

# ADDRESSING MULTIPLE TOPICS DURING WIC NUTRITION COUNSELING SESSIONS

**Sponsored by:** Minnesota Department of Public Health-WIC

**Presented by:** Karen Deehy, MS, RD and Altarum Institute





## THE PLAN

- ✓ Defining the challenge
  - ✓ Identifying our goals
- ✓ Time saving suggestions
- ✓ Multiple family members
  - ✓ New participants
- ✓ Counseling during COVID-19

# THE CHALLENGES

- New participants
- Multiple participants in one family
- Many risks/socioeconomic issues
- Many goals
- Distractions
- Non-English-speaking participants



# GOAL: ADDRESSING ALL TOPICS?

- Evolution of WIC guidance
- Internal desire to help and share information
- People are different



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a light-colored sweater, is holding a large white sign with a black border. The sign has the text 'COMMON MISPERCEPTIONS' written on it in black, uppercase letters. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile, and her hand is visible near the sign.

## COMMON MISPERCEPTIONS

- 1. It is required to discuss/educate on every risk factor.**
- 2. Everyone is in either the contemplative, planning or action phases of behavior change.**
- 3. Participants hear and understand all the information I offer.**
- 4. If I don't cover it now, they won't have the information.**
- 5. Everyone needs the same amount of time.**

# WHERE TO SPEND TIME?

- ✓ Assessing priorities
- ✓ True engagement
- ✓ Targeting individual needs
  - Information sharing
  - Support with goal setting
  - Connection to other services
  - Problem solving
  - Affirmation/building confidence
  - Empathy



# WHICH PATH: PRIORITIZING

- What can wait? What can't?
- Scheduling next appointment
- Asking for input



# PRIORITIZING TOPICS

- I try to pick topics that may need immediate intervention first and then rank topics in order from highest priority to the least.
- Thinking about what can wait and ask if it is ok to schedule another appointment in a month or two to follow up.
- Prioritize and if possible, do some of the education at 2nd or 3rd trimester. Schedule a phone call in a month to follow-up on some issues.
- Make notes on what is not covered if I feel it is too much, so at the next visit, we know to cover it.



# SPECIAL CATEGORY — NEW PARTICIPANTS

- Prioritize the time - what is most important at this initial appointment (often the WIC benefits, learning about the app, using the WIC card) - if multiple risk codes, what is of highest priority assigned? Does participant have other priorities?
- Provide information that is pertinent for first visit, provide one-month food package and have return to address further issues.
- I try to minimize some of the nutrition ed. so I can explain the program and the use of the WIC card. I then schedule a follow up appointment to review more of the nutrition education aspect of the program.





AGENDA



Time Saver:  
Setting the  
Agenda

1

## LET'S TAKE A POLL

**Scenario:**

2

**You are setting the agenda for a new pregnant participant.**

**Which introduction do you prefer?**

3

# ASKING FOR INPUT

**What topic to prioritize?**

**What information to share?**

**What goals are most important?**



# ASKING FOR INPUT 2

- Give them a choice of what they want to talk about... county resources, breastfeeding, eating healthy. Then document to touch base on the other items later.
- Meet the mother where she is at. Ask her how her pregnancy has been going and ask where her interests lie for learning.
- First ask if the participant has any questions or concerns they would like to discuss and address that first and foremost.



# Prioritizing Change Talk



1

## LET'S TAKE A POLL 2

**Scenario:**

2

**A pregnant woman wants to change lots of things. During the assessment, she talks about 3-4 changes she wants to make in her diet and 2 new things she wants to do for physical activity.**

3

**How would you respond?**



# TIME TRAPS

- ✓ Counseling during assessment
- ✓ Lack of motivation / readiness for change

# FOCUS ON MOTIVATION

“...It's not about what I think should be changed, but what they (participant) wants to work on changing. If they decided on a goal, then they are more likely to follow thru vs me trying to tell them that they should change—something they don't seem to be concerned with. With my open-ended questions and motivational interview style, I hope that they make ‘aha moments.’”



