



Milk Messaging Study

Report Prepared for:

Arizona Department of Health Services / AzNN
Arizona Women, Infants and Children / WIC
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Date: September 2009

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- A. WIC Case Manager Discussion Guide
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I. Background & Methodology

Over the past three years, WestGroup has conducted several qualitative and quantitative research studies for Moses Anshell and the Arizona Nutrition Network (AzNN) regarding milk preferences. The research has been conducted with the primary target for their social marketing campaigns - women ages 18 to 49 with children ages 2 to 11, who have household incomes equal to or less than 130% of the federal poverty level.

Through these studies, we have learned about the benefits and barriers to switching from whole or 2% reduced fat milk to 1% low fat or fat free milk - as seen through the target audiences' eyes. We have also measured these moms *self-efficacy*, or level of confidence they have that they can carry out the desired behavior. And, finally, we have *staged* milk drinkers into the five stages of change as described in the Transtheoretical Model.

Some of what we have learned (that is relevant to the current study) includes:

- *Three in ten moms drink 1% low fat or fat free milk, and are in the Maintenance Stage according to the Model. Nearly the same percentage (33%) say they are not considering making a change to 1% low fat or fat free milk and are in the Pre-contemplation Stage. Approximately two in ten (18%) fall into the Action Stage (trying to switch), 9% are in the Preparation Stage (definitely planning to change in the next month), and 9% are in the Contemplation Stage (thinking about changing to low fat or fat free milk in the next six months). Approximately 50% of these women drink 2% milk and 25% drink whole milk. (Some moms drink more than one type of milk, so totals equal more than 100%.)*
- *The barriers to switching from whole or 2% milk to 1% low fat or fat free milk far out weigh the benefits for many moms (for themselves as well as for their young children). In addition, they don't perceive the risks of not changing to lower fat milk as serious, or have not personalized them.*
- *Taste and habit or culture (i.e., this is what they grew up with) are the main reasons moms drink whole milk. Many who drink 2% milk do so because it is a "happy medium" between whole and 1% low fat milk. They say it is not as thick as whole milk, but not watery like 1% low fat milk. Some believe it's better for you than whole milk because it has the same vitamins and minerals, but does not have the calories or the fat of whole milk. Many who drink 2% have switched from whole milk and now feel they have made the healthy choice. Although a few who drink 1% low fat milk describe the good taste, most talk about what they perceive to be the major benefit. That is, it has fewer calories and less fat. The few who choose to drink fat free milk talk almost exclusively about the benefits of fewer calories and lower fat as the reasons for drinking this type of milk.*

- *Research shows that just over half of the target audience agrees with the statement “1% low fat and fat free milk have the same amount of vitamins and minerals as whole milk.”*

Prior to developing advertising messaging to specifically address the barriers to drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk, Moses Anshell, AzNN, and Arizona Women, Infants and Children (WIC) commissioned WestGroup to conduct research that will assist them in developing this messaging. The overall objectives of this research are to further understand and uncover the emotions attached to the specific barriers to drinking 1% low fat or fat free milk, and to explore attitudes and opinions about milk packaging.

A two-phased approach was used to address these objectives:

Phase I: Conduct one-on-one interviews with 8 WIC case managers.

The following WIC clinics were represented:

- Broadway (Mesa)
- Buckeye/Avondale
- Glendale
- Maryvale
- Mountain Park (Gilbert Road)
- Mountain Park (Baseline)
- Pinal County
- Yuma County

Phase II: Conduct focus groups with two sub-segments of milk drinkers:

- Moms who currently drink whole or 2% milk OR who have children over 2 years old who drink whole or 2% milk,
- Moms who used to drink whole or 2% milk AND have switched to 1% low fat or fat free milk OR who have children over 2 years old who have switched from whole or 2% milk to 1% low fat or fat free milk.

16 focus groups were held in Phoenix, Tucson, Yuma, Flagstaff, and Winslow as follows:

	Current Whole/2% Drinkers		Switched from Whole/2%	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
Phoenix	X	X	X	X
Tucson	X	X	X	X
Yuma	X	X	X	X
Flagstaff	X		X	
Winslow	X		X	

Following are the results of the research.

II. WIC Case Manager Interviews

A. Objectives & Methodology

The objectives of the case manager interviews were as follows:

- Explore case managers' milk preferences.
- Learn what influenced their decision to drink lower fat milk.
- Identify ways they transitioned (if they did) to lower fat milk.
- Identify barriers they hear from women.
- Identify differences (if any) they see between different cultural groups.
- Discuss ideas and strategies they have for helping clients transition to lower fat milk.
- Assess their perceptions of milk packaging and the influence it has on buyer behavior.
- Gauge reactions to high-level concepts for encouraging consumption of low fat milk.

Wendy Godfrey of WestGroup Research conducted five of the eight interviews with WIC case managers and Denise Meyer, Senior Analyst at WestGroup Research, conducted three interviews. All interviews were completed during August 2009. Metro Phoenix interviews were conducted in person at the WIC clinics; those outside the Phoenix area were conducted by phone.

B. Positioning Statements

Healthy/Good for You/All

- Drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk is an important part of a healthy diet.
- Moms today are switching to 1% low fat milk and making healthy changes for their families.
- Drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk is a healthy choice for everyone in your family.

Healthy/Good for Children

- Serving 1% low fat and fat free milk to your children when they are young will help develop healthy habits later on.
- After the age of 2, serving 1% low fat and fat free milk to your children will provide them with all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat.

Good Taste

- In taste tests, most moms couldn't tell the difference between 1% low fat and 2% reduced fat milk.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk tastes great and has all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk tastes light and refreshing.

All the Vitamins and Minerals

- 1% low fat and fat free milk has all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk has all the Vitamin D without all the fat.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk has all the calcium without all the fat.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk has fewer calories and less fat but all the vitamins and minerals.

Easy to Switch

- Switching to 1% low fat or fat free milk is a healthy step anyone can take.
- Switching to 1% low fat or fat free milk is easy and healthy for your family.

C. Summary of Findings

- The majority of the WIC case managers buy 1% or fat free milk for their households. A few grew up with whole milk and made the switch after learning of the health benefits of low fat milk. Only one mentioned undertaking a process to switch to 1% low fat or fat free milk. Several mentioned they don't drink a lot of milk, but do eat cheese and yogurt.
- Case managers are most likely to talk about improved overall health, lower fat content, and fewer calories when discussing the benefits of drinking 1% low fat or fat free milk with their clients.
- According to these case managers, taste and appearance are the biggest barriers to drinking 1% or fat free milk. Clients say it is thin and watery. Case managers are divided on whether or not they think their clients understand that 1% low fat and fat free milk have the same amount of vitamins and minerals as whole and 2% milk. Some managers believe their clients *get* this and others contend they do not. In addition, WIC managers believe that in many cases moms are buying and serving the same type of milk they drank as a child.
- Most of the case managers indicated that choosing which milk to buy rests with the moms rather than with their kids. They say most kids are more open to change than moms, but that moms sometimes cite their kids' dislike of 1% low fat or fat free milk as the reason why they're not switching.
- Most WIC case managers have not noticed much difference by ethnicity. Although several managers agree Hispanic moms are more likely to have been raised on whole milk, they say they are not resistant to trying to 1% or fat free milk. A couple think African American moms are more resistant to switching to low fat milk.
- Most case managers suggest moms make the switch gradually, going from whole milk to 2% to 1%. Some recommend mixing whole milk with 1% low fat until they get used to that, and then going with 1% low fat milk alone, while others suggest adding fruit to improve the taste and make the milk thicker. Generally, case managers recommend switching to 1% milk rather than fat free milk, maintaining that convincing moms to switch to fat free is very difficult.
- Some case managers use visual aids to demonstrate the difference – primarily in fat content – between the various types of milk. Those who do, find them very effective.

- Milk packaging does have an impact on the type of milk some WIC clients buy, according to these case managers. When they ask moms what type of milk they drink, they frequently hear “the one with the red cap.” Many moms also say “the regular kind,” and when probed by the case manager, say “the one with the red cap,” or “Vitamin D milk.” The prominent display of “Vitamin D” on the whole milk label leads many to think that other types of milk don’t have the same amount of Vitamin D in them.

Positioning Statements:

- *Healthy/Good for You/All* - In general, this positioning statement was viewed favorably. Most case managers rated it in first or second place, saying they like the phrases, “Moms today are switching to 1% low fat milk,” and it “is a healthy choice for everyone in your family.” There were no strong negatives with this statement.
- *Healthy/Good for Children* – Most case managers viewed this positioning favorably also. They liked encouraging children to switch while they’re young so they can develop healthy habits that they will continue throughout their lives. The only negative was that a few viewed it as limiting, saying they think it is important to encourage the entire family to switch to 1% or fat free milk, not just kids.
- *Good Taste* - Reaction to this positioning statement was mixed. Those who liked it thought it might help convince some of the skeptics that 1% low fat or fat free milk tastes great. Those who didn’t care for it, say it isn’t believable. Even though it was *proven* in taste tests, the main reason moms give for not wanting to switch to 1% or fat free milk is the taste, and telling them taste tests proved otherwise would not be convincing. Additionally, while using the word “refreshing” is positive for some, using the words “light” and “refreshing” may reinforce the idea some moms have that 1% or fat free milk is watery.
- *Has All the Vitamins and Minerals* - Case managers also viewed this positioning statement positively. Most recognize the need to continue to educate many WIC moms who think that 1% or fat free milk has fewer vitamins and minerals than whole or 2% milk. A possible negative with this statement is the mention of “fewer calories.” There is some concern that “fewer calories” might communicate that the milk is not as nutritious as whole or 2% milk.
- *Easy to Switch* - While some case managers thought it was fairly easy for their clients to switch from whole milk, others agree it is very difficult. Some suggested that any advertising should recognize that it is not an easy transition for many moms, and that it may take a while to get used to.

1. Milk Preferences

The majority of the WIC case managers buy 1% or fat free milk for their households. (Some buy whole milk for their babies who should be drinking whole milk). One person buys 2%, and has not tried 1% because she doesn't care for milk. Most have been drinking 1% or fat free milk for a long time. A few grew up with whole milk and made the switch to 1% after learning of the health benefits. Only one mentioned undertaking a process to switch to 1% low fat or fat free milk. Several mentioned they don't drink a lot of milk, but do like cheese and yogurt.

Comments:

I buy only fat free milk. I refuse to buy whole milk, so if he (husband) wants whole milk then he will go buy a small gallon for himself, which he never does, so he's kind of stuck drinking the fat free milk.

I drink soy milk, I am vegan, so I do drink that and I love it. I used to drink 2% milk. Basically that is when I was very young, but I was never into the milk drinking. I was more into yogurt and cheese.

