



**NUTRITION CONTENT STANDARDS
ADULT ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND LANGUAGE
PROGRAMS**



Nutrition Content Standards Adult English-As-A-Second Language Programs

The Nutrition content standards for adult English-As-A-Second Language (ESL) program for the state of California are a reflection of the six “Key Messages” identified by the California Nutrition Network (Prehm & Associates, 2002). The Network is a California-based social marketing campaign conducted by the California Department of Health Services that promotes healthy eating and a physically active lifestyle among low-income families. Its work falls within three overall goals:

- Eat the number of servings of fruits and vegetables recommended by the USDA every day
- Exercise every day – 60 minutes of moderate exercise for adults; and 60 minutes for children.
- Promote participation in federally funded nutrition assistance programs such as Food Stamps.

The behavior change component of the social marketing campaign differs from traditional nutrition education in that program outcomes are focused on influencing and supporting positive behavior change rather than on what learners **know about** nutrition. Research shows that improved nutrition knowledge does not automatically or necessarily result in improved eating habits. The Network has supported research (Prehm & Associates, 2001) to explore how to best influence and support healthy eating by understanding the culture, barriers, values, motivation and environments of different subgroups of low-income families in California. The approach of seeking understanding of the priorities, interests and viable next steps of the participants, called “designing by dialogue”, allows participants’ skills and existing healthy eating habits to be validated and reinforced and serve as a model for influencing behavior change in others. Roundtables of adult Latino ESL learners were convened around the state to garner ideas and concerns from these targeted groups. The solutions proposed have become the basis for the “Key Messages” put forth as nutrition education standards for adult English-As-A-Second Language programs by this project:

1. Students will identify solutions for healthy eating, as defined by the USDA, with limited time to cook and eat in order to function optimally at work, school and in the home.
2. Students will continue to eat, or add, fruits and vegetables to their diet to equal the number of servings recommended by the USDA.
3. Students will influence children to eat healthy meals and snacks.
4. Students will eat a balanced diet as defined by the USDA.
5. Students will access resources for low-cost, healthy food.
6. Students will demonstrate safe food handling practices at home, at school and on the job.



Other national projects for adult education have taken a similar approach in identifying content standards. The “Equipped for the Future” project sponsored by the National Institute for Literacy also convened focus groups of adult students to listen to what they wanted to “know and be able to do” in their roles as parents, workers, consumers and community members. Their research (Stein, 2000) concluded that *purpose* is the key to motivation for adult learners. Equipped For The Future (EFF) Standards encourage learners and instructors to think about strategies for learning and for using skills and knowledge in the context of the learners’ purpose, to identify barriers along the way to achieving that purpose, and to try new strategies that might enable the learners to get past those barriers.

This problem solving approach to developing knowledge and skills fits with adults’ everyday life responsibilities which demand that they be able to identify and respond to change and challenges at work and at home. It is also in line with adult learning theory that postulates that teaching knowledge and skills in the context of purpose and application fosters retention of knowledge in a useable form that leads to behavior change.

Another federally funded project, which reflects this approach, is the EL/Civics initiative. It supports the development of curriculum that provides adult ESL learners with the skills to interact at the institutional/organizational community or public policy levels of behavior. The curriculum development process begins with assessment of students’ needs/interests in content knowledge areas such as citizenship, civics, health and nutrition, and education to be integrated with their language development instruction. In California, 25% of EL Civics projects have included nutrition/health related topics based on student needs assessment data.

The Nutrition Content Standards for Adult English As A Second Language Programs were derived from formative research and developed with this background in mind. They are cross-walked to other accepted standards/competencies (K-12, CASAS, SCANS and Equipped For the Future) to show their universal nature.



NUTRITION EDUCATION FOR ADULT ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

CONTENT STANDARDS

STANDARD 1: Students will identify solutions for healthy eating (as defined by the USDA) with limited time to cook and eat in order to function optimally at work, at school and in the home.