# SHARING A CONCERN

- Need to know or nice to know
- Address their topic of choice first\*
- Limit CONCERNS to priority items
- If unsolicited, ask permission first



## SHARING A CONCERN 2

“If the information I need to share about potential nutrition risk factors are pressing, I will address everything during that one appointment. Probably starting with the participant's questions first so they feel listened to and rapport is developed. Sometimes things are related anyway. If the potential nutrition risk is not pressing, I'll write a note/alert to address it next time. If it's information overload on the participant, they probably won't remember it to make a change anyway. And if I don't listen to their questions first, which are their priorities, they may not care enough about what I think is important to make a change anyway either.”

A young woman with long, light-colored hair is smiling and looking towards the camera. She is holding a large, black-framed sign in front of her chest. The sign has the words "SHARING A CONCERN" written in a bold, green, sans-serif font. The background behind her is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting, possibly a window or a doorway, with a green wall visible on the right side.

**SHARING A  
CONCERN**

# SHARING INFORMATION

Less is more

Offer choices (not too many)

Assess interest / ask permission

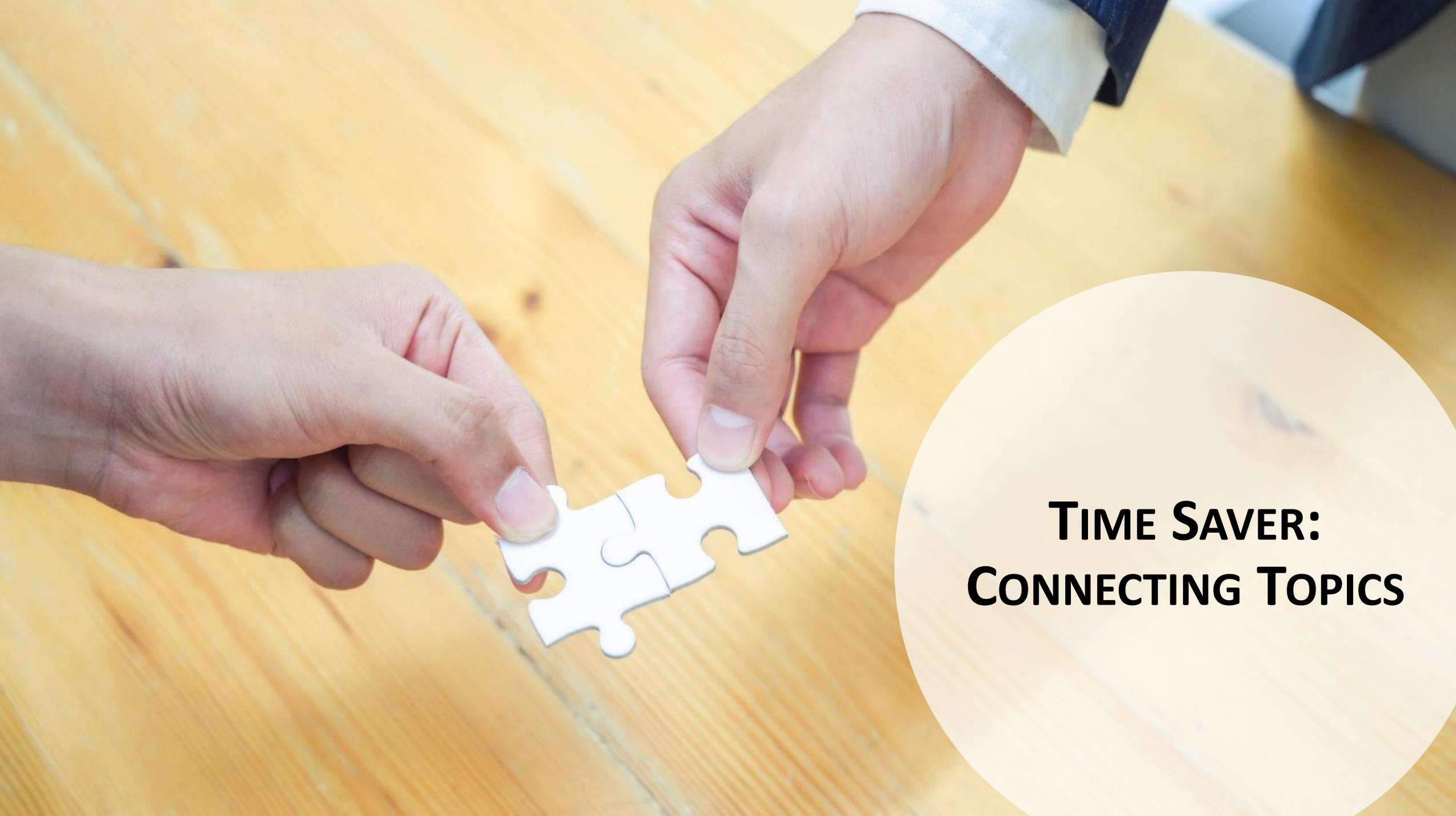
Use the sandwich technique



# SHARING INFORMATION 2

- I ask her what hand outs or topics her Dr. has already discussed. If it is the same ones that we talk about then I ask her if she has any questions about what the Dr. said or would she like more information or a handout.
- Ideas I have for preventing information overload is to take 2-3 pauses throughout the appointment, time allowing, to ask the mother... “is this making sense? [Is there] anything you would like repeated or more clarification on?”