What I used to drink when I was growing up is 2% milk. When I was in college, I majored in public health, so I had to take some classes in nutrition, so while I was taking those classes it got me thinking about the fat and the calories and all that stuff, so they suggested that we drink skim milk or fat free milk. First, I started out with 1% milk and then soon after that I went to fat free.

I buy 1% milk for me and I make my husband drink it too, and then for my daughter since she is only 1, I give her whole milk because of the extra fat she needs. I am not a really big milk drinker. My mom never really bought whole milk for us, so I didn't grow up on it. We either had 1% milk or soy milk growing up.

We would go to the store when I was younger and we would just get the red cap because, according to my parents, the other ones were not good, so I never knew the difference until I started working for WIC and then I knew that the 1% milk or fat free milk was the healthiest. So then I started drinking 1% milk and there was a while where we would drink 1% milk because that's what I would buy when I would buy the groceries, but then I stopped contributing (buying the groceries) and now it's back to the whole milk again. So for that reason, I never eat cereal and I never have anything other than cheese or yogurt.

2. Benefits of Drinking 1% Low Fat or Fat Free Milk

When case managers discuss the benefits of drinking 1% low fat or fat free milk with their clients, the approach varies by case manager. Some focus on overall health, others on calories, others on vitamins and minerals, and still others talk about fat. Since many WIC clients are under the impression that whole and 2% milk are more nutritious than 1% low fat and fat free milk, case managers must educate their clients on the nutritional facts of milk. They explain that 1% or fat free milk is just as nutritious as 2% or whole milk, but without the fat.

Comments:

The main thing is the fat. It's less fat and you're still getting the same vitamins. It's still Vitamin D.

I basically say that the calcium is the same. I do tell them that the benefit really is that there's going to be minimal saturated fat if they switch down to even 2% milk. I kind of like to talk more about the fact that it's healthier in the sense that they're not going to have as much saturated fat, which is prone to raising cholesterol levels.

I also tell them about the cholesterol that is in it, and the ones who resist are ones that tell me they have been drinking whole milk all their life and that there is nothing wrong with them. I tell them there is nothing wrong with them now, but who knows in the future. I tell them it may cause heart disease.

I just mention that the nutrients are all the same regardless if it's whole milk, 2% milk, 1% milk, or fat free milk. The only real difference is the fat content and the calories.

It's very important to let them know that you get the same nutritional value as whole milk, but you don't get all the extra fat.

Sometimes we do have people that argue with us and they say they just drink whole milk. I tell them the benefits of it and how it's all fortified with the same nutrients and everything except that it has less fat and that's the only difference.

We just tell them with the 1% milk or the fat free milk that it benefits their diet because they really don't need the extra fat unless the kids are underweight or they need the extra calories, but we also explain that not only for your weight but for heart disease and other types of medical problems and how it benefits them to have milk that is lower in fat for their overall health.

3. Barriers to Drinking 1% Low Fat or Fat Free Milk

Case managers indicate the biggest barriers to drinking 1% or fat free milk are taste and appearance. Many of these moms think the taste and appearance of 1% or fat free milk is thin and watery. Another issue is the nutritional value of the various types of milk. WIC case managers are divided on whether or not they think their clients understand that 1% low fat and fat free milk have the same amount of vitamins and minerals as whole and 2% milk. Some managers believe moms *get* this and others contend they do not. In addition, WIC managers believe that, in many cases, moms are buying and serving the same type of milk they drank as a child.

Comments:

A lot of times we do have clients that are drinking whole milk and that is all they have ever done. We have a lot of clients that have just never really considered changing at all. I think they know that the nutrients are the same because I think we are getting that message across and I think they know that the vitamins and the calcium and everything is the same regardless of what type of milk you have, and I really think it might just be a taste factor because a lot of times I think they fear that having low fat milk is going to be too much like water to them or like there is no taste for it or they can't adjust to that kind of fat that is in the lower fat.

(When WIC moms are told they should be drinking 1% or fat free milk)
Some of them have expressions on their face, and some of them will say that 1% milk is water. Some of them are OK with it. There are still some that say their children can tell the difference and that it tastes like water, so the women won't bother trying it.

It really depends. There are some that are okay with it *(switching to 1% or fat free milk)* and they are willing to make that change, but others aren't as willing. It's just more of a taste factor. I don't think they really care if there is fat or not. They just like the way that the whole milk or 2% milk tastes rather than the 1% milk because they think that is too watery. I think the biggest factor is the taste between the milks.

Some of them tell me that the fat free or anything less than whole milk basically tastes like water.

Some case managers indicate that their WIC office switched to 1% or fat free milk a long time ago. That is the type of milk the WIC moms receive, and that is what they're used to, so while some moms might prefer another type of milk, they go with 1%.

Comments:

We don't really have trouble with that here at the WIC in Yuma because we have been on fat free milk or 1% milk for about two years now. Nobody questions it anymore because we have done it for so long, so I guess it's just the norm now.

I know some clinics have still given people options to what they wanted, but we haven't. We stopped that a long time ago. All the workers are pushing the 1% milk, so I think they're used to it by now. I think we are a little bit ahead with that.

4. Kids' Role in Milk Selection

Most of the case managers indicated that choosing which milk to buy rests more with the moms than with their children. It appears that most kids are more open to change than the moms, but the moms sometimes cite their kids' dislike of 1% or fat free milk as the reason why they're not switching. In some cases, mom is buying 1% for her children, but continues to drink whole milk herself (or her husband drinks whole milk).

Comments:

From what I hear of the moms, the ones that don't like the 1% milk, she says, oh she (child) doesn't like it and she doesn't want to drink it, so she throws it. She doesn't want to take it, they won't drink it, and it gives them diarrhea, so you hear all kinds of things like that.

I think sometimes kids, especially the older ones, I think I kind of felt like some of them are already getting low fat milk if it's a daycare or a school or something like that, so what's interesting is that a lot of times I see mom taking whole milk for herself and then it's low fat for the children. I don't really hear kids saying so much that it's the one with the red cap, but I think it really is such an important part of the parent to offer the healthier alternative of course, but then it's setting a wrong example for mom to take the whole milk. I think there are those situations, and maybe the children are drinking low fat because they are in daycare or preschool or something or Head Start, so they might be getting it there, and then the mom is saying that the 1% milk or 2% milk is fine for their child, but she wants the whole milk because she has never tried the other stuff.

I think moms play a role in it more than the child does. I think the parents have a more difficult time making the change than the child has. I think children adjust if you put a little bit of fruit in it or things like that. If they've never tried any other milk, they're always going to go with whole milk from

the very start, but with the WIC program, we're educating them a little bit more to where they get the 1% milk, and sometimes they do come back and say they don't like the taste of it, so that's when we offer suggestions. I think it's mainly moms that play the role for the child.

I really don't know. We mostly hear that they (children) drink whatever the parents drink. Some moms will say their child won't drink that milk, and then we mention that once they start going to school that's all the school offers is 1% milk or fat free milk, and when they come back we ask if they tried switching over to 1% milk and they say their child is fine with it, but we ask what about you, and they say they still drink whole milk. So I don't know if the children really have a big say in what they drink.

I don't think the kids have much to do with it. I think it's more likely to be the moms taste preferences that influence anything.

I know a lot of times they (moms) say they won't buy the 1% milk or fat free milk because their kids won't drink it because they don't like the taste, so I guess just going by what their kids prefer then they're going to buy what they know they're going to drink instead of trying to wean them over and get them used to the 1% milk. They would rather not hassle with it and just buy what the kids want.

5. Differences in Willingness to Switch by Ethnicity

Most WIC case managers have not noticed much difference by ethnicity. Some managers think Hispanic moms are more likely to have been raised on whole milk, but overall, are not any more resistant to trying to change to 1% or fat free milk than other ethnicities. In fact, most seem very willing to try it. A couple said they think African American moms are slightly more resistant to switching.

Comments:

I think I see a lot of the Hispanics taking whole milk; however, I would say that they don't react negatively when we're trying to say or recommend that they could try to change to low fat milk. I think I see them being a little bit more fearful or they have that sense of like an uneasy feeling when we are asking them if they would be willing to try. It's not so much of a negative response from them. I think they are willing to try, but it's a struggle that I have seen with them. With the Caucasian culture, I see both ends of the spectrum with them, and some of them act very negatively, like, "No, I'm going to have my whole milk," but then some will say, "Yeah, let me try it," so we get a little bit of both from them.

They can all resist a little bit because they are used to 2% milk or whole milk and they are transitioning all the way down to the 1% milk, and they were used to being weaned into it. I see a little bit of resistance from all ethnic groups.

I think where I get most of the negativity is in the Mexican clients. Because of the whole milk thing because fat is always better. I hear a lot of people say that it isn't Vitamin D if it doesn't have the fat.

I just think with Hispanics that their concept is that because it's thicker it's healthier, so I guess they probably think it's full of vitamins, but I really don't see a big difference. It's either they want to change or they don't, whether they are Hispanic or not.

I would say it's more commonly in African-Americans in this clinic who have more resistance to switching from whole milk to 1% milk. Possibly it might be going back to habit because that is what they grew up on. A lot of them are uneducated too, so they think that whole milk has more vitamins and more nutrients and that bigger is better.

The African-American moms are the ones that I probably see the most resistance from, like they're not really open to drinking the fat free milk or the 1% milk.

6. Tips for Switching to 1% Low Fat or Fat Free Milk

Most case managers suggest making the switch gradually, going from whole milk to 2% to 1%. Some recommend mixing whole milk with 1% low fat until they get used to that, and then going with 1% low fat milk alone, while others suggest adding fruit to improve the taste and make the milk thicker. One case manager suggests mixing in powdered milk for thickness.

Most case managers tell their clients that, after drinking 1% milk for a while, they will get used to it and won't want to go back to whole milk because it will taste too thick.

In general, case managers recommend switching to 1% milk rather than fat free, maintaining that convincing moms to switch to fat free is very difficult.

Comments:

In the WIC program, we do have handouts on how to transition. We have one for milk and then we also have one for when the babies are coming off formula or breast milk and transitioning to whole milk, so we have two different types of handouts for the moms, which is kind of basically a 5 or

7-day transition period where they are trying to mix the old milk (whole) with the current milk (1%). Trying to mix it half and half for about a week. Some clients do great with that. They can do it pretty easily, but then there are others where it takes them several tries or several attempts to adapt to that new flavor or that new taste of low fat milk, so for some it could take months . . . We basically just like to encourage them to try it (1%) again just to see how they do with it, maybe not as a glass of milk, but mixing it with something or making a recipe with it or over cereal. We try to encourage that a lot is to use it with something else, like with another food. Sometimes they do seem to kind of respond pretty well with that idea. It is a struggle.

