WHAT IS FOODMANIA?
FoodMania is a NEW media literacy program for improving family conversations and skills related to food marketing and nutrition.

FoodMania is innovative and unique. Most media-related educational programs that target school-age youth try to convince families to use less media, often with limited success. FoodMania empowers parents and youth to critically analyze marketing messages about food, helps them find accurate information and guides them to use tools such as food labels.

WHY DO WE NEED FOODMANIA?
Nearly 1 out of 3 U.S. children are either overweight or obese. Children may be more likely to choose unhealthy food after seeing food advertisements on TV or online. Seeing just one or two food ads can affect young children's eating choices.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF FOODMANIA?
The ultimate goals of FoodMania are to
1) increase parent purchasing and youth consumption of fruits and vegetables and
2) decrease parent purchasing and youth consumption of foods high in calories, fat, sugar and salt.

These outcomes occur as a result of increased parent expectancies about discussing media messages and providing healthier foods. This leads to increased parent-child discussions about media messages about food and improved critical thinking and media literacy among youth.

HOW WAS FOODMANIA DEVELOPED?
FoodMania is a 5-year USDA AFRI Childhood Obesity Prevention Program grant (no. 2012-68001-19618). Youth and families participated in focus groups and work sessions that directed the development of the program. Feedback was also provided by Extension educators who piloted the program in 5 counties in Washington state. Qualitative and quantitative pretest/posttest and focus group results from the pilot helped to refine the FoodMania curriculum.
WHAT DO FAMILIES DO IN THE FOODMANIA PROGRAM?
Youth ages 9-14 attend 6, 2-hour sessions with a parent. For the first five sessions, parents and youth meet in separate groups and then come together during the second hour for a group lesson. The final session is designed as a celebration for the parents and youth to enjoy together.

Each lesson is organized into 5 parts:

Setting the Stage: General background information to provide context for the new information a lesson will introduce. Designed to engage parents and youth in relating to their previous experiences and knowledge.

Lights, Camera: Provides information which the participants will need in order to take action and relate to their own experiences.

Action: Opportunities to apply new information to daily life. Includes hands-on activities, small group discussion and brainstorming.

Flash Back: Parents and youth get a chance to reflect on the content from the day’s lesson. The questions provided encourage parents and youth to share their personal perspective.

Flash Forward: Parents and youth get a preview of the next session. They are given a take-home activity to complete together and encouraged to apply the information from the session at home.

HOW WAS FOODMANIA EVALUATED?
Two cycles of field testing of the FoodMania family program were conducted in 5 counties in Washington state in 2015 & 2016 (n = 105 Intervention Dyads, 84 Control Dyads) using a pretest/posttest/6-month delayed evaluation design. A 12-month delayed posttest was also conducted with cycle 1 participants.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF FOODMANIA?
Compared to controls, youth participating in FoodMania report:

- Increased efficacy and critical thinking towards food advertising content
- Initiating discussions about food advertising with their parents more often
- Eating fruits and vegetables more often

Data analysis is in progress for the 6- and 12-month delayed posttest.