

# MARWIC

T · I · M · E · S

MID-ATLANTIC REGION SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN

## WEST VIRGINIA'S TSN/WIC PROGRAM CHOSEN AS A PILOT SITE OF THE SOLES 4 SOULS PROJECT

**W**IC participants are kicking up their heels and stepping out in style this spring in their new shoes provided by local podiatrist, Dr. Lenord Horwitz as part of the Soles 4 Souls Project. Shoe manufacturers who are members of Soles 4 Souls donate shoes to be given out to families in need. Dr. Horwitz chose to donate 110 pairs of Skechers canvas slip-ons to the TSN/WIC Program clinics in Bluefield and Welch, West Virginia.

Parents and TSN staff alike are delighted with the smiles of the children as they try on their new shoes and pose for pictures during this pilot phase of the project.

"They're asking about shoes for toddlers too," comments TSN clerk Mary Williams, about the excited mothers and caregivers. Program Director Elva Clemons is optimistic about getting more varieties and sizes in the future.

The TSN/WIC Program would like to thank Dr. Horwitz for bringing so much joy into the lives of our participants. ■



**PROUD SHOE SHOWCASE** — As participants enter the TSN/WIC clinic in Bluefield, WV, they are boldly met by Soles 4 Souls Project information.



**NO STRINGS ATTACHED** — WIC participants, Alan and Corey Pendleton, prepare to wear their new shoes home from their WIC appointment.

## SUMMER 2008

- Puerto Rico's San Sebastian WIC Gets Nutritious .....Page 3
- St. Croix Good Hope School Science Fair Sparks Nutrition Education Activity .....Page 5
- District of Columbia WIC Showcases National Nutrition Month .....Page 7
- WV's Elkins WIC and Area Agencies Raise Awareness Against Domestic Violence .....Page 9
- NJ's North Hudson WIC Program Springs Into Good Health .....Page 10

### KUDOS TO THE STAFF AT PENNSYLVANIA'S MIFFLIN JUNIATA WIC OFFICE

By Kathie Wagner, BSE, IBCLC, RLC, Family Health Council of Central PA, Inc.

*This letter was received from a former participant.*

**P**lease forgive the lengthy delay of this letter. I am writing to inform you of the excellent service I received from the Mifflin-Juniata WIC office in Lewistown, PA. I received services from about 2000 until 2007. I was exceedingly impressed with the cheerful and expedient service I received from the ladies at the WIC office. There was never complaining or gossiping, and the office was always neat, clean, and welcoming.

I'm grateful for the wonderful services provided by the Mifflin-Juniata County WIC offices. They were a great help to our family. ■

## DELAWARE WIC PROGRAM PARTNERS WITH THE COMMUNITY

**T**he Delaware WIC Program has recently been involved in several outreach activities, partnering with other organizations in the community to promote good nutrition and health practices.

The Food Bank of Delaware received a grant to provide boxes of non-perishable foods and nutrition education to pregnant and postpartum women, and they graciously offered to provide these services to WIC clients in New Castle County during the month of March. Beverly Jackey, RD, nutritionist for the Food Bank, presented a nutrition class to several prenatal WIC clients at the Hudson State Service Center in Newark, DE. Ms. Jackey utilized materials from MyPyramid.gov and discussed recommended weight gain goals and portion sizes for various foods using food models. Clients who participated in the class

*Continued on page 4*



**NUTRITION ON DISPLAY** — Check out the creative materials provided by WIC at the YMCA Kids' Health Day.



**CLASS IN SESSION** — WIC participants listen as Nutritionist Beverly Jackey makes her presentation.



**Regional Training on New Food package held in Herndon, VA**

**A**s reported in the Winter issue of MARWIC TIMES, the long-awaited new WIC food packages, which had not been changed for 30 years, were published in the Federal Register on December 6, 2007. The new regulations require a magnitude of program changes, but are well worth the adaptation. The revisions are in line with the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, as well as infant feeding guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The revisions also reflect the recommendations made by the Institute of Medicine.

April 8-10, the Mid-Atlantic WIC Food Package Federal/State Workgroup met in Herndon, VA and shared new WIC food package implementation strategies, developed multi-state cost containment initiatives, and identified areas for collaboration to prevent duplication of effort. With the magnitude of program changes the rule covers, the facilitated sessions provided an opportunity for states to work strategically and share initiatives, such



*(Left to right) Barbara Martin, Section Chief, Special Nutrition Programs, Facilitator of the meeting; and, Jeanne Kelleher, MARO staff, take a break and pose for a picture.*



*MARO and WIC State agency staff focus their attention on one of the many issues discussed.*



*Attendees (left to right) Marcelino Collazo, PR WIC; Tony Hardy, SFPD; Donna Seward, VA WIC Director; Kathy Knolhoff, MD WIC Director; and Sabrina Lewis, DC WIC, share a light moment during the work session.*

as medical documentation approval forms, IT plans, vendor management initiatives, participant surveys, and various marketing strategies.

The first afternoon, Tuesday, included greetings and a presentation by Diana Torrice, Regional SFP Director, on how Americans' dietary habits have changed over the years and how timely the new food package is. This was followed by a presentation on the new food package by Patti Mitchell, Senior Program Specialist of SFPD, who provided an overview and update of the new regulations. This was followed by time for questions, an important part of the session which continued into the following day when Debbie Whitford, Chief of the Policy Program Development Branch and Anne Bartholomew, Team Leader, and several other staff members, were available the full day to participate in answering questions and other activities of the day.

On Wednesday, the states were divided into work groups where several states worked together on predetermined topics for brainstorming. On Thursday, a panel was convened whereby Mary Mickles (NJ State WIC Nutrition Coordinator), Donna Seward (VA State WIC Director) and Chris Harr (PA State

WIC Chief for Grants and Retail Stores Section) explained how they were addressing food package issues through default food package system (NJ), Work group involvement (VA), and concerns for vendor managers (PA).

The meeting provided additional time for states to come together and work strategically on their work plans: both collectively in regional work groups on Wednesday, and then on Thursday, in individual state staff work groups to make strategic decisions. The sessions followed an approach that was useful in developing VENA strategies in 2006. The sessions will be facilitated by MARO SNP Section Chief Barbara Martin, who was instrumental in planning for strategic sessions, to be held for the VENA meeting. The objective was for all state staff to leave the training meeting with some of their goals for implementation in place, and this was successfully realized. Staff who participated included the WIC Directors, Nutritionists, Vendor Mangers and IT staff.

Regional projects for the new food package include securing a multi-state infant formula rebate, cross state public service announcements, and the development of a participant notification marketing strategy.