It does taste a little bit different and it looks a little bit different, but you can always add half of a banana and put it in the blender and make it like a smoothie to give you that taste without extra sugar added. You can add any kind of fruit to it and that will help. You can also wean yourself into it. You could mix the 2% milk with the 1% milk and eventually you will wean into it. They keep thinking that it doesn't have the same nutritional value, but it does, and I keep explaining to them that they won't get the extra fat in it. It will taste a little bit different, but I make suggestions and ideas of how to add stuff to it.

As far as convincing them, we just ask if they would be willing to try the 1% milk, fat free milk, or nonfat milk, and then we encourage them to mix either 2% or whole milk with the 1% milk to try to help them switch over to the 1% milk.

What I tell them if they are on the whole milk is that instead of going directly to the 1% milk or fat free milk we could start with the 2% milk because sometimes gradually weaning yourself from the whole milk to the 2% milk might help. Also, you could do things like the powder milk and mix it in with the 1% milk so it gives it more of a thicker taste. I just tell them to try it. They're not going to know if they like it until they just try it.

Some of the case managers have visual aids when discussing the benefits of 1% or fat free milk when encouraging mothers to switch. They feel these visual examples are very effective at convincing the moms that the 1% and fat free milk have the same nutrition but with much less fat. One case manager made the following comment when asked what words he would use to convince moms to switch:

What I think would really work best is if you showed them a picture of the fat tubes of how much fat is in one kind of milk vs. how much fat is in the other milk, I think that would be good. I think actually showing them would be better than just telling them.

The visual aids used by the case managers include:

- A sheet of paper showing the nutrition labels of all four types of milk.
- Small test tubes with white material at the bottom for different types of milk, illustrating the amount of fat contained in a glass of milk.
- Similar to the test tubes, cups of 'milk' showing how much fat is contained in each type of milk.
- Putting spoons into glasses of whole milk and 1% or fat free milk. When the case manager vertically lifts the spoon from the milk, the spoon in the 1% or fat free milk is nearly clean, while there is residue on the spoon that was in the whole milk.

Comments:

I usually show them this handout. They will say they drink 2% milk and I tell them that 2% milk has 120 calories and the 1% milk has 100 calories, so it's not much of a difference. Then I show them how much fat is in it and I give them the little comparisons. Once they see that visual comparison they understand it better than just me telling them. And then I usually show my little fat bottles to them of how much fat is in the milks. I show them this is how much fat is in a cup of whole milk and this is how much fat is in a cup of fat free milk, so when they see the visual of how much fat is in them they say, "Wow!" They kind of get grossed out and they decide they should try drinking 1% milk.

We have little cups with the fat free milk, the whole milk, and the 2% milk, and then we have on there the amount of vitamins and calories and the fat content in all of them.

I ask them if they want to see why we give them 1% milk or fat free milk and they say yes, so I take out these fat tubes that we have and I show them the difference between fat free milk and whole milk, and if they are on 2% milk I tell them if they take the fat free milk and whole milk and add them together and divide them by two then that's how much fat is in the 2% milk. Once they see the fat they say, "Yuck."

At the other clinic I was working at they had the cups that show the amount of fat that each one had, so that was nice too because then they could visually see and it kind of surprised them a little bit more.

One thing I like to do is I will take a cup of whole milk and a cup of fat free milk or 1% milk and stick a spoon in there and take them out and show them what the difference is because if you've ever done that there's fat on the whole milk spoon, and then you compare it to the other ones and there is nothing, so it's like, look what you're getting and look what you're not getting, so that kind of helps.

7. Milk Packaging

Milk packaging does have an impact on the type of milk some of the WIC clients buy. When case managers ask moms what type of milk they drink, they frequently hear “the one with the red cap.” In addition, many moms say “the regular kind,” and when probed by the case manager, say “the one with the red cap,” or “Vitamin D milk.” The prominent display of “Vitamin D” on the whole milk label leads many to think that other types of milk don’t have the same amount of Vitamin D in them.

Comments:

When they say they drink Vitamin D milk and you ask them what color the lid is, they say it’s red, and that’s whole milk. . . . I have even had moms tell me that they’ve tricked their family by changing the caps and changing the labeling because red catches a child’s eye.

I hate that whole milk is labeled Vitamin D because then people think whole milk has Vitamin D and the other milks don’t have it. When I ask them what type of milk they drink they will say Vitamin D milk and then they refer to the red cap on the whole milk. They say that this kind has Vitamin D and the other ones don’t, and then I tell them that the other ones actually do have Vitamin D in them.

They will come in and I explain to them that they will be getting 1% milk or fat free milk and then they will ask me what color the cap is. I tell them that it is different colors at different stores, but usually it is blue, and they say, oh, because my family always drinks the one with the red cap. Or they will say that they are willing to try, but they say their husband isn’t so willing, but then I say it’s actually for them. I say to just switch the cap on the milk and their husband probably wouldn’t know.

They (WIC moms) never said that the one with the red cap was healthier, but they would say that the other ones weren’t any good. They probably thought that because it tasted like water and it was thin.

They always say that they get the red top one. When they have their first appointment with us we will ask them what kind of milk they buy and they don’t know what it is, but they say it’s the one with the red top.

When I ask them what kind of milk they drink, whole milk, 1% milk, or 2% milk, most of the time the women will just say they drink regular milk, and then I say that regular milk means something different from one person to another, like regular for me is 1% milk and regular for them might be something else, so they say it’s the one that has the red cap or the Vitamin D milk. They usually refer to the whole milk as Vitamin D milk.

8. Positioning Statements

Case managers were presented with five alternative positioning statements, and asked which they think would be most effective in encouraging moms to switch to 1% low fat or fat free milk.

There was no clear winner among the positioning statements, though there was one that was consistently chosen as not believable. That one was *Good Taste*. Following is a summary of the findings for each of the statements.

a. Healthy/Good for You/All

In general, this positioning statement was viewed favorably. Most case managers rated it in first or second place, saying they like the phrases, “Moms today are switching to 1% low fat milk,” and it “is a healthy choice for everyone in your family.” There were no strong negatives with this statement. The ones who ranked this in second place frequently did so because they think the Healthy/Good for Children positioning would be more effective. These managers feel it is better to focus on kids who are more receptive than adults, to switching to 1% or fat free milk.

Positive comments

I really like the second part there (Moms today are switching to 1% low fat milk and making healthy changes for their families) because a lot of moms are gung-ho on what their moms did, but this one kind of makes them realize that even though they may have grown up with one thing or what their mothers might have done, not that it wasn't good, but now we are in a different time period and sometimes we do have to make changes to benefit our lifestyles that we are living now, so I think this kind of makes them realize that now things are a little bit different, so now maybe switching would benefit my family.

I think it would influence moms to want to switch, because like I said, if most moms are doing it then maybe that mom will want to do it too, or why am I the only one not doing it?

I like how it says it's for everyone. And then where it says, “Moms today are switching to 1% low fat milk and making healthy changes for their families”, that is nice. I guess that's how the moms play a key role in making decisions or choices.

I would probably take the first approach about being healthy for everyone because we are trying to get everyone to switch to that even if they're not on WIC.

Negative comments

I would aim for the kids rather than the family because we still have a while to go with the kids, so we could change them now as they grow, which is better than when they get older.

I don't think just telling them this would be effective. You would probably have to show them because I would say those fat tubes convince the majority of them.

They are telling me that it is a healthy choice, but why is it a healthy choice? Is it a healthy choice because you are saying it is a healthy choice?

b. Healthy/Good for Children

Most case managers viewed this positioning statement favorably. They liked encouraging children to switch while they're young so they can develop healthy habits that they will continue throughout their lives. They think it is important to get them drinking 1% or fat free milk while they're young.

The only negative reaction to this positioning statement is that some viewed it as limiting. Those who felt this way think it is more important to encourage the entire family to switch to 1% or fat free milk, not just the kids.

Positive comments

I would aim for the kids rather than the family because we still have a while to go with the kids, so we could change them now as they grow, which is better than when they get older.

I think here when it's saying, "Serving 1% low fat and fat free milk to your children when they are young will help them develop healthy habits later on", I think I kind of wanted to say that it will help them develop healthy habits for a lifetime, because that's kind of what I feel WIC is trying to accomplish is that we're trying to do these kinds of behavior changes for a lifetime and making it more of a lifestyle change.

I also like that it's healthy for your children and to grow into a healthy habit. That is a great one too because when you start them young, they're likely to continue on with the 1% milk and make other healthy choices as well.

Because I would think as parents we would want to do what's best for our child, so to see that message will make me want to try to develop healthy

eating habits for them. So basically, I think for parents, this would be a good one because they want to do what's best for their child.

I like where it says, "Helps them develop healthy habits later on in life." It's basically saying if I incorporate this, then maybe our eating habits and everything that we think about eating right now will help us in the long run as far as our kids getting older. Basically, I would take that into consideration and maybe think about trying 1% milk or fat free milk. I also like where it says, "Will provide them with all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat." It is basically telling parents that whole milk can be beneficial, but 1% milk is just the same but with less fat just think that line is really good.

So for younger moms or for first time moms with young children, if they realize they should start the change right now when they are smaller then they're not going to have such a hard time when they get older and they can develop these good habits from small toddlers and then once they are teenagers then their eating habits will be better rather than trying to throw all of this on their 13-year-old. So I think putting the word 'young' in there is a good word.

Negative comments

I would probably take the first approach (Good for all) about being healthy for everyone because we are trying to get everyone to switch to that even if they're not on WIC.

c. Good Taste

Reaction to this positioning statement was mixed. A few thought it was the best one, and a few thought it was the worst. The ones who liked it think it might help convince some of the skeptics that 1% low fat or fat free milk tastes as good as whole milk. The case managers who didn't like it say it isn't believable. Even though it was *proven* in taste tests, the main reason moms give for not wanting to switch to 1% or fat free milk is the taste, and telling them taste tests proved otherwise would not be convincing.

Additionally, while several said using the word "refreshing" is positive, some felt using the word "light" and "refreshing" are negative because it reinforces the idea some moms have that 1% or fat free milk is watery.

Positive comments

I think this one is a good one too. It's kind of like proving to them that it tastes the same. It's demonstrating something to them and not just telling

them something. It's not ordering them to do something, like to drink low fat milk.

I love the word 'refreshing' though because it is refreshing.

Most moms are concerned about taste and serving children things they like, so I think it is good because in taste tests moms didn't even know the difference, so they figured maybe if they didn't know the difference then maybe their children wouldn't know the difference either.

