

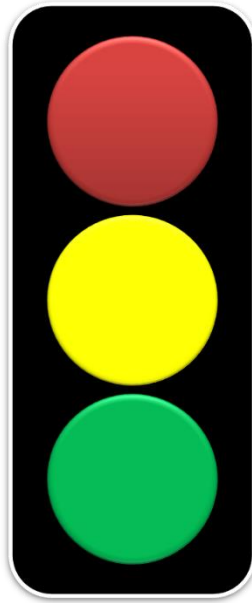
Stoplight Healthy Living

Facilitator Manual



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Produced by the Kansas Disability and Health Program



Disability and Health Program
kansans with disabilities can be healthy

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Welcome to Stoplight Healthy Living

We at the Kansas Disability and Health Program developed the *Stoplight Healthy Living* program to promote good nutrition and physical activity among adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

The program emphasizes self-determination for the participants by helping them learn to make healthy choices. It provides them with information (including resources) that is easy to understand to help them make decisions about nutrition and exercise.

This manual describes the process and materials used in the program.

Program Details

The program is based in part on the Stoplight Diet, an evidence-based program that has been tested and found to be helpful in sharing plain language information about nutrition with people with IDD.

It uses a simple color-coded system, like the signals on a stoplight, to teach healthy food choices.

GREEN or GO! Foods should be eaten often (such as fresh fruit).

YELLOW or SLOW! Foods should be eaten less often (such as potatoes).

RED or WHOA! Foods should be eaten rarely (such as candy).



The *Stoplight Healthy Living* program is delivered in **six weekly sessions** that emphasize choosing healthy foods, promoting physical activity, and increasing water consumption to help participants develop healthier habits. Participant goals for the program are to:

- Have fun!
- Value self-determination in making lifestyle choices
- Make small changes everyday
- Support each other
- Be healthy!

We developed the content and structured the activities in this program to reinforce the Stoplight concepts. In every session, the participants are encouraged to move their bodies. They also learn about and sample healthy snacks that can be easily made at home. Each session

takes a different focus, such as the amount of sugar in soft drinks, or how to choose more nutritious foods when grocery shopping.

This simple and fun approach has been successful in past *Stoplight Healthy Living* sessions. In evaluations of the program, participants reported that they increased their daily fruit and vegetable consumption, increased their purchases of healthy foods, reduced their soda consumption, and increased their knowledge of healthier fast food meal choices.

How to Deliver *Stoplight Healthy Living*

Your role as facilitator is essential. We know that you will bring considerable experience and knowledge to the program, and we appreciate your investment of time and energy in working to improve the health of *Stoplight Healthy Living* participants.

Please note the manual format: *Suggested scripts for facilitators are in bold italics*; directions for facilitators are in regular font. The scripts are intended as guides, to help you deliver the *Stoplight* content and activities.

Please encourage participants to interact as you deliver the scripted information. Each facilitator will bring different strengths and skills to the program, so we would love to hear about your successes in delivering the sessions.

- **Getting Started**

- The *Stoplight Healthy Living* sessions are ready for you to deliver to your participants—all the information is provided in the Session Guides. However, if you have questions, please contact us at 785-864-1561 or kbruns@ku.edu and we will be happy to provide technical assistance by teleconference or Zoom.
- Each session should take between 60-90 minutes to deliver. The exact time depends on the number of participants, their support needs, etc.
- Session One is critical to the program as it introduces the *Stoplight* GREEN, YELLOW and RED food groups and subsequent sessions build on this one. So, any delivery of *Stoplight Healthy Living* should start with this session, even if all six sessions are not delivered.

- **Facilitator/Participant Ratio**

Stoplight Healthy Living works best with at least one facilitator for every 3-4 participants; sessions with two facilitators and 6-8 participants are ideal to give each participant the attention they deserve and allow them to learn from each other. However, we know that the real world does not always permit this. Be aware that the session activities may take longer to complete if there are many participants for each staff facilitator.

- **Including Other Attendees**

Personal attendants, parents, guardians and/or friends can be valuable attendees of the sessions. They can provide social support for healthy behaviors, learn along with those they

support or care for, and can provide valuable reinforcement of the Stoplight content. However, they should remain as supports versus active participants in sessions.

- **Setting and Equipment**

To deliver *Stoplight* sessions, the following are needed:

- a large room with tables and chairs that allows participants to both move around and do seated activities
- equipment to project videos on a large screen and play music loud enough to engage a group
- internet access
- kitchen facilities to prepare and clean up after snacks

- **Snack Activity**

See the list of snacks and the ingredients needed that is provided with Stoplight materials. Providing a healthy snack during sessions helps participants to learn healthy options and to try some foods that may be new to them. We note the sequence of all session activities except for the snacks so that facilitators can decide what sequence is best based on the time of your sessions. For example, if your sessions begin at 9 AM, you may want to offer snacks mid-way through the session, so snacks are not consumed too close to lunch. If your sessions begin in late afternoon, you might want to do snacks at the start, so they are not served too close to dinner. Please adjust the time of this activity according to participant needs.

- **Physical Activity for Participants Who Use Wheelchairs**

Stoplight Healthy Living exercise videos and activities can be performed by participants in a seated or standing position. For participants who use powered wheelchairs and/or have little or no arm and leg movement, the videos may not be useful. These folks may need therapy to do passive exercise or a more individualized program. However, they can still benefit from participating in *Stoplight* to learn about healthy eating and drinking healthy beverages. Please note: It is important for participants who can stand to do exercises and activities in that position to gain the most benefit. Seated exercise is only for those who are unable to stand.

- **Support Needs of Participants**

Depending on their support needs, not all participants will gain the same benefits from all activities. For example, the activities on cooking healthier foods and using the color-coded *Stoplight* Grocery Shopping List may not be as relevant for participants who do not typically cook or choose their own foods at the grocery store. Still, the Shopping List can help to reinforce what foods are in the GREEN, YELLOW and RED groups. All participants can benefit from being part of a group focused on learning about healthy choices. For this reason, we

have included a variety of activities so that there is something for everyone.

- **Prompts Between Sessions**

If you have contact with participants between sessions, prompting them regarding session content and activity would be very helpful. For example, reminding participants of the benefits of water over pop will reinforce their learning. If you accompany a group to eat out, you might encourage water drinking and making healthy Stoplight food choices; if you go grocery shopping with participants, ask what GREEN foods they are buying.

Any reinforcement of the *Stoplight* concepts will help to remind participants to practice what they are learning in *Stoplight* sessions. However, self-determination is an underlying principle of *Stoplight*, so it is important to prompt or remind versus direct. Our goal is to help participants to make healthy choices, not to direct them to do so.

**Thank you for delivering Stoplight Healthy Living and for promoting
the health of the participants!**