolina are in the process of writing a new curriculum, which will be completed in the spring of 2006. The curriculum submitted for review, *Families – Eating Smart and Moving More*, is the “old” curriculum. While the existing curriculum was not developed specifically for EFNEP, it was developed for use with low-income families. The design team developing the new curriculum plan to use a similar format for materials, lesson plans, visuals, etc. Reviewers were asked to assess the “old” curriculum.

According to the reviewers, strengths of the “old” curriculum included interactive and useful visuals, active participant involvement throughout the lessons, effective use of technology, and accurate and useful information for the target audience. Reviewers also like the format of the lessons.

Reviewers' comments regarding weaknesses included potentially combining too many messages in one lesson and the failure of some of the visuals to represent the target audience. Review of the finished "new" curriculum is needed to assess whether or not the strengths of the "old" curriculum are maintained and the weaknesses are addressed. An improvement noted by the reviewers used to ensure that pictures, places, etc. in visuals depict the target audience; reviewers felt some of the illustrations seemed "middle-class." The reviewers made no suggested improvements to the curriculum.

Wisconsin The Wisconsin EFNEP program uses a series of booklets in their adult program. Each booklet covers a variety of nutritionally related topics that are designed to be taught in a series of lessons. The booklets reviewed have not yet been updated for the *2005 Dietary Guidelines* and MyPyramid. Curriculum developers plan to limit revisions to these updates; all other aspects of the curriculum will remain the same. Reviewers looked at the booklets keeping in mind that revisions will reflect current updates to the *Dietary Guidelines* and MyPyramid.

According to the reviewers, the design of the booklets and reading and comprehension level of the materials are the curriculum's greatest strengths. The use of the booklets as teaching resources as well as take-home handouts helps to reinforce the messages. However, reviewers commented that the organization of the booklets might be confusing to target audiences, making the lesson format difficult to follow.

Reviewers reported that some of the information in the booklets was out-of-date (not just regarding the *Dietary Guidelines*), and certain important topics, such as salt intake, are either inadequately addressed or not covered at all. The curriculum is not accompanied by any visuals or handouts other than the booklets, which may limit the

teaching methods of the paraprofessionals. In addition, purchasing a set of booklets for each participant may prove to be more expensive than other curricula options. The reviewers made no suggested improvements.

Wyoming The EFNEP curriculum reviewed from Wyoming is called the *Cent\$ible Nutrition Program*. EFNEP professionals are in the process of revising this curriculum; therefore, only a few revised lessons were available for review.

Reviewers deemed this curriculum strong overall. Each lesson available for review contains accurate and complete background information intended to aid the paraprofessional in teaching classes. The lessons include active involvement of the participants with useful, interactive activities. Reading and comprehension level are appropriate for low-literacy audiences and content material is accurate, complete, and useful. Each lesson also contained background information for the paraprofessional's use in preparing to teach. This section of each lesson provided content information at a level deeper than addressed in the lesson. This was seen as a strength by reviewers.

According to the reviewers, an area of the curriculum that could use improvement is the lesson on infant feeding. There are a few minor errors regarding accurate information in the infant feeding lesson. In addition, the topics in the infant feeding lesson cover a wide range of infant feeding topics, which may be more effective as separate lessons. Lastly, the reviewers found the direction for the use of some of the handouts included in the lessons to be confusing. Reviewers suggested that additional instructions on the use of the handouts could be useful.