From SNEB

Quality Nutrition Education Materials for Pregnant or Lactating Women and Children Ages 0–24 Months Old

The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior’s (SNEB) Nutrition Education for Children Division recognizes the role SNEB members have in ensuring quality nutrition education handouts for the pregnant and birth (0) to 24-month population (P/B-24) population. Importantly, objective quality assessments of educational materials will be crucial for evaluation of behavior change outcomes and understanding how educational materials promote behavior change. The Developing and Assessing Nutrition Education Handouts (DANEH) tool provides objective criteria for assessing nutrition education handouts, and has been used to assess educational materials aimed at B-24 population. However, studies examining quality of nutrition educational materials aimed at P/B-24 population remains limited, and investigation of adherence to dietary guidelines by P/B-24 population for identification of behavioral outcomes is warranted.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) 2020-2025 inform nutrition communications that promote behavior change and for the first time include the P/B-24 population. Handouts are a practical nutrition communication tool for nutrition educators to reinforce key messages, increase knowledge, influence attitudes, and encourage behavior change, yet many do not include scientific references and contain too much information for practicality and applicability. Furthermore, nutrition educational materials for parents with children ages 0–24 months are limited and have been found to contain information inconsistent with national recommendations, be written at inappropriate reading levels, and lack cultural appropriateness.

Together with the DGAs 2020-2025, the DANEH tool can serve as a framework for the development of simple, evidence-based, and culturally appropriate nutrition educational materials for the P/B-24 population and assessment of current educational materials. Therefore, the Children’s Division encourages the use of the DANEH tool by SNEB members who utilize and/or create educational materials for the P/B-24 population. Evaluation of educational materials can aid in targeted education efforts and facilitate research efforts to explore the relationship between DANEH scores and target audience behavior change outcomes.

REFERENCES