MARWIC TIMES is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture, Mid-Atlantic Region Office as a discretionary project of New Jersey

**WIC.**

- Marilyn A. Lynch, MS, RD .....Project Manager
- Jean Malloy.....Acting NJ WIC Director
- Christina Balas.....Creative Director
- Lisa Arnold .....Editor

Please submit articles or story ideas for MARWIC TIMES to your State Editor at the State WIC Office Address.

- Delaware .....Laura Peppelman
- District of Columbia .....Anne Spaulding
- Maryland .....Connie Webster
- New Jersey.....Marilyn Lynch
- Pennsylvania.....Bonnie Mellott
- Puerto Rico .....Alma Ortega
- Virgin Islands .....Lorna Concepcion
- Virginia .....Carol Bell
- West Virginia .....Heidi Staats
- MARO, USDA .....Delores Stewart

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy WIC is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



*Diana Torrice, MARO WIC Director, addresses the group and makes the welcoming and opening remarks.*



*MARO and WIC State agency staff discuss the intricacies of the WIC Food Package rule.*



*(Left to right) Denise Ferris, WV WIC Director; Joanne White, DE WIC Director; Cindy Pillo, WV WIC; and Sandy Daubman, WV WIC, break for a group photo.*

Where are we going from the April meeting? States in the Mid-Atlantic Region are well on their way to completing implementation plans, listing parking lot issues that will be further pursued, and setting more realistic timelines for completing their plans. The Regional office staff is now looking at issues raised and trying to find solutions for better clarification. ■

### WIC FOOD PACKAGES: HELP IS JUST A CLICK AWAY

Need some help? Visit the WIC Works Resource System (WWRS). Check out what's available at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/> when you click on "New WIC Food Packages: Resources for WIC Staff" at the top of the page.

### WEST VIRGINIA'S CABELL WIC SEEING MULTIPLES

By Jenna Rose, MA, RD, LD

On October 27, 2007, a Cabell County family participating in WIC welcomed five new little ones when Lori Baker delivered quintuplets Hunter, Aiden, Kailee, Emma and Chloe. All five infants were healthy at birth with each of them weighing over two pounds, but unfortunately Kailee passed away a few weeks after delivery.

Lori Baker, mother of the quintuplets has been using a Lactina breastpump loaned from the WIC Program. Even though the infants spent seven weeks in NICU, Lori has been providing the infants with the best since birth. She rotates which baby gets breastmilk at each feeding. We congratulate the Baker Family on their new additions to the family and will continue to provide them with support. ■



**WIC SUPPORTING A MOTHER IN BREAST-FEEDING MULTIPLES** — (Left to right) Hunter, Emma, Chloe and Aiden are growing and receiving the best as their mother breastfeeds.

### NEW FOR WIC LEARNING ONLINE: VENA MODULES

The WIC Works Resource System is pleased to announce that *Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA)*, the latest addition to WIC Learning Online (WLOL), is now available on the WIC Works Web Site. See [www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks) for full details.

- The three new modules that make up this lesson
- identify the health outcome approach and critical thinking as skills helpful in completing a value enhanced nutrition assessment,
  - provide an overview of VENA,
  - define the WIC nutrition services process,
  - explain the anticipated results of incorporating VENA for staff members and participants, and how to achieve these results,
  - describe critical thinking,
  - illustrate how to apply critical thinking skills in a WIC nutrition assessment,
  - present the health outcome-based approach to a WIC nutrition assessment, and
  - show how protective factors or health determinants help to achieve a desired health outcome.

The new modules highlight content from the VENA guidance and associated training documents which can also be found on WIC Works. In addition, new implementation materials are continually being added to this section so check the site often.

The entire 18 modules of WLOL were developed as a joint project of the USDA/Food and

Nutrition Service, the NAL/Food and Nutrition Information Center, and the University of Maryland. Each interactive module takes about 20-30 minutes to complete.

A free, Web-based course, WLOL provides continuing education, training, and resources. The entire course offers continuing professional education hours for registered dietitians and registered nurses. Those who finish the modules can print a personalized certificate of completion for their records.

Some WIC offices use WLOL to provide orientation, training, skill building, and information review sessions for employees. The 15 WLOL modules released previously focus on customer service, literacy and cultural issues, facilitated discussion, motivational interviewing, nutrition education, infant nutrition and feeding, breastfeeding, food safety, and herb and supplement use.

Please take a look at the newest additions to WIC Works. If you have any questions about the modules, send an e-mail to [wicworks@nal.usda.gov](mailto:wicworks@nal.usda.gov).

The WIC Works Resource System is an online education and training center for WIC staff. In addition to online learning, users can access hundreds of printable education and training materials, share ideas via the WIC-Talk listserv, and search three unique databases of resources and tools. ■

### PUERTO RICO'S SAN SEBASTIAN WIC GETS NUTRITIOUS

By Alma Luz Ortega-Báez, Outreach Nutritionist

#### Family Day Celebration

The WIC Clinic of San Sebastian, Puerto Rico, along with the local Head Start Program, celebrated with participants on Family Day during March's National Nutrition Month activities in Carmela Perez Park.

WIC Nutritionist Carmen Corchado, in coordination with Diana Ramirez, Nutrition Coordinator of the San Sebastian Municipality Head Start Program, prepared the event.

The objective of the day's activities was for all the children, as well as the WIC and Head Start employees, to work as a team and actively participate in the physical exercises offered by Cristine Matos, a physical trainer with the Department of Health.

#### Friendly Healthy Recipe Demonstration

The staff of the WIC Clinic of San Sebastian, Puerto Rico attended a food recipe demonstration as part of San Valentin Day festivities. The employees were trained by Nutritionist Carmen Corchado.

The objective was of the day was to share knowledge and skills about healthy cooking. Ms. Corchado explained the importance of nutritional analysis in food recipes. Everyone agreed the best part of the day was when they tasted the final product, which was a low-fat cake with fresh strawberries.

Events such as these increase the employees' awareness of the importance of teaching WIC participants about healthy food choices. ■



**LET'S PLAY** — Physical trainer (left) Cristine Matos shows Head Start children a new game.



**LOOKS GOOD** - Nutritionist Carmen Corchado (left) demonstrates a tasty recipe for the employees of the San Sebastian WIC Clinic.