Negative comments

Light and refreshing reinforces the attitude that 1% or fat free milk tastes like water.

I don't know if clients that are currently drinking whole milk want to know that 1% milk is light and refreshing or that they would respond well that it's light and refreshing because I think to them it's going to sound like it is watery.

(Tastes light and refreshing) They would be saying that it is a lie because they have tried it and it's not good and refreshing and it tastes like water.

I don't think they would believe it. Probably the part about vitamins and minerals would be good to leave in, but not about it tasting great because they're not going to say it tastes great since they have tried it and they say that it doesn't taste great.

I don't think this is very good because I don't think they are going to believe this. Most of the complaints when we try to switch them over to the 1% milk is that they don't like the taste, so I don't think somebody is going to believe that somebody couldn't tell the difference between 2% milk and 1% milk because they swear they can.

It shouldn't have the word 'light' in there because I think that would influence moms to not have it because it's not thick so therefore it's not milk.

d. Has All the Vitamins and Minerals

Case managers also viewed this positioning statement positively. They recognize the need to educate many moms who believe that 1% and fat free milk have fewer vitamins and minerals than whole or 2% milk.

A possible negative with this statement is the mention of “fewer calories.” There is a concern that “fewer calories” might communicate that the milk is not as nutritious.

Positive comments

I like this one because it's still saying that it has fewer calories, less fat, and it has all the vitamins and minerals.

I feel like this one is good too, which is the one that says there is still the same Vitamin D and calcium regardless. So with the low fat and fat free milk it has all the same Vitamin D and calcium without all the fat.

That is a good approach too. It's stating the facts and not just ordering you to do something.

I like the fact that it mentions how the nutrients are still the same, but it's just that it has less fat, which those are the good pinpoints to point out to moms because most of them think that it's not fortified with all the same nutrients and everything else.

I like it because it is emphasizing that it has everything, like the Vitamin D, but it doesn't have the bad part, which is the fat. I think it emphasizes that it has Vitamin D and that not just whole milk has Vitamin D.

It lets you know that low fat milk has the same vitamins and minerals that whole milk does and that it has less fat and less calories, so it is more detailed than the other ones are.

Negative comments

Calories are something that makes your child healthy whether it's good or it's bad, so to me if they see fewer calories I think they're going to think that the milk is not as nutritious, even though you are telling them that it has all these vitamins in it. I just think maybe they will feel that it doesn't have quite everything that the other milk has.

e. Easy to Switch

While some case managers thought it was fairly easy for their clients to switch from whole and 2% milk to 1% low fat or fat free milk, others thought it was difficult. Therefore, the reaction to this statement was mixed. Though none of the case managers picked it as their #1 choice, several picked it as their second choice. Three of the case managers picked it as their least favorite.

Positive comments

I guess once somebody tells me the difference between the whole milk and the 1% milk and then I read this, it makes sense what they're trying to educate me about. I think it might encourage them to, especially moms who are kind of iffy about their toddler or their preschooler having a hard time drinking it. If they were to see slogans like this they might think about it a little bit more and realize that maybe it's not as hard as I am making it to be.

I like where it talks about being healthy for your family and that it's a healthy step that anyone can take. I feel like that is believable because it is a healthy step, and anybody with an open mind can do it.

Negative comments

I don't know if we want to say in this bottom one here that it's easy and healthy. You could say something like, "Switching to 1% low fat or fat free milk is a healthy step anyone can take. Just give it a try."

Not everyone is going to think that it is easy.

The part where it talks about it being easy to switch to 1% milk or fat free milk, to some people that might not be an easy transition because if you're used to doing one thing for so long, that can be a hard transition, so that's why I usually tell parents that it can take a while for you to get used to it, but once you incorporate it into your routine, you will eventually get used to it.

These statements themselves are good, but I just think back to reality with our clients and how sometimes it is difficult for them to switch because they just like the other taste. I just think back on how I tried to explain to my father who I would think would believe me that 1% milk was better, but he just keeps sticking to whole milk, and I don't know why. I wish switching was easy, but it isn't easy.

III. Focus Groups with Target Audience

A. Objectives & Methodology

Objectives of the focus groups with the target audience were as follows:

- Explore milk preferences.
- Identify current milk-drinking habits.
- Explore attitudes and opinions about milk packaging.
- Discuss milk-drinking history (what did they drink as a child).
- Identify barriers to drinking 1% low fat milk or fat free milk.
- Identify factors that influenced decision to switch to 1% low fat or fat free milk (among those who have switched).
- Understand experiences with 1% milk.
- Obtain specific information on what would motivate the target audience to change from whole or 2% milk to 1% low fat or fat free milk.
- Gauge reaction to high-level concepts for encouraging consumption of low fat milk.

Focus groups were conducted in five Arizona cities: Phoenix, Tucson, Yuma, Flagstaff, and Winslow. Ten groups were conducted in English and six groups were conducted in Spanish. Winslow groups consisted entirely of Native American women.

Yazmin Venegas and Fernando Cordova moderated the Spanish-speaking groups and Wendy Godfrey moderated the English-speaking groups.

B. Summary of Findings

- The image of the mom who buys whole milk for her family and the mom who buys fat free milk are very different. To some extent, both are trying to do what's best for their families; however, because of different life experiences, different levels of education and knowledge, and different priorities, they have made different choices. The following table shows some key words and phrases that demonstrate the differences in the two moms.

	Mom Buying Whole Milk	Mom Buying Fat Free Milk
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be a little heavy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tall, skinny, blond hair
Clothes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeans and a t-shirt • Long blue dress • Tights and a loose blouse • Tennis shoes • T-shirt and shorts • Capri pants • Sweat pants, t-shirt, tennis shoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sporty • Tank top and shorts • Tennis outfit • Running clothes • Gym clothes • Business suit • Carries a canvas bag for her groceries
Items in Grocery Cart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereal/Frosted Flakes • Junk food • Juice • Chips • Cookies • Meat • Chicken • Some fruits and veggies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lean chicken • Organic food • Fruits & veggies • Blueberries, other berries • Wheat bread • Low calorie foods • Granola • No red meat, chips, sweets
Other Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church • Family/children • On a budget • Tired from work, doesn't have time to fix big breakfast • Doesn't know about nutrition/not well informed • Believes mother/grandmother/things passed down to her • Children need everything whole milk offers • Believes this is most nutritious 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmentally aware/"green" • Home schools her kids • Exercise (running, swimming, tennis, going to gym) important to her • Watches her weight/portion control • Family/children • Has family's habits under control/empowered • Believes this is most nutritious

Implications:

- ✓ *In general, the target audience is more likely to relate to the mom buying the whole milk than to the mom buying the fat free milk. Of course there are moms that relate more to the fat free milk buyer, but most of these moms are already drinking 1% low fat or fat free milk. Those we are trying to convert are more likely to relate to the whole milk buying mom.*

The mom buying the fat free milk was almost too extreme for many in our target segment. That is, they are too far away from how these women view themselves. Participants said this mom could be a “hippy,” someone in Birkenstocks, and a vegetarian who only buys organic food. She could also be someone who is very concerned about her weight, spending much time at the gym, running, swimming or playing tennis. The other possibility is that this mom has a health condition such as diabetes or high cholesterol that necessitates her drinking fat free milk. Whatever their description, many moms in the groups could not relate to these profiles.

In contrast, they described the mom buying the whole milk as someone who is perhaps a little heavy and whose children might be a little heavy, who is tired, on a budget, and trusts those words of wisdom passed down from her mother and grandmother. She is concerned about nutrition and thinks her children need everything that whole milk offers, including the fat. She is likely to be less informed, but believes what her grandmother and mother have passed along to her. In this case, that means believing that whole milk is best

- ✓ *There may be a halo effect of fat free milk on 1% low fat milk, making 1% seem unsuitable for moms like them, and families like theirs. They may think 1% milk, like fat free milk, is just for moms who are overly concerned with their weight, who buy organic food, and spend time at the gym.*
- ✓ *Should messaging focus on getting moms to switch to 1% low fat milk rather than combining 1% low fat with fat free milk?*

Milk Preferences

- *Moms who drink whole milk do so for a variety of reasons: 1) they like the taste 2) it's what they drank as children and they have continued to buy it out of habit or preference, and 3) they believe it is more nutritious and that their children need all the vitamins, minerals, and fat that is in whole milk.*
- *Many moms who drink 2% do so because it has less fat than whole milk and they believe it is the healthy choice. Most of these women feel proud they*

have switched their families to 2% milk, with several referring to 2% as “low fat” milk.

- Mothers who drink 1% low fat milk (or serve it to their families) do so for several reasons: 1) they believe it is healthier than drinking whole or 2% milk, 2) they want to lose weight (or they want their children to lose weight) so they switched to 1%, 3) they have more energy when they drink 1% milk, 4) they don't have as many digestive problems with 1%, and 5) it is more thirst quenching and refreshing than whole or 2% milk.

Implications:

- ✓ *For the most part, no matter what type of milk they are drinking or serving their children, moms think they are doing what's best for their families. If it's whole milk they're drinking, they believe it is more nutritious and that's what their mothers served them, so it must be best. If they're drinking 2%, they most likely switched from whole milk, so they feel they have made the healthy choice. Those who drink 1% or fat free also feel they have made a healthy choice to drink and serve low fat milk . . . because it has all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat.*
- ✓ *Few moms feel they're doing the wrong thing by drinking whole or 2% reduced fat milk. That is, they don't understand the risks of doing so. On the contrary, many think they are doing what's best for their families. The Health Belief Model of behavior describes this as having a low “perceived susceptibility,” and low “perceived severity.” The Model suggests messaging that heightens perceived susceptibility and specifies consequences of the risk and condition, for people in these segments.*

Barriers to Drinking 1% Low Fat or Fat Free Milk

The target audience has identified many barriers to switching to 1% low fat or fat free milk, including the following (in no particular order):

- ◆ *Taste – 1% milk tastes watery, thin, nasty.*
- ◆ *Look – And, it looks watery, thin, and blue. You can see through it.*
- ◆ *Cultural - My mom/grandmother drank/gave me whole, so it must be best.*
- ◆ *Habit – I always just pick the one with the red cap.*
- ◆ *Conflicting information – WIC tells me I should give him 1%, but my pediatrician says to give him whole because he can use the extra fat. They serve 2% at school.*
- ◆ *Schools – He drinks 2% at school so that is what he is used to.*
- ◆ *Misunderstand nutritional information – Whole milk is more nutritious.*
- ◆ *Buy whole or 2% for babies/young children – I just want to buy one kind, so we all drink whole milk.*

- ◆ Child's weight/size/level of activity – *My child is skinny/very active, so he needs the fat.*
- ◆ Other family members – *My husband/kids won't drink 1% low fat milk.*
- ◆ Packaging – *Why would it say Vitamin D if it didn't have more Vitamin D than the others?*
- ◆ Cost – *I buy whatever is on sale.*
- ◆ Drink 2% - *I've already switched to low fat milk.*

Implications:

- ✓ *Moms are being bombarded with messages – often conflicting - about milk. Even those sources they trust most (e.g., their own mothers, pediatricians, WIC, their child's school) say different things. This is confusing to moms. Combine this with no perceived, compelling reason to switch to 1% low fat or fat free milk, and the result is barriers that far outweigh benefits.*
- ✓ *As seen in the Introduction to this report, at least one-third of the target audience is in the Precontemplation stage in terms of drinking 1% low fat or fat free milk. According to the Transtheoretical Model (Stages of Change), this stage indicates an active resistance to change. Before changing, people must recognize a need to change. Unfortunately, a significant portion of these moms doesn't recognize the need to change. One version of the model suggests "building awareness is the main task of the educator at this stage."*

An additional one in ten are in the Contemplation stage, where they are said to be gathering information about the behavior and how it may be affecting their lives now and in the future. Programming for people in the Contemplation stage should address motivating the learner by presenting options available to assist in making the change (e.g., tips/suggestions/recipes for switching to 1% low fat or fat free milk).