**TIME SAVER:  
CONNECTING TOPICS**

# CONNECTING TOPICS

- Determine if there is any overlap, or how your concern could be related to what the parent is interested in.
- Follow the clients lead of their interest- if it is possible, tie the 2 topics together--- their concerns and mine and how they can both be improved.



1

## LET'S TAKE A POLL 3

### **Scenario:**

2

**A common combination of issues might be: juice, milk, etc. throughout the day (“whatever they ask for”) along with frequent snacks including many granola bars and fruit chews along with pickiness and you can see that the kids are running the show (i.e., parent has a hard time getting them to listen and a reluctance to follow through on “threats”).**

3

**How would you prioritize or combine topics.**



# PARTICIPANTS WHO SPEAK A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE

# MULTIPLE FAMILY MEMBERS

- ✓ Assessing family eating patterns
- ✓ Focusing on family nutrition goals



# MULTIPLE FAMILY MEMBERS 2



- Seeing if 1 goal can be streamlined across different family members as appropriate; asking the nutrition assessment questions about all household members that have an appointment that day at the same time and differentiating the household members as needed.
- Often one education topic applies to more than one person. Focusing on the issue that has the most energy around it - i.e., parent seems most receptive and/or is most concerned about.
- The more you can weave in questions about all family members during the assessment, the better. E.g., who in your family is taking vitamins right now? Does Johnny like fruits and vegetables as much as Anna? Which of your children most concerns you with their eating habits?