## MARYLAND VENA TRAINING PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES

By Nancy Dimond, MS, RD, LDN, CLE, Nutritionist  
Mid-Shore WIC Program

Maryland's VENA training in March presented many practical tips for connecting with our WIC families and helping them to improve the nutritional status of their families. The inspirational and motivating videos, "Everyday Creativity" and "Celebrate What's Right with the World," by Dewitt Jones,

prompted the following thoughts about opportunities we have as nutritional facilitators for our WIC families.

- "Most of us wouldn't work for WIC if we didn't care about people. Create a caring environment at your workplace. If you care, if you show compassion, clients will enjoy coming to their appointments and they will listen more."
- "Grab every opportunity to use positive language. For example, telling clients what their 'risk factors' are may sound like a reprimand. Instead of talking about health risks, reframe the language into: 'These are things you can do to help improve your child's health.'"
- "It can be difficult to balance families' priorities with WIC's mandate to educate and inform. Find every opportunity to make your technique meet both the needs of the family and your responsibility to inform. We all make mistakes but the important thing is that we learn from our mistakes."
- "Our families and we, as WIC employees, sometimes make decisions on an emotional basis. We make decisions on how to interact with our families as we discuss with them the nutrition choices they make. Take every opportunity to not choose the path of least resistance when decisions are hard – even when we're pressed for time and patience."
- "We need to believe that parents are doing the best they can and want to be good parents. No one says to herself, 'I'm going to be a bad parent.' Parents get advice from all different sources. We have 19 or more opportunities (at WIC appointments through age four) to guide them in being the best parents they can be."
- "We hear over and over again that families come to WIC for the food. If we take every opportunity we have to really market WIC as a family's best choice for nutrition information and promote the nutrition education component of our program, our families will come to expect that from their visits. They will see us as their guide through the uncertainties of feeding and raising their children. We can do it because we care!" ■



**ARTISTS TOO!** — Natalie Camacho (left) and India Buchanan (right), Johns Hopkins WIC Program, focus on creative art activity during "The Art of the Cert" VENA training.

## WV HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARNING ABOUT WIC

By Jenna Rose, MA, RD, LD

WIC was invited to two local high schools in Huntington, WV, to provide a presentation about WIC. The WIC presentation was presented to students participating in parenting and child development classes. The teachers at Huntington and Cabell Midland High Schools wanted students to learn about available resources in their local community, so they could help classmates, friends, and families with finding help if or when they needed it. In addition, many of the students plan to have professions that focus on children.

The students asked many questions during the presentations and provided their insights about the program. I really enjoyed the students' interest in the WIC Program and hope we will be invited back in future years. ■



**TARGETING THE FUTURE** – Sharing the WIC message in high school parenting, home economics, and child development courses not only increases public awareness, but may also spark adolescent interest in the nutrition profession.

## VIRGINIA WIC UPDATES COORDINATORS

The Virginia Annual WIC Coordinators' Meeting was held March 11-13 in Richmond. The conference covered topics such as VENA, the new Food Package, the Automated Computer System, and Crossroads. Attendees took only a few short exercise breaks, but they had their running shoes on the entire time.

The WIC Coordinators were updated on the status of the ongoing initiatives, and they were informed about upcoming trainings that will be available throughout the state for all WIC employees. The Advisory Committees, composed of WIC coordinators, made their recommendations on topics such as technology, nutrition education, and training. A workshop on developing measurable strategies and the use of the automated system was presented.

This meeting was a great opportunity for coordinators from around the state to network and share ideas. ■



**STRETCHING BODY AND MIND** — Virginia WIC Coordinators took exercise breaks during their annual meeting.

## Delaware WIC continued from page 1

seemed genuinely interested and asked some good questions. Each client received a food box to take home which contained staples from each food group, such as pasta, rice, canned fruit and vegetables, shelf-stable milk, beans and peanut butter, as well as a flyer with recipes featuring these ingredients. Food boxes were also provided to more than 20

other families who came for their WIC certification appointments that week.

Delaware WIC also occupied a table at a Kids' Health Day on April 12, at the Western Family YMCA in Newark. WIC Nutritionist Ameer Woodard presented a poster on "what kids need more of" (such as healthy foods and physical activity) and "what kids need less of" (such as junk food and sedentary activities),

and handed out nutrition education materials and booklets of recipes highlighting fruits and vegetables. Dozens of families attended the event, which also included a moonbounce, health and safety demonstrations, and a table distributing healthy snacks.

We look forward to continuing to work with other community organizations to support health and nutrition for Delaware families. ■

## PENNSYLVANIA'S ADAGIO HEALTH'S BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELOR NETWORKING WITH LOCAL HOSPITAL

By Barbara Jinar, BS, CLE, IBCLC  
Nutrition Education Coordinator  
Adagio Health Inc., Pittsburgh

Adagio Health's WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Aimee Bintrim recently visited Jameson Memorial Hospital in New Castle, PA. Aimee, who works part time in the Adagio Health WIC office in Lawrence County, scheduled a visit with the OB nursing staff to share the January 2008 Lawrence County WIC breastfeeding statistics. Aimee was happy to announce that the Lawrence County breastfeeding duration increased from 9.59 weeks to 14.2 weeks. The breastfeeding incidence also showed a marked improvement from 33.42% to 41.53%.

Aimee took the OB staff a basket filled with all types of goodies to thank them for their part in helping WIC increase their breastfeeding rates. These goodies included items such as mugs, tea, hot chocolate, milk duds, cream savers, and teddy grahams. Aimee told the hospital staff that teamwork needs to continue between the hospital and WIC. These efforts will thus help WIC breastfeeding mothers and babies enjoy their breastfeeding experience.

Aimee counsels both prenatal and breastfeeding mothers during their WIC appointments. Because breastfeeding support is vital in the beginning, Aimee calls all new breastfeeding moms several times a week to make sure that things are going well. Prenatal moms are also called near the end of their pregnancy to see if they have any questions and also to make them aware of what to expect in the hospital.

In addition to the networking with the hospital, Aimee has also built up an outreach breastfeeding support network with the pediatricians, family practitioners, and obstetricians in the Lawrence County area. It has been said that "It takes a village to raise a child." In the world of WIC it takes the breastfeeding mom, the infant, the WIC Program, the hospital, the pediatrician, and family support to help mom and baby succeed at breastfeeding. ■



**GOODIES FOR ALL** — Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Aimee Bintrim shows off the basket of goodies she delivered to Jameson Memorial Hospital OB staff.

## ST. CROIX GOOD HOPE SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIR SPARKS NUTRITION EDUCATION ACTIVITY FOR NUTRITION MONTH IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WIC PROGRAM

St. Croix Good Hope School's fifth grade science fair game project on label reading fostered an excellent nutrition education clinic activity for the Charles Harwood WIC Program, St. Croix. When Nutrition Education Coordinator Lorna Concepcion, MS, RD, saw the interactive science fair display, it sparked an idea for holding a Label Reading activity for Nutrition Month in the clinic.

