**INTRODUCTION**

**BACKGROUND**
- Maternal health practices are related to child health outcomes like dietary intake, physical activity, and weight status. 1,2
- Maternal self-care, or behaviors facilitating healthy eating, physical activity, and stress management practices, may play an important role in child weight status.

**Study Objective:**
To develop and refine a theory-based self-care intervention using Intervention Mapping (IM), informed by semi-structured interviews with mothers of preschoolers.

**METHODS**

**PARTICIPANTS**
- 19 mothers were recruited from 4 preschool/Head Start centers in rural, Eastern Colorado.

**IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS**
- Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) was used as a theoretical framework.3
- Guide content and face validity were established via expert review and pilot testing. Interviews included 22 questions with multiple probes.

**PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS AND IM**
- Interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and coded.4
- Preliminary content analysis was used to define emergent themes.
- IM steps of formulation of change objectives, material creation, and implementation/evaluation plan development were followed.5

**SELF-CARE PRACTICES**
- Participants had varying definitions of self-care which included activities related to: physical health, mental health, emotional wellbeing, and interpersonal connections.
- The contexts in which self-care practices were used differed among mothers and situations.
- Mothers saw self-care as important for their own wellbeing and that of their families.

  “If you don’t take care of yourself, you’ll reach a breakpoint and you won’t be able to be the best mom.”

**FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS TO SELF-CARE**
- Mothers described infrequent practices of self-care and difficulties prioritizing self-care.
- Barriers to self-care included: time, lack of resources, limited energy, guilt, and responsibilities to the family.
- Facilitators to self-care practices included: support from friends, significant others, and family members.

  “I take care of the kids, the house, get the kids to and from school, do volunteer work. I have to sometimes sit down and watch a movie. I have to take a break.”

**RESULTS**

**INTERVENTION MAPPING**
- Input from these interviews guided IM for the development of a self-care program which includes 2 workshops, 4 remote health coaching sessions, and a companion website.
- SCT guided change objectives, methods, and strategies.
- Topics addressed included what defines self-care, how to incorporate self-care behaviors into a busy life, and how self-care can benefit families.
- Resources and handouts (Figure 1) were created with information on key change objective topics: healthy eating, stress management, and physical activity.

**DISCUSSION**

**INFORMING INTERVENTION DEVELOPMENT**
- Mothers expressed wanting opportunities for self-care, but many lack the skills or resources to overcome barriers to self-care.
- Findings from interviews, coupled with SCT constructs, informed IM with change objectives, content, and educational resources.
- Inclusion of a self-care component as part of public health interventions has the potential to facilitate obesity prevention efforts aimed at both adults and children.

**REFERENCES**