Positioning Statements

Healthy/Good for You/All

In general, moms liked this positioning – drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk is good for everyone in the family. Moms particularly liked “healthy/healthy changes/healthy choices, and some liked “healthy diet.” However, there are several *problem* words or phrases that need to be considered: “diet,” “changes,” and “everyone.” For some mothers, “diet” suggests being on a specific food plan that excludes some foods, such as a low carbohydrate diet, rather than the usual food they consume day-to-day. Other moms didn't care for the phrase “healthy changes,” suggesting that many people don't like change, and would be turned off by such a statement. Instead, they prefer “healthy choices.” Still others

crossed out “everyone” saying that low fat milk is not best for everyone. Finally, some moms felt it should say, “Parents today are switching,” or “Families today are switching,” to make it look more like a shared decision.

Healthy/Good for Children

Moms liked this statement very much, particularly “developing healthy habits.” They realize the importance of developing healthy habits at a young age, with several saying they drink the type of milk they drank when they were kids. Others mentioned they like the phrase “after the age of 2,” saying they like that it’s specific about which children should get 1% low fat and fat free milk (and which should not).

Good Taste

The majority of moms we talked with do not believe these statements, particularly the first one – “most moms couldn’t tell the difference between 1% low fat and 2% reduced fat milk.” Many maintain *they* can tell the difference and believe that most people are able to. Others said they would like to know who did the test and want more information about it before they would believe the statement. In addition, there were moms in the groups who disagreed that “1% low fat and fat free milk tastes great,” and/or “that 1% low fat and fat free milk tastes light and refreshing.”

Has All the Vitamins and Minerals

This positioning – 1% low fat and fat free milk has all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat is also positive. For some, this information was new and for others, a reminder of what they had heard before, but all moms agreed that this is very important information that should be *broadcast* widely. Interestingly, even those moms for whom the information was new received it as fact. In other words, it wasn’t challenged like “most moms couldn’t tell the difference between 1% low fat and 2% reduced fat milk.” In addition, seeing (in print) that 1% low fat and fat free milk have fewer calories seemed to really get their attention.

Easy to Switch

Moms were mixed in their reactions to this positioning statement. Some, generally those 1% drinkers who found it easy to switch, liked this very much, saying it was easy for them to switch to 1% low fat or fat free milk.

However, most of those who had tried 1% low fat milk but had not switched, those who had family members who had tried to switch but were not able to, and those who wouldn’t think of trying it because of their perceptions of this type of milk, agreed that it is not easy or that not anyone can take this step. Rather, they

maintain it is a very difficult transition to make and it isn't a step anyone can or should take.

Implications:

- ✓ *Switch to 1% low fat and fat free milk because it is healthy for your children and healthy for your family, and because it has all the vitamins and minerals of whole and 2% milk, but without the fat (and calories?) are good messages. Conversely, trying to convince whole and 2% milk drinkers who are very skeptical about drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk because it tastes great, light, or refreshing, is unlikely to be successful. Similarly, trying to convince this same audience that switching will be easy is likely to fall on deaf ears.*
- ✓ *Several words and concepts stand out as being good to use with this audience, including 'family,' 'healthy,' 'choices,' 'healthy habits,' 'all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat,' and 'fewer calories,' (for moms). Conversely, there appear to be words to avoid – 'diet,' 'everyone,' 'anyone,' 'change,' and 'tastes great, light,' (when referring to 1% low fat and fat free milk).*
- ✓ *There may be a need for dual messages so that moms feel good about giving 1% low fat milk to their young children (because it has all the vitamins and minerals of whole and 2% milk), AND it has fewer calories, which is important to the moms themselves.*
- ✓ *Recognize that switching from whole and 2% milk may be difficult and give moms fun ways/tips for doing so.*

1. Perceptions of Whole and Fat Free Milk Purchasers

The image of the mom who buys whole milk for her family and the mom who buys fat free milk are very different. To some extent, both are trying to do what's best for their families; however, because of different life experiences, different levels of education and knowledge, and different priorities, they have made different choices.

The following two scenarios were presented to focus group participants:

Suppose you were in line at the grocery store behind a mother with a couple of children that looked like they were in grade school. Mom is buying two gallons of whole milk. Write down some words that describe the mom. How old is she? What else does she have in her grocery cart? What things are important to her? What does she believe in?

Suppose you saw another mother in the grocery store line and she also had two children in grade school. This mom is buying two gallons of fat free milk. Write down some words that describe this mom.

In general, the mom buying the whole milk was described as having more junk food (e.g., chips, cookies, ice cream) in her cart, while the mom buying the fat free milk was said to have much healthier food and snacks in her grocery cart (yogurt, fruit, vegetables, wheat bread). Interestingly, several focus group participants pictured the second mom (the one buying fat free milk) as someone who is extremely health conscious, with some saying she had organic food, granola, no red meat, low-fat yogurt, blueberries, and almonds in her basket.

In terms of her physical appearance, the mom with the whole milk was often described as being heavy - with some saying her kids are also heavy - and as someone who doesn't exercise, walk, or go to the park with her kids. Some said this mom is less educated or informed about the health benefits of drinking low fat milk. Still others said this mom may not be able to give her kids a healthy breakfast, so she gives them whole milk to fill them up, or, that she is so tired that she doesn't have the energy to control her family's eating habits so she gives in to what they want.

That said, there were a few moms who said the mom buying the whole milk is very concerned about the health and nutrition of her children and that's why she is buying whole milk. Others said that since this mom was raised on whole milk, she thinks it's better for her children.

In addition to having healthy food in her grocery basket, the mom buying the fat free milk was described as being very active, with many saying she had just come from the gym. For the most part, she was described as slim and very concerned about her health and the health of her children, although a few said

she was probably a little heavy, so was buying fat free milk so she could lose weight.

With regard to age, some focus group participants said the mom buying the whole milk was young and must have young children who drink whole milk. Several also said she's young because she hasn't yet learned what is best for her children. As one participant said, "You always want to please them, so you just get whatever they want you to get. Her kids probably like that kind of milk." Others said the mom buying whole milk must be older, because "that's what my mom's generation drinks."

Similarly, the mom buying the fat free milk was often described as older, because she has learned more about nutrition and what's best for her family. However, other participants said she's young, because younger moms have learned more about health and nutrition through WIC and other sources.

Comments re: Mom #1 (with the whole milk): ("S" indicates comment from Spanish-speaking mothers, and "NA" indicates Native American mothers.)

I thought she was 35 to 45 years old because my mom drinks whole milk and she makes my sister drink whole milk. I don't think she gets plenty of exercise. She has her children eating cereal every morning, which is why she has a lot of milk. Her children might be a little bit on the heavy side if they are in grade school because they are supposed to be drinking 2% milk.

I imagine her as being overweight, with kids that are very active. She has a lot of cereal. We try to all buy kids things that they like because you work and we want to give them what they want, but maybe you're not doing the right thing as far as nutrition. (S)

I think that the person that is giving whole milk to her children like the others say here, it is passed down from the family, they are used to it. I think that she is a person a bit older than the other, reason being that modern moms have more information like from WIC classes on how to feed their children and what type of milk to give them. (S)

The first mom acts like me. I was in my 30's when my kids were younger and basically back then it was junk food and whole milk and the whole shebang.

I think she probably works full time because she doesn't have the energy to control her family's eating habits and she kind of gives in to what they want, like their comfort foods.

My first mother was younger because I think when you are younger you don't really think about the fat in the milk and you just want your kids to have the nutrients. I found that mother to be more family-oriented with her kids and family and church because I think when you are younger you are so into all of that. (NA)

The first mom is a younger mom because I am a younger mom and sometimes you really don't know what to give your kids. You always want to please them, so you just get whatever they want you to get. Her kids probably like that kind of milk. She probably had a lot of junk food, like chips and stuff like that.

Comments re: Mom #2 (with the fat free milk):

I think she is probably in her 30's, and she is looking more towards wanting to stay healthy and keeping her kids healthy, so she probably gets wheat bread and other low-calorie stuff. If they get snacks it's going to be yogurt, fruits, and vegetables. They probably aren't buying red meat.

I know a lot of people that drink milk that is 1% and it's people that are older. Thin. They like to exercise a lot, walk, and go to the gym. They have a lot of blueberries, strawberries, low-fat yogurt, granola, and cereal, with fiber. If they eat bread, they have bread that is whole wheat. (S)

This mom is 35-years-old and has two children. She's paying attention to her children. She has two gallons of fat-free milk and has no sweet snacks, no chips, no cookies or anything like that. She has organic food, plenty of fruits and vegetables.

I said that she is probably about 40 years old. She is very healthy and kind of like a hippy. She is wearing Birkenstocks and carries a canvas bag. She eats organic foods and is very strict with all kinds of snacks. Everything is fruits and veggies, and she is probably vegetarian and just has the milk because her kids need it.

The other mother with the fat free milk, I pictured myself there because I put fat free milk in my cart and I have two children and I watch what I eat and I exercise. My family is the most important thing to me, as well as my health and my children's health. Now that my 11-year-old is getting older, he doesn't need all that fat in his milk, but milk is still good for him. The second mom was dressed sporty because she takes care of herself and exercises. (NA)

I think she looks intelligent and has her family's eating habits under control. She is empowered.