The didactic activity was done in game form entitled, "Guess Which Food I Am," where food labels were numbered and attached to a poster board and the food containers were placed in a basket. Participants were asked to guess which label belonged to which food and to write their answers on a score sheet. A display board gave information on the Nutrition Facts label and also explained the game. Participants who recorded three or more correct answers received a prize. Participants enjoyed the hands-on activity. A WIC mom, Marisa Trinidad, said the activity was fun and made her think, but she added, "I didn't realize that the label told you the serving size. I learned that after doing it."

Activities that require participant involvement are encouraged in the *Revitalizing Quality Nutrition Services Process*, so that nutrition education can help facilitate healthy behavior change. This activity also promotes the positive life application that science fair projects can foster. The VI WIC Program wishes to commend the Good Hope School fifth grade for such an applicable, real-life project. ■



**LEARNING IS FUN** — Marisa Trinidad says, "It's work, but I learned about the serving sizes on the label."



**ALL SMILES** — Brenda Parris smiles proudly as she learns she was the first to get everything right.



**GAMES PEOPLE PLAY** — Lorna Concepcion explains the "Guess What Food I Am" activity to Stephanie Lindsey.

## MOMMIES AND BABIES AND MORE, OH MY!

By Christine Compton, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, Kanawha WIC, Charleston, WV

Recently the Putnam, WV WIC office, in Teays Valley (WV), hosted a community-wide baby shower for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in the area. The shower was open to all members of the family, including special prizes for dads. Both WIC and non-WIC participants were invited to attend and to learn and share information.

The event was organized by Tina Mullins, IBCLC, and the breastfeeding coordinator at that location. More than 50 mothers and family members signed in for the celebration on March 19, and 21 of them were able to take advantage of free massages offered by Mountain State School of Massage. Many other wonderful prizes were given out as well, including coupons for free meals, groceries, haircuts, even tickets to the area's Wave Pool and an upcoming circus performance.

Aside from the abundance of free items, a lot of free and useful advice was also shared. Representatives from several service agencies were on hand to share information with the attendees. Also, while refreshments were enjoyed, three different guest speakers spoke to the group. Local news anchor Penny Moss shared her stories of childbirth and nursing. Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Yvonne Snyder spoke about the history of breastfeeding and its importance in child development, and Midwife Angy Nixon explained the benefits of having a home birth experience.

In the end, Mullins felt that the event was successful, "We put a lot of work into it," Mullins said. She hopes this makes more community members aware of the benefits WIC has to offer. ■

## NEWS FROM NEW JERSEY'S BURLINGTON COUNTY WIC

### Celebrating National Nutrition Month

The Burlington County WIC Program, in collaboration with Rutgers Cooperative Extension, celebrated National Nutrition Month with the theme "A Taste of the Tropics." The event was held at the Burlington County Health Department for employees, WIC clients and the public.

WIC staff was dressed in tropical attire and Caribbean music was played to set the stage of the Tropics. There were various fruits familiar and unfamiliar to the clients. It was an opportunity for clients to sample fruits and juices they may not have had. Recipe and information cards were given to clients on the fruits sampled as well as other fruits. The event was enjoyed by all.

### Best Practices

Burlington County WIC clients were recipients of over 200 brand new pajama sets provided by the children of Tabernacle Elementary School. The project was for each child/family to donate pajamas to give to an agency that served low-income families. The Burlington County WIC Program was selected as the lucky recipient of this donation.

Burlington County WIC Coordinator Dr. Deepti Das and Assistant Coordinator Leshette Williams attended the event to thank all the children and their families for their generosity and how it benefited the WIC clients. The pajamas were for infants to adult sizes and distributed during certification and class appointments. Tabernacle is also a town in which the Burlington County WIC Program has a satellite site to provide services to WIC clients. The WIC families who received the pajamas have expressed their gratitude to the children of Tabernacle Elementary School. ■



*TROPICAL TASTE – The tropical fruits were but a sample of the foods served during Burlington WIC's National Nutrition Month festivities.*

## NEW JERSEY'S GLOUCESTER COUNTY WIC PROGRAM CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

By Linda Spiegel, RD, Chief Nutritionist

New Jersey's Gloucester County WIC Program celebrated National Nutrition Month with food sampling and two contests during the week of March 10. Participants at each of the four sites were offered treats of clementines, sampling cups of homemade bean soup, turkey and cheese roll-ups made on whole grain tortillas, cookies made with beans, and banana slices rolled in whole grain cereal. These snacks were well received.

We also solicited favorite healthy recipes from our participants for a recipe contest. The winner was a Flan recipe that made good use of WIC foods. Guesses were offered on the number of beans and amount of protein in a jar of pinto beans with bean recipes made available. Those whose guesses were closest received a zippered food cooler or colander. ■

## NEW JERSEY'S TRINITAS WIC HOSTS NUTRITION MONTH BABY SHOWER

New Jersey's Trinitas Hospital WIC Services incorporated the National Nutrition Month theme, "Nutrition is a Matter of Fact," by hosting a baby shower on March 31. Pregnant women and families were invited to attend educational sessions that included: Facts About How WIC Helps; AIDS Awareness; Getting Prepared for the Hospital; Who's the baby's doctor?; Infant Water Education: Sterilized versus Baby Spring Water, Bottle Selection Based on Infants' Needs; WIC Breastfeeding Support and Nutrition Jeopardy.

Guests participated in educational sessions and were invited to visit the various table displays featuring Babies 'R Us, Trinitas Women and Pediatric Health Center and VIKMOM Boutique. WIC Nutritionist Amanda Reyes was instrumental in contacting the various vendors to offer displays. Gift cards donated by Stop and Shop, Target, ShopRite and Babies 'R Us were raffle prizes. Carry bags, blankets, training cups, and clothing gift sets were donated from Trinitas Hospital, New Jersey Food Bank, First Baptist Church of Elizabeth, Gerber and Babies 'R Us.

Women were presented with party favors, corsages and gift coupons as they rested in the special occasion chair which was donated by the New Fantasy Novelty Party Shop. Representatives from VIKMOM Boutique demonstrated how to use various breastfeeding supports aids which included pumps, pillows and nursing pads. All the WIC staff participated in decorating the office with lights, garlands, and education displays. Staff contacted vendors, collected donated gifts, prepared gift bags and served refreshments. The Diaper Cake center piece created by Nutritionist Zelma Lopez was a crowd favorite.

