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Contributing author:

Chapter 14: “Tailor Communication for Different Ages”

Dani Lebovitz is a pediatric dietitian, children’s author, and food education expert reimagining how kids learn about food. Her work brings together pediatric nutrition, child development, and education to help adults create food experiences that match how kids actually think, feel, learn, and grow.

She is the founder of Kid Food Explorers, where she creates books, hands-on resources, and professional education that help families, educators, and professionals support developmentally attuned food learning.

Dani is the author of 10 children’s books, including the Growing Adventurous Eaters® series, *Where Does Broccoli Come From?*, and *Becoming a Food Explorer*, and co-author of *Food Positivity: How to Ditch Diet Culture and Talk to Kids About Food*. Her work translates nutrition science and child development into practical ways grownups can support how kids learn about food in everyday life.

With a background in health communication and more than 20 years of experience across clinical nutrition, education, and media, Dani helps adults understand not just what to teach kids about food, but how kids make sense of what we teach. Her work has been featured by *Good Morning America*, *TODAY*, and *Parents*.

What led you to contribute your time and expertise to writing *Communicating Nutrition*?

I’ve always been drawn to the intersection of science, education, and communication, but over time, my work has really centered on one question: How do we make nutrition make sense to the person receiving it? In my work with kids and families, I see every day that knowledge alone isn’t what drives change. It’s how that information is understood, experienced, and applied in real life.

I contributed to this book because I believe strong nutrition communication can shape not only what people understand, but how they experience food and the relationship they build with it over time. I wanted to help bridge the gap between what professionals know and how that information lands with the people we serve. I believe strong nutrition communication has the power to shape not just behaviors, but long-term relationships with food. I wanted to help bridge the gap between what professionals know and how that information connects with the people we serve.

What is the impact you hope this book, and specifically the portion you helped write, has on the profession of nutrition and dietetics?

I hope this book helps shift the focus from simply delivering information to truly understanding the audience on the receiving end, so we can create learning experiences that are more meaningful, practical, and usable in real life. In the first edition, my contribution focused on communicating effectively with adults across life stages, generations, and settings, and how to adapt communication to meet different audiences where they are. In this second edition, I authored the foundations for effective food and nutrition communication during childhood through a child development lens.

Nutrition professionals understand the science of nutrition, and many recognize that early food experiences can impact long-term well-being and chronic disease prevention. But we are rarely taught how to translate that knowledge into food learning experiences that match a child’s developmental readiness in ways they can understand. When working with kids, it’s important to recognize that kids are not mini adults. They think, interpret, and learn about food differently at each age and stage. My hope is to help nutrition professionals create more aligned and supportive food learning experiences based on how kids learn, so kids can build the knowledge, relationships, body awareness, and practical skills that help them nourish themselves for life.

What is one piece of advice you would like to share with current and future nutrition communicators?

Before you create any resource, pause and think about how your audience will understand what you’re saying, not just what you want them to learn. With children especially, meaning is not automatic. It is built over time through experience, language, and context. The more you can align your message with how your audience thinks, feels, and learns, the more meaningful and effective your work can be.

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