2. Milk Preferences

All moms were asked why they drink the type of milk they drink, as well as why they give their children a certain type. Most moms who drink whole milk say they like the taste and/or that's what they drank as a child. In addition, a few say whole milk is more nutritious, and others that it's more natural. Moms who give their children whole milk believe that it's more nutritious and feel their children need the extra vitamins, minerals, and fat that they believe are in whole milk.

I figured if I'm going to be paying for it then I'm going to get the good stuff and it's going to be whole milk. I'm not going to spend \$3.00 on something where they take half of the stuff out. I want to get my money's worth. (NA)

I used to take WIC and they told me that the whole milk is part of your food when you drink it. (For example) when my son doesn't have a chance to eat breakfast in the morning, he will just drink milk and that will make him full.

Because I've always bought whole milk and I've never tasted the 2%, the 1%, or the fat free one!

Interestingly, many moms who drink 2% do so because it has less fat than whole milk and they believe it is the healthy choice. Many tell of switching from whole to 2% because it's healthier or because they were trying to lose weight or their children were overweight. Some refer to 2% as "low fat" milk.

I give my kids 2% milk because when we were on WIC they were overweight, so that's how we ended up changing to 2% milk. We ended up just keeping them on the 2% milk.

My mom began to switch to 2% because she began to work out and eat healthier and that is what made her switch to 2%. (S)

We drink 2% because it is low in fat and because my friends say it is better. (S)

I give my kids 2% milk because the whole milk has more fat content and my kids are getting older and their dad is a little bit overweight, so I don't want them to follow that. I just think it's better for them. They do get enough exercise though.

I get 2% milk because I thought whole milk had more (fat). You know, when they are small they have to drink whole milk up to a certain age and then WIC stops giving you whole milk and changes it to 2% milk. I thought

it was because of the fat in whole milk and 2% milk doesn't have very much fat in it, so that's why I give my kids the 2% milk. (NA)

I feel more comfortable with 2% milk and 1% milk because it's healthier. (NA)

Similarly, moms who drink 1% low fat milk do so primarily because it is healthier than drinking whole or 2% milk. Most refer to the fat content being less than whole or 2%, with others saying they have more energy when they drink 1% milk, or that they don't have as many digestive problems now that they drink 1%. Still others say it is more thirst quenching and refreshing than whole or 2%. Some explain that they drink 1% because they are trying to lose weight or that they give it to their children because they are overweight.

I give them 1% milk because it has the same nutritional value as whole milk with a lot less calories and fat (NA)

My youngest son is overweight, so instead of drinking 2% milk, we all just switched over to 1% milk. (NA)

When I drink 2% milk, I can taste a difference between the fat free milk and the 2% milk. I prefer the fat free milk because of the texture. With the 2% milk, it feels like you have wax in your mouth.

I have no preference in taste. It's just the fat content for us because it's healthier. I know that you still need a little bit of fat in your diet, so 1% milk is good.

I liked it. I'm not going to say I didn't like it, because I did like it. I have felt lighter. It is lighter. (S)

1% is lighter. The taste is good . . .you get used to it. (S)

3. Reasons for Switching to 1% Low Fat or Fat Free Milk

Moms have a variety of reasons for switching from what they used to drink to 1% (or, for those who consider 2% low fat, 2%) milk. The most frequently cited reasons were overall health and wanting to lose weight or have their children lose weight. There were many moms who said they weren't able to lose the weight after they had a baby, so they decided to switch to 1%, with others saying as they get older and are less physically active they don't need the extra calories that come with whole and 2% milk. Other reasons moms switched included, that's what WIC gives them, specific health issues, including bronchial problems and constipation, and that's what their children get at Head Start. Finally, a few moms said they drink 1% because it's cheaper than 2% and whole, with several explaining that whole is most expensive, followed by 2%, then 1%, then fat free.

I switched for health reasons. I am not as active as I was when I was younger, so it was better for me to have the 1% milk. (NA)

I have a son that is 8 years of age and (when) I used to give him whole milk, he was very constipated. Now, he drinks 2% and he is better. (S)

For me, it's for my kids' health. We used to drink whole milk, but then both of my boys became obese, so that's why they had to make a switch and they had no choice. They are doing good on it now.

It was because of WIC. They used to give you whole milk at first and then all of a sudden they switched to 1% and skim, so that's why. But, my son didn't take it too well.

I switched from whole milk to 2% first because I wanted to make a healthy choice. Then I changed to 1% because of WIC.

It took me actually having my kids in order to switch to 1% because I always would drink 2% because that's what my mom bought. Then, when I moved out, I obviously bought what she would buy me so I kept buying 2% and then after I had my kids I gained a lot of weight and I didn't lose it for two years. I became obsessed with reading labels and everything so basically after reading diet stuff I learned that basically whole milk is bad for you. There's like hormones and everything in it and basically they said that the only milk that's good for you is skim milk. I tried skim milk but I didn't like it because it was really watery so the next best thing was 1%!

My reason is not health related at all, it's cost related. I'll probably answer the question you asked earlier about the whole milk and 1%, why I drink both. If I didn't have WIC, I wouldn't be getting the 1%. When I wasn't getting WIC and I had to budget everything I would get 2% or 1% because it's cheaper than whole milk. That's why I would drink 1% or whole milk.

4. Barriers to Drinking 1% Low Fat or Fat Free Milk

In the proposal for this research, we identified the following barriers to drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk:

Taste: tastes watery, thin, weak, “like soap,” nasty

Conflicting information: Women have gotten conflicting information (or what they perceive to be conflicting information) from WIC, pediatricians, their children’s schools, and other sources. For example, some women report that their children’s schools provide 2% milk, “so it must be best.” Others believe that WIC provides whole milk until the child turns 2 years old, and then 2% milk until the child turns 5 (and is no longer eligible for WIC assistance), or some variation of this. (In reality, WIC provides whole milk to all children from 1 to 2 years of age. At 2 years old, they begin providing 1% or fat free milk to children. With a dietitian’s approval, they will authorize 2% or whole milk for children or adults who are underweight or who cannot tolerate 1% or skim milk.)

Emotional/cultural: Some women continue to drink whole and/or 2% milk because “this is what my mother gave me.”

Habit: Similarly, some women simply say, 2% or whole is what I’ve always drunk, or this is what I’m used to.

Misunderstanding of nutritional information: Some believe whole milk is more nutritious or has more vitamins and minerals than 1% low fat and fat free milk, perhaps because doctors recommend whole milk for babies. In addition, some recommend 2% until the child is 5 years old. These women feel that if it’s best for their young children, it must be best for their older kids (who are not overweight). Others are under the impression that 1% low fat and fat free milk are just for people who are on diets.

Buy whole or 2% for baby/young children, others in the family drink it: Some moms buy whole milk for the baby, and/or 2% for a toddler, so give the same milk to other family members.

With this research, we confirmed these barriers and uncovered a few more:

Look: Although taste is a major barrier to drinking 1% low fat or fat free milk, the *look of the milk* seems almost as important. Many moms, especially whole and 2% drinkers, agree that 1% and fat free milk look watery, clear, thin, or blue. This is a big deterrent for some moms to even try low fat milk. They can’t get past the look of it.

Comments:

You pick it up and you're like, "What is this! There's a lot of water in there!"

Look is a big deterrent.

And it looks like water. It's like taking a glass of water and just putting a teaspoon of milk in there and drinking it.

When I see milk in the store, Vitamin D, 2% . . . 2% and Vitamin D both look the same to look at them, but 1% looks completely different and for that reason I've never even tried it because it looks like it wouldn't be really milk.

Yes, I do give my kids 1% but they say it's too clear. (S)

The 1% is more nutritious. I think that maybe it's psychological because you see it's thinner. My mom doesn't drink it because she says it's like water and she pours it and she's like, "Look!" (S)

What happens is that the whole is thicker and the 2% or 1% is a lot thinner. The 1% looks like pure water. If you got whole milk and added water, that is how it would look. (S)

Child's weight/size/activity level: Many moms refer to their child's weight and activity level when telling about the kind of milk he or she drinks. As one mom explained, "My child is skinny, so I give him whole or 2%." Others describe their child as being very active and therefore needing whole or 2% milk. For some, this is because they think there are more vitamins and minerals in whole and 2% milk, and for others, because they think their child needs the extra fat.

If you have an overweight son, then you're not going to give him whole milk, but if you have a really slim kid, then it's okay for them to drink the whole milk.

My kids are as skinny as rails, so they don't have any problems drinking whole milk, and they eat their food too. There is no need in changing the milk my kids drink because they're fine. Besides, they get the 2% milk at school. They only drink one big glass of whole milk every other day.

I give my oldest son 2% milk because he likes it better and it's easier for him to drink. He is growing and he runs around a lot, so the little bit of fat in there is good for him. I drink the 1% milk though, because it's just easier to get now. (NA)

Because my son is skinny. . . tall, but skinny. My grandson is tiny and they need vitamins and nutrients. I buy whole milk and 2%. (S)

I like 2% more. I don't think it is like water. I like canned milk . . . evaporated milk with oatmeal, but the red (cap) has more fat for the children, more strength to be outside. (S)

The mother that buys whole maybe thinks that because it is whole milk it has more vitamins. It is going to be better for her children. Maybe her children are more active and that is why she gives them whole milk because of the vitamins. (S)

Other family members: Many focus group participants said they drink 1% milk (or would like to), but their husbands or children prefer 2% or whole milk. Some report drinking a different type of milk than other family members, with others saying it doesn't make sense to them to buy two or three different kinds of milk, so they go along with what others in the family prefer.

Several moms reported that, in addition to not liking the taste, their husbands are opposed to anything that suggests the food may be "diet food." So, drinking "low fat" or "fat free" milk is incongruous with their *macho* demeanor.

My kids' dad is the same way and his whole family. . . they will not drink anything but whole milk. I told him I couldn't get whole milk from WIC, so he said I would just need to get some money to go buy some. I told him to go get his own whole milk.

My husband is extremely athletic, but all he drinks is whole milk. That's all they do in his family, and he is really into cooking and all that. On the other hand, I have always had the 1% milk. We buy whole milk just for him, but I'm always going with the organic and looking at the veggies.

My (husband) won't drink 2% because he said that it's water! That's what he tells me, "I'm just drinking water. No, I want my whole milk!" So I buy him his whole milk.

I don't like the 1% milk or the 2% milk because it seems like it is watered down. My son won't drink it at all. I will try to make him strawberry or chocolate milk with it and he won't drink it, and he is 5 years old. So I just buy whatever milk he will drink.

Oh, I like it, but it's just that my fiancé, like I said, I have to trick him into drinking 2% milk, but 1% milk is out of the question. He can taste a difference. There's no use in buying three different kinds of milks in your house because it's going to go bad.