"Preparing for the Trip to the Hospital," was presented by Sister Marion Scranton, Vice-President of Community Initiatives. It is important to know the names of all the doctors providing services to your family. Being an informed, educated patient is empowering. Sister Scranton explained the hospital admission process, labor and delivery, and the services for infants on the nursery floors. She suggested patients collect business cards from all their family providers and have them available during doctor visits or trips to the emergency room. Collect all your insurance information and forms in a folder to facilitate patient registration. WIC referrals are provided to pregnant women.

Heather Evans, Nurse Practitioner from Trinitas Pediatric Center, delighted our guests with an explanation of services and vital issues of pediatric health. If a patient does not have a pediatrician, the hospital provides this service from whoever is on call. Appointments are made to the Pediatric Health Center within three or four days. Ms. Evans discussed the Apgar scores and the rating from zero to ten: the higher the rating the better. Mothers were curious about the hearing test given to infants and the practice of circumcision. It is important to discuss breastfeeding with your obstetrician, so a patient should inform the nurse about breastfeeding plans. A hospital stay for a normal delivery is about two days. During the first appointment, along with an examination, patient education is provided covering such things as: infant feeding, umbilical cord care, infant stools, immunizations, weight gain, bathing temperature, circumcision and breathing. Mothers were encouraged to post the numbers of emergency contacts for the Poison Control Center and doctors in an easy-to-find location. ■



*GROUP SHOWER – Lots of moms participated in the Trinitas Baby Shower.*

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WIC SHOWCASES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

**D**C WIC held several events around the city in honor of National Nutrition Month. The Howard University Hospital (HUH) lobby proved to be an excellent venue for that local WIC agency to spread the news about the importance of nutrition, as it captured the attention of all who passed by with brightly colored posters and information. A large table-top, three-dimensional food pyramid showcased authentic examples of the food groups. Many visitors and hospital employees stopped to ask questions of the WIC Staff about nutrition related to overall health, as well as about their personal health conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and cancer. There was also some curiosity about nutrition during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Among the attractions were sample offerings of fresh fruits and vegetables such as apples, pears, grapes, and salad bags of raw broccoli, cucumbers, and carrots. A somewhat surprising and pleasing phenomenon was the interest in the fresh food samples. It was proven that when given the opportunity, people will eat healthy food. It just needs to be as accessible, convenient and economical as less healthy choices.

The planning and hard work of the HUH WIC staff paid off with a successful day of sharing vital information about nutrition, breastfeeding and WIC services with the hospital and community. The staff included Dora Thomas, Nutrition Coordinator; Doris Sawyer-Guest, Nutritionist; Tiffany Williams and Trenita Cassell, Technicians; Vernessa Perry, WIC Project Manager; with assistance from Sayeeda Habib, a nutritionist with the HUH Cares Program, and Gwendolyn West, DC WIC Lactation Consultant.

The Children's Hospital Adams Morgan/Dorchester site offered breakfast demonstrations each Tuesday morning during the month of March. The general objectives were to increase participant awareness of the importance of a healthy breakfast that meets their nutritional needs; provide participants with specific information about the benefits of fiber and how to incorporate it in their diet; and increase participant awareness about ways to include fruits in their breakfast.

The Children's Hospital WIC clinic on Michigan Avenue celebrated by decorating its waiting area and clinic space with colorful National Nutrition Month posters obtained from the American Dietetic Association. During our nutrition education classes, we showed and discussed an engaging culturally competent video designed especially for WIC. Participants learned how to include their children in preparing delicious healthy meals and snacks, and were given a recipe card to make the foods at home. After class, one participant exclaimed, "I can't wait to make veggie nuggets with my kids. This is a great way to get them to eat their vegetables!"

The Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care WIC Program celebrated by inviting residents of the surrounding community to learn about their services in a big and colorful open house. All the staff participated and helped to organize it, but particular recognition goes to Wendy Quinteros and Xian Zhen, who donated toys for the children who visited that day and a fruit basket that was given out as a prize. Another winner received a food basket with delicious and nutritious items from the WIC food list. ■



**BOUNTIFUL FEAST** – These breakfast treats were among the foods served during DC WIC's National Nutrition Month festivities throughout the District.

## PENNSYLVANIA'S HOME NURSING AGENCY WIC CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

By Diana Wallace, RN, WIC Director

**T**he staff at Home Nursing Agency's WIC Program, Blair and Centre counties, PA, celebrated National Nutrition Month by promoting beans with a fiesta theme. Clients were encouraged to guess the number of beans in a jar and the offices displayed bulletin boards with bean information. Additionally, clients were treated to food samples featuring beans such as bean brownies and spicy bean cake. Children who attended were given prizes and recipes were provided for the food samples as well as other recipes featuring beans. ■



**ALTOONA FIESTA** — In the party mood are (seated) Nutrition Assistant Zeldia Riddle, (standing left to right) Nutritionists Amy Lowe and Sue Lamertina, Nutrition Education Coordinator Tracy Kelley, Nutritionist Marci McDonald, Nutrition Assistants Jessica Lonsinger and Paula O'Rorke, Nutritionist Karen Allen, and Nutrition Assistant Vicki Schellberg.

## NEW JERSEY'S PLAINFIELD WIC CELEBRATES 2008 NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

**N**ew Jersey's Plainfield WIC celebrated National Nutrition Month all month long.

During the first week, the agency nutritionist invited Shagufta Yasmin, a registered dietitian from Muhlenberg Hospital, to speak to WIC clients on the subject of portion control. Ms. Yasmin used a Power Point presentation and captivated the audience's attention. The session ended with lots of questions and answers. All clients received a colorful laminated portion plate placemat to take home.

During the second week, Rhythmic Arts Academy instructors were invited to the WIC office to demonstrate physical activity workouts. The instructors taught different exercises, such as muscle strengthening, self defense, stretching, weight bearing, yoga and more. All WIC clients enjoyed the session and learned the importance of exercise.