Example Objectives: Students will be able to:

- 1.1 Eat a healthy diet as recommended by the USDA.
- 1.2 Prepare quick and easy, healthy meals to eat “on the run” or take with them.
- 1.3 Plan nutritious meals ahead that are quick and easy.
- 1.4 Keep basic nutritious food on hand for quick meal preparation.
- 1.5 Simplify meal preparation to adapt to a fast paced lifestyle.

STANDARD 2: Students will continue to eat, or add, fruits and vegetables to their diets to equal USDA recommendations.

Example Objectives: Students will be able to:

- 2.1 Explain the health advantages of eating fruits and vegetables daily.
- 2.2 Make progress towards a goal for healthy eating by using strategies to add fruits and vegetables if necessary.
- 2.3 Distinguish 100% juice from other juice drinks with added sugar.
- 2.4 Prepare vegetables in new ways to appeal to different age groups in the family.
- 2.5 Use less familiar, free or low cost produce in traditional meals.



STANDARD 3: Students will influence children to eat healthy meals and snacks.

Example Objectives: Students will be able to:

- 3.1 Identify healthy eating habits for children.
- 3.2 Evaluate children's eating habits to decide if change or modification is necessary.
- 3.3 Plan strategies for modifying children's preferences for foods, beverages and snacks that are high in sugar, fat and salt.
- 3.4 Involve children in meal planning, shopping, food preparation and cleanup as support for academic learning (e.g. budgeting, bargain shopping, estimating, reading labels and signs, etc).
- 3.5 Describe the health benefits of families sharing mealtime together.
- 3.6 Guide children's selection of healthy food choices.

STANDARD 4: Students will eat a balanced diet as defined by the USDA.

Example Objectives: Students will be able to:

- 4.1 Define the relationship between nutrition and good health.
- 4.2 Categorize foods commonly used in students' traditional diets into the food groups defined by the USDA.
- 4.3 Create a day's menu that meets the USDA definition of healthy eating.
- 4.4 Evaluate typical daily food intake to decide if modification of choices is needed to achieve balance.
- 4.5 Make and implement a plan for maintaining or modifying one's diet to achieve the health benefits of balanced eating.
- 4.6 Interpret food labels to select foods lower in sugar, fat and sodium.
- 4.7 Modify recipes to prepare healthier versions of traditional meals.
- 4.8 Make healthy choices when eating at restaurants.



STANDARD 5: Students will access resources for low-cost, healthy food.

Example Objectives: Students will be able to:

- 5.1 Save money by using community resources for low cost healthy food.
- 5.2 Locate affordable sources of healthy food in the community.
- 5.3 Plan meals according to availability of healthy food (e.g. seasonal, sale, free)
- 5.4 Identify and access nutrition assistance programs:
 - 5.4.1 Identify services and procedures for accessing community food programs.
 - 5.4.2 Identify services and eligibility requirements for emergency food resources.
 - 5.4.3 Identify services and eligibility requirements for government nutrition assistance programs including Food Stamps.

STANDARD 6: Students will demonstrate safe food handling practices at home, at school and on the job.

Example Objectives: Students will be able to

- 6.1 Use safe food handling practices at home, at school and on the job.
- 6.2 Reduce the spread of germs/bacteria in everyday environments.
- 6.3 Describe symptoms of common food related illnesses (*E. coli*, *salmonella*, *Hepatitis A*) and recognize when medical treatment is needed.
- 6.4 Demonstrate appropriate sanitary practices before, during and after food preparation and handling (**clean, separate, cook, chill**).
 - 6.4.1 **Clean** hands, food, utensils and work surfaces.
 - 6.4.2 **Separate** and handle raw meat, fish and poultry safely to avoid cross-contamination in shopping, cooking and storing.
 - 6.4.3 **Cook** foods thoroughly (i.e. to a high enough temperature) to be safe to eat.
 - 6.4.4 **Chill** foods properly needing refrigeration before and after cooking; and thaw foods properly.