I have always leaned more towards foods that do not have a lot of cholesterol and many things like that, but he always buys that milk. But, he is the one that chooses whole milk, because he thinks that it is better. (S)

I still buy 2% because my child doesn't like 1%. He says it's not good. (S)

When I give my daughter whole milk she drinks it better and she will even tell me, "Hmm. . . the milk is delicious mommy." But when I give 1% to her in cereal, she will leave it. (S)

For my kids, I know it is healthier for them to have 2% milk as opposed to whole milk. They could care less either way, but they don't want to drink 1% milk. I've bought 1% milk before and they told me that it didn't taste like milk. (NA)

Conflicting information (continued): We referenced moms getting conflicting information from WIC, their pediatricians, and their child's school previously. We also learned that moms are either getting conflicting information from WIC clinics or are misunderstanding the information they get. For example, many in the Winslow area reported that WIC gives them 2% milk.

I asked them about the 2% milk and they said it's healthier for my daughter because now she is going to school and she needs more energy.

I also heard that WIC gets 2% milk now and after your kids are two, I think they give you whole milk. I heard it's going to start switching to 1% milk in October. There is not going to be anything but just the 1% milk

I give my daughter, it depends, whole or 2% because they told me at WIC that when the children are from 1 to 5 years of age to give them whole milk or 2%, whatever they like. (S)

I buy the 2% milk for my grandkids because that's what they get on WIC and that's what they are used to. Their system is so used to having that 2% milk. If we switched them over to 1% milk or just whole milk, it throws their body system off right away, so it's best just to stay with the same thing. (NA)

I get 2% milk because I thought whole milk had more...you know, when they are small they have to drink whole milk up to a certain age and then WIC stops giving you whole milk and changes it to 2% milk. (NA)

Milk Packaging: Interestingly, moms report that whole milk always has the red cap, no matter which store, no matter which brand. However, there is not a consistent color scheme for 2%, 1% low fat, or fat free, which can be confusing.

In addition, the large “Vitamin D” printed on the whole milk containers leads many to believe that it has more Vitamin D than the other types, or that the other types have no Vitamin D at all. *(There is more on milk packaging later in this report.)*

Milk served by schools: According to moms, different schools serve different types of milk to their students. Some schools offer their students a choice of two or three kinds of milk, while others just serve one kind. Some provide 1% and others 2%. Moms with children that attend schools that serve 2% milk (or at least moms think they serve 2%) feel the schools must know best or that their kids get used to 2% milk at school, so that’s what they want at home.

Other moms report their children’s school provides 1% to students, or gives them the option of choosing 1%, along with 2% or fat free milk.

I asked at school which milk they give and they told me 1% for health reasons, because of obesity and that they wanted the children to get more nutrition without the fat. (S)

I know my kids take 2% milk at school when they have lunch. They pretty much know what 2% tastes like and the difference of the whole milk. I think they know the difference.

I think schools are doing a good job by helping the kids drink 2% now and be healthier. It will be easier for them to change to 1% in schools.

I used to work with (the schools) and I know they only allow them to serve 2% milk or fat free milk unless the pediatrician or doctor states something otherwise that they need to have whole milk, and then they would provide that for them. But, other than that, it’s only 2% milk and fat free milk. (NA)

I give my kids fat free milk because there are less calories in there, but at school they drink 2% milk, so they don’t really have a preference. (NA)

When I had my son in Head Start, all they would give him is 1% milk. Even at his school now in kindergarten, it’s all 1% milk that they give them. They’re trying to get the kids to not eat so much fat these days.

I know why the schools are pushing the 1% milk is because of the obesity level because it’s pretty high right now, so they are trying to get the kids healthier, so they are pushing healthier foods and that’s why they are doing the 1% milk. They’ve done studies on which milk is healthier for the kids and what one will balance out their long day at school.

Cost: Although cost does not appear to be a major barrier, several moms mentioned they buy what’s on sale or whichever milk is cheapest.

One of the big things is cost, but to see the fat or whatever. I understand healthiness. I understand all of that, but if it's cheaper to get the fat one, I'm sorry, that's what I'm going to get.

Right now, I drink 1% milk or 2% milk depending on which one is cheaper. My kids drink the same thing.

I think it was when I moved out (that I switched to 1% milk), and basically it had a lot to do with the price, too, because it seems like it was a little bit cheaper to buy the other milk rather than the whole milk. I especially noticed that when I moved out on my own.

Right now, Circle K has 2% milk on sale - 2 for \$4.00 - so everybody at my house is having to drink 2% milk because I tell them it's on sale. I'm not paying more for Vitamin D milk just to buy it, so that seems to be working for me right now.

Finally, another "barrier" to switching to 1% low fat or fat free milk is that many moms feel they did switch to "low fat" milk when they switched from whole to 2% milk. This was apparent throughout these discussions, as has been seen in previous sections of this report. There are many examples of moms who referred to 2% milk as low fat, and most of those who had switched from whole to 2% said they did so because 2% is healthier.

Actually, the doctor said 1%, but I told him I don't like 1%, so I buy the 2% and the boys and now my daughter drink it. So, because it has less fat, it still has the same vitamins, but it just has less fat for them.

I thought (WIC stops giving you whole milk) because of the fat in whole milk and 2% milk doesn't have very much fat in it, so that's why I give my kids the 2% milk. (NA)

I never saw 2% milk until I was in junior high, and then that's when I used to hear people say that you needed to drink 2% milk to be healthy, but out on the reservation all that was available was whole milk. That's what they had at the schools on the reservation too. (NA)

To further understand this thinking, some of the groups were asked about the fat content in whole milk. We said, "If the 1% and 2% refer to the fat content, then what would you say the fat content is in whole milk?" Responses ranged from 5% to 100%, with quite a few guessing a number over 50%.

5. Milk Packaging

Many mothers refer to their preferred type of milk by the color of the cap. This is especially true of whole milk drinkers who often talk about the milk “with the red cap.” From what we hear from moms, whole milk always has a red cap no matter what store or what brand. However, this is not the case for the other types of milk. The colors used for 2%, 1%, and fat free, although somewhat consistent, can differ from store to store. Moms also say their children often know what color cap *their* milk has, as do their husbands.

It doesn't matter what brand you buy. It's always a red cap.

My mom buys the blue for us and the red for the children, that is the way she has always bought, and I do also. I have always bought the blue for me and the red for the children. (S)

My kids already know at the store what milk we are getting. My 5-year-old will go right to which milk we get. It's the color of the cap.

I will tell my husband to get dark blue or yellow, but no light blue or red. Safeway has dark blue for fat free milk and a yellow cap for 1% milk.

I choose it by the color. Red is whole milk and blue is 2% milk.

I always buy the 1% and it always has a blue lid but I think different brands have different colors.

Some stores like at Fry's or Fresh & Easy, the 1%, I think it's blue. It's light blue. I've seen pink ones, also.

Many whole milk drinkers or former whole milk drinkers also refer to *their* milk as *Vitamin D* milk, explaining that there is a big “Vitamin D” on the container.

Isn't whole milk the same as Vitamin D milk, which has that in it? The other ones don't have Vitamin D in them, do they?

But it's just when people say Vitamin D, I automatically think whole milk. So, that's what they're trying to get your attention with the fat free, the 1% and 2%. But on whole milk it says “Vitamin D” in big letters.

I think 1% milk has more vitamins, but I think the whole milk has more Vitamin D in it. (next participant) Yeah, because why would it say “Vitamin D” on the whole milk?

6. Positioning Statements

Focus group participants were presented with five alternative positioning statements, and for each statement, asked which they think would be most effective in encouraging moms (like themselves) to switch to 1% low fat or fat free milk. In reviewing the statements, participants were asked to circle the words or phrases they liked and to cross out those they didn't like.

Following is a summary of the findings for each of the statements.

a. Healthy/Good for You/All

- Drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk is an important part of a healthy diet.
- Moms today are switching to 1% low fat milk and making healthy changes for their families.
- Drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk is a healthy choice for everyone in your family.

In general, moms liked this positioning – drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk is good for everyone in the family. However, there are enough *problem* words and concepts that it didn't rise to the top among woman in the groups. Those who liked this statement liked the focus on the family - not just moms, not just kids, but everyone in the family. Many women, especially Spanish-speaking moms, circled the words healthy/healthy diet/healthy changes/healthy choices, with quite a few circling “moms today are switching.” A few remarked that if “moms today” are doing something that is healthy for their families, they want to know about it.

Conversely, those who didn't care for this statement took issue with some of the specific words and ideas. For example, many moms crossed out “diet,” saying they don't want to hear or be reminded that they need to go on a diet. For these mothers, “diet” suggests being on a specific food plan that excludes some foods, (e.g., a low carbohydrate diet) rather than the usual food and drink they consume. Again, they don't want to hear any more about dieting. Other moms didn't care for the phrase “healthy changes,” suggesting that many people don't like change, and would be turned off by such a statement. Instead, they prefer “healthy choices.” Still others crossed out “everyone” saying that low fat milk is not best for everyone. And, some moms felt it should say, “Parents today are switching,” or “Families today are switching,” to make it look more like a shared decision .

Comments:

I circled the last one also because it's basically straight to the point that it's for everyone in your family. It doesn't just specify mom or another specific person. It's everyone.

I circled 'switching' and 'healthy choices' because they were just good words. I didn't cross any words off in the second one, but in the first one I crossed out the word 'diet' because that is a whole different category than milk. Diet includes other foods and exercising and other things, but it's not just milk by itself. (NA)

I didn't know anything about the 1% so hearing that mom say, 'I'm switching,' then I would be like, 'Oh, my gosh! I need to! Why is everybody switching to 1%? What's going on?' Just seeing that line, I wanted to read what the rest of it had to say. 'Okay, I'm going to switch to 1%.' Obviously there was something I didn't know about it and now I know. That spoke to me.

I like this one because healthy choices are being made for the good of the family. (S)

I like 'moms today are switching to 1%, 'low fat,' and making 'healthy changes for their families,' because they're talking about their families, they're not just talking about themselves or diet or whatever.

I didn't like 'healthy diet' in the first one because for some people, when they see the word diet, it's a negative thing.

I changed the words 'healthy changes' to 'healthy choices' though because it should be a choice.

I changed 'healthy diet' to 'healthy living.' (NA)

In my house, my husband does most of the shopping, so it could say 'dads' because it's not always the moms. (NA)

I don't agree with, 'Drinking 1% low fat and fat free milk is a healthy choice for everyone in your family,' because I honestly think that little kids should have whole milk.

You don't want to see children on a diet.