The final event featured Anna Kozak, a nutrition student from Lehman College, Bronx, NY. She worked with WIC Chief Nutritionist Ms. Kalyan to develop a Sudoku game with pictures. The theme for the game was fruits and vegetables. The student gave a brief presentation to a group of WIC clients and engaged all participants in solving the game by giving clues to fill in the missing pieces in the puzzle. WIC clients were rewarded with prizes for the correct answers. WIC clients showed enthusiasm and participated freely. ■



**MOVING AND GROOVING** — Exercise was one of the highlights of Plainfield WIC's Nutrition Month activities.

## GIRL SCOUT'S GOLD AWARD BENEFITS PA'S CHESTER COUNTY WIC CHILDREN

By Paula M. Taylor, Outreach and Breastfeeding Coordinator  
WIC Program, Chester County Health Department

Anne Sheldrake wanted to help her community as she developed ideas for her Gold Award project for Girl Scouts. She remembers driving by the WIC Clinic in Southern Chester County (PA) almost on a daily basis and seeing young children arriving for their WIC visits. Thinking about her love of reading she thought, "Wouldn't it be exciting to be able to provide these children with story books," and that is exactly what she did!

The Gold Award in scouting requires the scout to create a project that will benefit her community, devoting at least 65 hours of her time. She is required to write a report on what she learned as she did the project.

A busy senior at Ursuline Academy, Anne worked on her Gold Award project beginning last September by asking all of her high school classmates to give her children's books they no longer wanted. She asked her church group, her neighbors, her former elementary school teachers and their students for used books. In fact, she asked just about everyone she could think of to give her books. Anne collected the books all winter long until she had enough boxes of books to completely fill the back of her mother's Jeep!

Then she called the WIC Director and requested a date when she could deliver the books to the Toughkenamon Clinic. Toughkenamon is located in an area of mushroom barns where many migrant workers, mostly from Mexico, harvest the mushroom crops. The families who come to WIC at this clinic may not speak English and have few possessions. Early exposure to books is a wonderful way for these children to begin to understand some elements of the English language, and many of them have older siblings who speak and read English. Of course, pictures are a universal language.



**A PERSONAL FAVORITE** — "I'm really glad to see who got this book," said Anne Sheldrake as she gave a bright colored book about princesses to Sherlyn Nunez. "It was one of my favorites!" she said.



**THE GIFT OF GIVING** — Anne Sheldrake shares a book with Jose Julian Duran during his WIC visit. Anne donated many story books to the Toughkenamon WIC Clinic for her Girl Scout Gold Award project.

On February 25, Anne and her mother unloaded all the books she had collected. The boxes were labeled by the age of child who would enjoy the books in that box, starting with infant books and continuing to older elementary level books. Since the day the boxes arrived, the children in Toughkenamon have had a wonderful time choosing the books they want to take home with them.

There is just something special about bright colored, oversized, bigger than life stories that fill a child with wonder and awe. Anne Sheldrake experienced this love of stories herself as a child and has passed on this excitement to the children of the Toughkenamon WIC Clinic. What a wonderful community service this has been! ■

## WEST VIRGINIA'S VALLEY HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS PEER-TO-PEER TIPS OFFERED BY WIC PARTICIPANTS

By Helen Payton, Nutrition Coordinator  
Valley Health WIC Program

VENA is in full swing in the West Virginia Kanawha Valley. A participant bulletin board has been established in a prominent location at the Kanawha County WIC office after staff began gathering children's artwork, recipes and feeding tips submitted by WIC families. During group and individual counseling, nutritionists invited participants to share "what works for us" tips on feeding and parenting.

Children colored on paper taped to the wall while parents talked with the nutritionists. Copies of displayed recipes, in wall pockets beside the bulletin board, are available to take home. WIC families were pleasantly surprised to be asked for THEIR expertise to share with everyone. Now they have a board created by them for them, not a board of what we want them to know. ■



**PARENTS HAVE PLENTY TO SHARE** — This bulletin board highlights participants' tips as well as children's artwork as a way to facilitate VENA in group nutrition education classes.

## THE ART OF THE CERT MARYLAND VENA TRAINING

By Nancy Benjamin, Maryland WIC Temp - assigned to Baltimore County WIC Program

Not having attended prior VENA trainings, I was pleasantly surprised by my recent experience at "The Art of the Cert," held in Baltimore on March 4. The presenter, Mary Dallavalle, began by reviewing the six components that comprise VENA, and followed this with a detailed PowerPoint presentation on the communication skills and knowledge base necessary to succeed while using this framework.

Attendees were reminded of many relevant points covered during Cathy Carothers' training session at the State WIC Conference in October, especially the need to really listen to and care about your clients. The traditional lecture format was effectively broken up with a variety of activities, including a fun coloring project, in keeping with the "art" theme, that gave a hands-on understanding of the message that "There is always more than one right answer." This message was conveyed by two excellent films, "Everyday Creativity" and "Celebrate What's Right with the World," featuring National Geographic photographer DeWitt Jones.

Participants were purposely seated with staff from other agencies to increase the likelihood of brainstorming new ideas and solutions to real-life case studies that emphasized key VENA concepts. We all benefited as a designated representative from each table shared his/her best approaches with the entire group. Attention to detail was evident right up to the last moment when every attendee was presented with a "VENA Change Tool Kit," filled with clever props to remind us of each of the core teachings.

As a relatively new WIC employee, I found this training to be informative, supportive, and liberating. I learned that while it is tempting to give participants every last bit of information, it is more important to collaborate with clients to determine their most urgent needs. We were all encouraged to abandon the "medical model" of dispensing information, and to take advantage of the many opportunities that WIC provides for building meaningful relationships with participants over time. "Light a fire. Don't fill a bucket." I will continue to remember that very helpful slide. ■

## WEST VIRGINIA'S ELKINS WIC AND AREA AGENCIES RAISE AWARENESS AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

By Lori Leach, Nutritionist

In honor of October being "Domestic Violence Awareness Month," as well as to support our community, Randolph-Elkins WIC Program participated in a Community Candlelight Vigil and Domestic Violence Awareness Night. The event was sponsored by the Randolph County Prosecuting Attorney and the local domestic violence shelter, Women's Aid in Crisis.

The evening began with fun activities designed to educate children. The children learned ways to control emotions through skits performed by Old Brick Playhouse's Artistic Director and Assistant Creative Director, who dressed as clowns.

Decorated shirts with anti-abuse messages made by inmates at Huttonsville Correctional Center (HCC) were displayed along the wall while the HCC Warden spoke of how awareness in prison is powerful. "Designing the t-shirts helps ensure inmates are getting help for their problems that assists in their re-entry into society," stressed the Warden.

Candles were lit to represent victims of domestic violence. Many observers held back tears as community members lit candles for either those they knew were victims of domestic violence or if they were a victim themselves. Most residents gained insight into how widespread the problems of domestic violence are in our local community as a young teenage girl came forward to light a candle in representation of her experience with domestic violence.