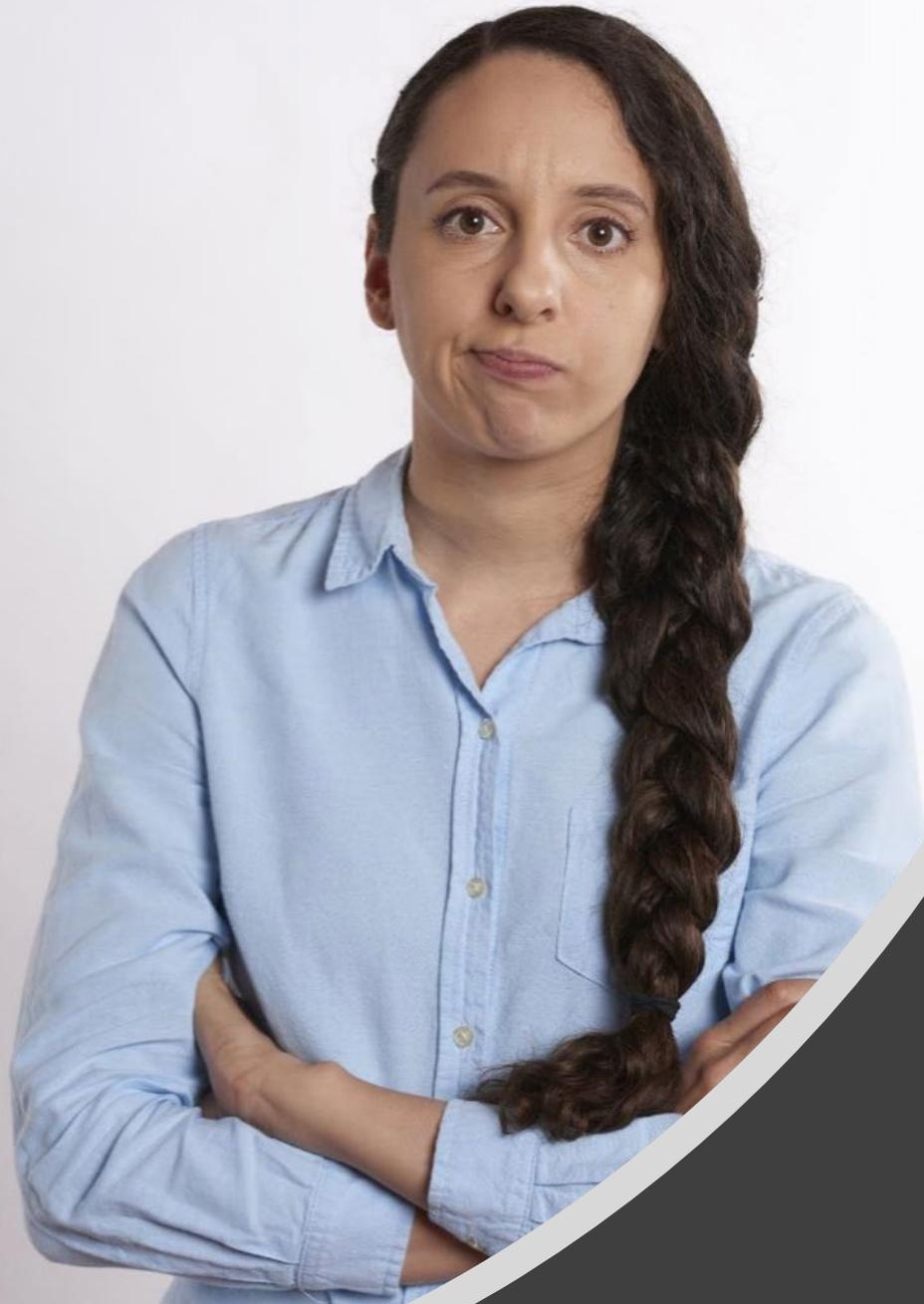
## MORE TIME SAVING TIPS

- Reviewing previous notes
- Using handouts / internet resources
- Targeting online secondary education
- Using referrals
- Sending materials in advance

# MORE TIME SAVING TIPS 2

- ...Read the charts beforehand, especially for high-risk clients. This can help allocate time to priority issues.
- Offer printed supplementary material, offer PHN visits to address areas unable to cover.
- I try to cover things in person that are appropriate and then encourage online education or I email supporting documents or videos.
- I encourage him/her to go to the website and download the app, watch the video about using the app and the card and do as many things as they can prior to the appointment, so we don't have as much to cover at the appointment.





# OTHER TOOLS

- ✓ Use body language
  - Reflect it
  - Ask open-ended questions
  - Rephrase using simpler terms
  - Shift focus
- ✓ Use our body language
  - Relaxed, not rushed
  - Smile
- ✓ For the talkative client
  - Use short reflections and summaries
  - Refocus conversation
  - Politely break in



# COUNSELING DURING COVID-19

- ✓ Shifting family priorities
- ✓ Cognitive load already high
- ✓ PCS Skills
  - Empathy
  - Reflecting / normalizing fears
  - Affirming
  - Keeping goals small / manageable
- ✓ Sending information in advance



Q<sub>10</sub>

U<sub>1</sub>

E<sub>1</sub>

S<sub>1</sub>

T<sub>1</sub>

I<sub>1</sub>

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G<sub>2</sub>

C<sub>3</sub>

H<sub>4</sub>

R<sub>1</sub>

L<sub>1</sub>

Thank You