A lot of people don't like to change, so maybe make it is an option. Maybe say here's another healthy option for your family.

Where it says, 'moms today are switching,' instead of using the word 'moms' I would say 'families today are switching.'

I don't like the word 'fat' (grasa), because when I hear 'fat' I automatically think it's something bad. (S)

When I see diet, when I see that, that still turns me off. I know I'm overweight, I know I need to change my eating habits.

b. Healthy/Good for Children

- Serving 1% low fat and fat free milk to your children when they are young will help develop healthy habits later on.
- After the age of 2, serving 1% low fat and fat free milk to your children will provide them with all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat.

Moms liked these statements very much, particularly “developing healthy habits.” Women in all groups consistently circled this phrase. They realize the importance of developing healthy habits at a young age, with several saying they drink the type of milk they drank when they were kids. Others circled “after the age of 2,” saying they like that it’s specific about which children should get 1% low fat and fat free milk (and which should not).

There were very few negative comments about this statement. A few moms said they didn’t like the specificity of the statement (after age 2), saying it depends on the child.

Comments:

There is one word that is very important here and that is habits. We have to develop good habits. (S)

I liked the first one because it is up to us to teach our kids good habits because they are too young right now to know the difference, so it’s up to us.

I circled ‘will help them develop healthy habits,’ because, like it says, if you want a healthy kid, give them something healthy and they will keep that in mind. (S)

I liked it because it says ‘healthy habits’. (What do you like about that?) So they would learn at an early age what healthy habits are.

I circled the words ‘young’ and ‘healthy habits’ because the earlier you start, the better chances there are of them eating healthier and making better choices. (NA)

I grew up on 2% milk and that’s all I drank, so with this, if you’re always given 1% milk, then you will develop a healthy habit of drinking that.

Most of the people that I know who refuse to drink 1% milk or 2% milk are older people who have always drank Vitamin D milk, so maybe if you start them younger and they can develop that taste then they will be more open to it.

I like the first statement about how it helps them to develop healthy habits later on. That is important to me that my kids do this because they're not always going to be in my house and they're going to have kids of their own, so I want them to know how to feed them and get them off to a good start.

I circled the second one because it says, "After the age of 2," because between the ages of 1 and 2 they should be drinking whole milk, and after they turn 2 years old, then they can start drinking something else.

It says, after the age of 2, serve them 1%. I was like, 'Oh, really? Starting at age two?' To me, it's a wake up call, after age 2. These people are saying my child is supposed to have 1%. They're still getting the same vitamins they're getting in the whole milk. I need to switch them to 1%.

c. Good Taste

- In taste tests, most moms couldn't tell the difference between 1% low fat and 2% reduced fat milk.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk tastes great and has all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk tastes light and refreshing.

The majority of moms we talked with do not believe these statements, particularly the first one – “most moms couldn't tell the difference between 1% low fat and 2% reduced fat milk.” Many maintain *they* can tell the difference and believe that most people are able to. Others said they would like to know who did the test and want more information about it before they would believe the statement. In addition, there were moms in the groups who disagreed that “1% low fat and fat free milk tastes great,” and/or “that 1% low fat and fat free milk tastes light and refreshing.”

Conversely, those moms who liked this statement (primarily those who drink 1% low fat or fat free milk already) contend that it does taste great and it is light and refreshing. Other supporters of this statement liked the phrase, “has all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat.”

Positive comments:

I kind of like the point on the second one where they tell you what it has in it without all the fat. That is good to say, but they shouldn't say it's great because they can't tell you what it tastes like. It's telling you right here

what the vitamins and minerals are and it says without all the fat, so that is kind of good to know.

I didn't like the middle one because if you're drinking whole milk, 1% milk isn't going to taste great. That's not going to make me think, oh yeah, it does taste great, I think I'm going to go out and switch. It just doesn't do that to me.

You need to write on there what test it was and who did that test according to this certain study. This is just a general statement, but there is nothing to back it up. (NA)

It says you can't really tell the difference in the taste between 1% and 2% and I can distinguish the taste. Like I said, 2% has a different taste than 1%. Here it says you can't tell the difference. I can distinguish it. (S)

I can tell the difference between 1% milk and 2% milk, so I didn't really like the first one. I did like the second one though because I like how it says, 'without all the fat.'

d. All the Vitamins and Minerals

- 1% low fat and fat free milk has all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk has all the Vitamin D without all the fat.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk has all the calcium without all the fat.
- 1% low fat and fat free milk has fewer calories and less fat but all the vitamins and minerals.

This positioning – 1% low fat and fat free milk has all the vitamins and minerals without all the fat – was well received, especially the last bullet point, which many moms agreed “says it all.” For some, this information was new and for others, a reminder of what they had heard before, but all moms agreed that this is a good *selling point*. Interestingly, even those moms for whom the information was new received it as fact. In other words, it wasn't challenged like “most moms couldn't tell the difference between 1% low fat and 2% reduced fat milk.” A few moms said they liked the parts of this statement that specified that 1% low fat and fat free milk have the same Vitamin D or calcium, but most seemed to like the more all-encompassing statement about it having the same vitamins and minerals. The added bonus of it having fewer calories really seemed to appeal to these moms.

Comments:

I think this is good because earlier we were saying how we weren't sure if it had all the same vitamins and minerals, so this is saying that it has all the same stuff, but it's just without the fat. (NA)

I circled the word 'all' because it says, 'all the vitamins and minerals', but it doesn't say just the Vitamin D or just the calcium, but it's talking about all of them. (Is that important?) Yes, because why should I give it to my daughter if it only has calcium in it and it doesn't have any of the other stuff?

I circled 'less fat' because it doesn't break it down like the second or third one where it talks about Vitamin D and calcium. Nobody has the time to sit down and read all of that because it is too wordy. This last one just brings it all together.

I crossed out 'Vitamin D' and 'calcium' because it targets just those two vitamins. It's just saying like it only has the Vitamin D without all the fat, but it doesn't say it has calcium and all the other stuff. The last one says that it has all the vitamins, plus fewer calories and less fat. (NA)

I circled 'less fat' and 'fewer calories' because it is fat free milk. Personally, that is just something that is important to me.

I like that one because it does say fewer calories and less fat. I think this one is an eye catcher for me because that is what I am looking for right now. There are a lot of people who are going to want to keep their kids healthier and they're going to be looking for that, and then it also says that it has all the vitamins and minerals in it too. (NA)

I like it as well because, these days, with so much obesity going on, people wanting to change their diet, I think it attracts anybody regardless of whether you have children or not. Because it says 1% low fat and fat-free milk has fewer calories, less fat but all the vitamins and minerals and that's all stuff we want. Less fat, less calories because we're looking out for our diet, but yet it has vitamins and minerals. (S)

That's the one I liked best, too, because some people are more health conscious and watch their calorie intake, so it says it has fewer calories, but you're still getting everything that you'll get in your other milk.

I like the one that talks about the vitamins and minerals because most people don't know that 1% milk and fat free milk also have calcium and Vitamin D and all that. (NA)

e. Easy to Switch

- Switching to 1% low fat or fat free milk is a healthy step anyone can take.
- Switching to 1% low fat or fat free milk is easy and healthy for your family.

Moms were mixed in their reactions to this positioning statement. Some, generally those 1% drinkers who found it easy to switch, liked this very much, saying it was easy for them to switch to 1% low fat or fat free milk. They think this would be a good message to get out to people, that is, that it's not that big of a deal to go from whole or 2% milk to 1% low fat milk. In addition, there were a few whole or 2% milk drinkers who were intrigued by the thought that this would be an easy transition . . . perhaps easier than they thought.

However, most of those who had tried 1% low fat milk but had not switched, those who had family members who had tried to switch but could not, and those who wouldn't think of trying it because of their perceptions of this type of milk, agreed that it is not easy or that not anyone can take this step. Rather, they maintain it is a very difficult switch to make and it isn't a step anyone can or should take. Some moms, who did not like the second statement about it being easy to switch, felt much more comfortable with the first statement - it's 'a healthy step anyone can take.

Comments:

I like the first statement best because it is a healthy step. The second one says that it is easy and healthy, but sometimes it's not easy switching, and it may not be for your whole family.

I circled 'healthy' and 'a step that anyone can take' because it's true. Anyone can do it, but some people won't do it because they don't like it.

I liked the second one better because to me it felt like they were talking to me and my family. I circled the words 'easy' and 'family'. (NA)

Who doesn't want something healthy for their family and on top of it easy to implement? (S)

Because it is not easy for me, it was not easy for my children. (S)

I think it's hard for adults to switch, but it's easy for kids. It would be much easier to just switch a kid than to switch yourself. I wouldn't switch just because I don't like the taste of it, but it's easier for my son to switch because he doesn't really care. It's just milk to him.

I like the first statement, although it says that anyone can take it. I don't think anybody can take it though because if they really like whole milk then they won't go to 1% milk. Yet on the second statement, they say it's easy, but it's not always easy for people to switch from whole milk to 2% milk because they are used to the whole milk, so it's not easy.

I don't agree with either of them because not just anybody can switch, especially kids.

And I like the other one because it wasn't easy, and it still isn't because my husband won't stop buying whole milk, so now and again, if that's all there is left, then I have to drink it and it doesn't agree with me.

F. Other Suggestions

Participants were asked what other suggestions they had for trying to encourage moms to switch from drinking whole and 2% milk to 1% low fat or fat free milk. Several moms suggested using visuals such as the "fat tubes" to demonstrate the different levels of fat content, while other moms proposed talking about how much more energy you have when you drink 1% low fat milk compared to 2% or whole milk. A few recommended telling people about specific diseases you could get if you continue to drink whole or 2% milk.

Comments:

They showed me these little vials and they have fat in them. The whole milk ones are full to the top and then they have less in them as the milk goes down to 2% and 1%. Those are what made me switch milk.

At a WIC - I don't remember if it was here or LA - they showed me the difference in fat between the whole milk and the 1% and that really got my attention. Maybe it would be important if they made an informative pamphlet or show the difference, make it more visual. (S)

I think that it would be good to put three glasses like so, and put the whole, 2% and 1%, because it really impressed me when it spoiled and I saw that it was nothing but fat in the whole, and I said, 'Oye!'

I would tell them all about the bad things, all the ways that whole milk affects them from now until you're an adult. Also, I would explain how whole milk or the fat is affecting your organism and for the kids and older kids I would explain to them what whole milk and 2% is and why 1% is better. (S)

I think a key word would be easy to digest because a lot of people have digestive problems. I think that's a key word. (S)

I would tell them there is less fat and it will energize you when you are getting ready for work or school. You're more focused and not all tired at work or at school like you are when you drink whole milk.