The evening concluded with candles burning bright while the students from the Wilderness Journeys Alldredge Academy, a nationally recognized wilderness program for at-risk youth, struggling adolescents and troubled teens, played healing rhythms on handmade drums. While the crowd was silent, the students of the Academy shared their mission of giving back to others while representing who they are now and the journey completed while at the Academy.

"The Community Candlelight Vigil and Domestic Violence Awareness Night is designed to show the public in a very dramatic way that domestic violence happens in every community and encourages them to focus on prevention as part of an overall plan to break the cycle of abuse," explains Tammy Johnson, Randolph-Elkins WIC Program Nutrition Assistant. Several area agencies, including WIC, offered awareness and education materials concerning available community resources that are intended to support families. This included Youth Health Service, Inc., Mountain Heart, WV Birth to Three, Right From the Start and Randolph County Child Advocacy Center.

The Randolph County Prosecuting Attorney, a Family Court Judge, a police officer, a State Senator, and a Child Protective Services worker spoke about our community's role in domestic violence prevention. The event was a demonstration of concern and commitment to finding solutions as well as offering help to victims. ■

## PA'S ALLEGHENY COUNTY WIC CELEBRATES MR. ROGERS' BIRTHDAY WITH "SWEATER DAY"

By Candis Sines-Westerberg, MEd, Allegheny County Health Department WIC Program

On February 26, Pittsburgh celebrated the 80th birthday of Fred Rogers by having "Sweater Day." On Sweater Day, Pittsburghers were encouraged to wear their favorite sweater in honor of Mr. Rogers' spirit of being a caring neighbor. In the downtown Pittsburgh Allegheny County Health Department/WIC office, children were read to by ACHD/WIC Nutrition Services Assistant Tia Capuraso. All of the children participating received a book and a key chain. The children and the parents were all excited to participate, and it was a fun way to celebrate Mr. Rogers' birthday! ■



*A TIME TO READ — Tia Capuraso, ACHD/WIC Nutrition Services Assistant, reading to Joey Zappi, Thomas Cavanaugh, Ryan Knudsen, Brittany Knudsen, and Michael Hahne.*

## TRAIN RIDE TO MARYLAND REAFFIRMS MOTHER'S CHOICE TO BREASTFEED

By Jerica Miller, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, Frederick County (MD) WIC Program

It's the middle of the night. I'm on a train with my six-month-old son sleeping peacefully on my lap. We're somewhere outside Chicago on our way to Maryland, where we'll meet with my husband who's been driving cross country with all our belongings. I hear the doors between rail cars slide open and then close. A woman holding her crying baby approaches me. She asks me if I have a bottle she could have or borrow. I'm thrown off by the question and ask what's going on. She tells me that at some point during her travels she lost her baby's bottle and now her baby is hungry. I tell her I don't have a bottle, but I offer my son's new sippy cup as a possible substitute. She declines and returns the way she came. Her baby continues to cry.

As a breastfeeding mother, I was aware of many of the health benefits associated with breastfeeding, such as reduced risk of certain cancers for both mom and child, the likelihood of fewer allergies, less incidence of ear infec-

tions, and a host of other benefits. However, meeting this mother and baby on the train made me realize one basic benefit I'd taken for granted – the ability to immediately answer my baby's need to eat and be soothed. No need for bottles, powders, sterilization, or scoops. The minute I saw signs my baby was ready to eat, I was able to provide him with the very best in infant nutrition. This incident also affirmed my belief that breastfeeding empowers mothers, gives them satisfaction and confidence in their ability to nurture their children.

Every mother has to decide how best to feed her new baby. Many factors go into this decision. As the Frederick County WIC Peer Counselor, I work along with the Local Agency Breastfeeding Coordinator, and all of the WIC staff, to help mothers-to-be see how breastfeeding can fit into their lives. Should they decide to breastfeed, we work to support them in that choice. WIC supports breastfeeding in many ways. 'Breastfeeding Basics' and 'Breastfeeding

and Beyond' classes are offered every week. The Frederick County Health Department's Lactation Consultant is present at these classes the first Tuesday of every month to answer questions. In addition to providing access to a peer counselor, breastfeeding coordinator, lactation consultant, and supportive staff, WIC provides larger food packages to mothers who choose to breastfeed, and makes resources such as nursing pads and breast pumps available to them at no cost.

Occasionally, I think back to the mother I met on the train that night. I can't imagine the panic I would have felt at not being able to quickly meet my baby's need to be fed. Breastfeeding my son has had its challenges, some of them tougher than I expected, but this moment on the train made me appreciate the ease with which I was able to feed and comfort him. I feel positive about my personal decision to breastfeed. It was, and is, the right choice for me. ■

## NEW JERSEY'S TRINITAS HOSPITAL WIC CELEBRATES BREASTFEEDING AWARENESS

By Anita Otokiti, WIC Director, Trinitas Hospital

New Jersey's Trinitas Hospital WIC Breastfeeding Services hosted an educational session in honor of World Breastfeeding Week on several dates in August. The theme, "Breastfeeding the 1st hour saves one million lives! One Action, One Hour!" was promoted in all the WIC sites and services of the hospital. Over 120 countries celebrate World Breastfeeding activities. Initiation of breastfeeding within the first hour of birth is the first step toward reducing infant mortality (WABA).

Trinitas Hospital WIC is centrally located in Elizabeth, NJ. Site locations are at the Hillside Health Department, Summit Health Department and the Union Township, Vauxhall Health Station. New Jersey Healthy People 2010 objective is to increase the proportion of children ever breastfed to 75 percent. Anita Otokiti, Trinitas WIC Director reported that in 2005, 55 percent of the children enrolled in WIC were breastfed and in 2006, 68 percent of the children were breastfed.

The WIC Center is located adjacent to the Trinitas Hospital Women and Pediatric Health Centers at 65 Jefferson Avenue in Elizabeth. Mary Beth Santillon, Director of the Trinitas Health Centers and WIC Director Anita Otokiti work collaboratively to coordinate appointments to support early enrollment into health care. Board certified lactation specialists work at the Health Center, WIC and in the nursery at Trinitas. The policies and practice of the hospital support breastfeeding and foster a family support

Supervisor of Breastfeeding Services Maribel Solano indicated that more than 100 guests participated in the World Breastfeeding Celebration at the main site in the Trinitas WIC Center and the Summit Health Department. Mothers and infants were presented with infants gift sets donated by the First Baptist Church of Elizabeth; blankets from Project Linus; water bottles and bags from Amerigroup. It was a time of sharing and acknowledgement. Pictures of mother and child were taken.

Guest lecturers were Mary Beth Santillon and Theresa Andrews, Nurse, Trinitas Pediatric Health Center and Glenda Mejia from Amerigroup. Registered Dietitian Rosa Tamayo presented "The Crawl" and discussed that lack of breastfeeding is a major cause of under nutrition.

Nutritionist Epoeta Jerome discussed infant feeding. WIC Nutritionist Zelma Lopez discussed the importance of breastfeeding as explained in a pamphlet "When Disaster Happens", by Pamela K. Wiggins, IBCLC and the pamphlet, "Infant Nutrition During a Disaster, American Academy of Pediatrics.

Breastfeeding Service focuses on prenatal education and support for lactating women. Lactation Instructors/Consultants are available to assist women with problems, positioning and latch-on techniques. Bi-lingual staff is available and information in many other languages are also provided through the New Jersey WIC Program. Weekly classes and support group meetings are held for breastfeeding women.

Mothers who delivered at Trinitas were greeted by the Breastfeeding Service staff and presented with a congratulatory rose and information of World Breastfeeding Awareness. ■



**SEE HOW IT'S DONE** — Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Claudia Lopez uses model dolls for class demonstrations.



**WHY BREAST IS BEST** — Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Angela Smith addresses women on the benefits of breastfeeding.



**LEARN A LESSON** — WIC Manager Rosa Tamayo, MPA, RD, presents "Baby Crawl" from World Allegiance Breastfeeding Action (WABA).

## NEW JERSEY'S NORTH HUDSON WIC PROGRAM SPRINGS INTO GOOD HEALTH

New Jersey's North Hudson Community Action Corporation WIC Program and

Health Centers collaborated their efforts to kick off spring with a health fair, "Spring Into Good Health." The purpose of the event was to increase people's awareness of their health and nutrition and to encourage them to take positive steps to improve their health

behaviors. Staff members enjoyed teaching about the value of good nutrition and everyone had fun learning about the benefits of eating the proper food.

The nutritionists conducted a food demonstration of fun and healthy snacks and parents and children were excited to try them and take home the recipes. WIC staff dressed in fruit and vegetable costumes greeted all those who participated in the activities. The children were excited to compete in a painting contest and play "Hop to Health," "Feed Me," and "Hit the Foods." The "Nutrition Wheel" game was used to ask nutrition questions to both the parents and children. The adults won the NHCAC WIC Program cookbook and children won fruit and vegetable coloring books and "Fun Kids' Recipes" for playing the games. There were also opportunities for free screenings of blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose followed by nutrition education provided by the WIC nutritionists.

Adults and children enjoyed snacking on Kix, Cheerios, Juicy Juice and VitaTops, courtesy of General Mills, Nestle, and Vitalicious. Horizon Insurance Group, Inc., Amerigroup and Americaid were present to enroll people in health insurance plans. Many people won pedometers from Horizon Insurance Group, Inc. as prizes to questions asked about health and physical activity.

The fair was a great success and participants reported that learning about nutrition at such an event made the process pleasurable for them. A local cable station reported on the fair events and interviewed staff, children and adults. We would like to thank Victoria Hollist from New Jersey State WIC for joining us at the fair. ■



**NUTRITION WHEEL** — Chief Nutritionist Karen Lazarowitz (right) uses the Nutrition Wheel to ask participants questions.

## HALLOWEEN WISHES FROM PA'S SHENANGO WIC

The Shenango Valley Urban League Oil City WIC participants were amused by the WIC staff, who dressed for Halloween. The staff distributed

treat bags to all the children. Dressed for the occasion are (left to right) Robyn Kavounas, Grace Olson, Sandra VanTassel, and Brenda Wells. ■



## BECOMING "VENA FRIENDLY" IN MARYLAND

By Kathryn Conrad, Nutrition Technician Supervisor, Eden Street Clinic, Baltimore City WIC Program

Mary Dallavalle did a great job putting the March VENA training together. The training was such a delightful learning experience. I was so glad for the seating arrangement. I really enjoyed meeting and sharing team input with members from other agencies, especially Marge, the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator for Harford and Baltimore counties. Her insight in the case studies was so VENA friendly; she taught me so much. The coloring sheet icebreaker she set up provided for good team interaction. I have my coloring page on display in my work cubicle. The two videos by Dewitt Jones were awesome! I came away from the training feeling so empowered. The first thing I did when I came back to the office was to gather informational

pictures related to nutrition counseling topics and get copies made for the staff. "Speaking to the heart from the heart" has always been my commitment.

I know when I sing my little "finger pinch song," the mother and her child are put at ease. It may not work for everyone, but it seems right, to try to make someone else's journey a little easier – to "reframe problems into opportunities." As I set up for the hemoglobin test, I prepare the child. Looking at him at eye level, I say... "Jaylin, today, Miss (your name) is going to sing you a song, pinch your finger, and put a Band-Aid on it, ok?" The song goes like this...

*"It's cold and wet, it's cold and wet, it's very, very cold and wet!" (while holding the child's hand and wiping his finger with the alcohol pad)*

*"Dry, dry, dry, dry, I'll do my best not to make you cry!" (while wiping the child's finger with gauze)*

*"Tiny little pinch, tiny little pinch, tiny little, tiny little, tiny little pinch!" (while using the lancet)*

*"Catch a little drop, catch a little drop, catch a little, catch a little, catch a little drop!" (while doing the "catch" with the cuvette)*

*"Put your Band-Aid on, put your Band-Aid on, put your Band-Aid, put your Band-Aid, put your Band-Aid on!" (while putting the Band-Aid on)*

*And when it's all finished, "Jaylin, really good job!" ■*

## MARYLAND WIC INTRODUCES ADVANCED TRAINING FOR NEW STAFF

By Michelle Clark, Assistant Community Nutritionist  
Baltimore County WIC Program

Since beginning employment with the Baltimore County (MD) WIC Program in December 2007, I had been looking forward to the week-long WIC Wise 2 training. A diverse group of 14 women representing nine local agencies attended this training.

Facilitated by Mary Dallavalle, Amy Resnik, and Sherri Sabol, the training covered prenatal and postpartum nutrition, infant nutrition, breastfeeding, and child nutrition. The entire first day focused on counseling skills. This focus was continued the rest of the week as part of the nutrition and breastfeeding content. The training included topics of both professional and personal interest, such as effective counseling skills, quality customer service, anticipatory guidance related to infant and child feeding, breastfeeding basics, and VENA.

As a group we were encouraged to share best practices and ask questions to find appropriate solutions to our individual client and clinic issues. Although the majority of the training participants had less than a few weeks of WIC experience, the discussions and breakout practice sessions generated useful and informative dialogue. Most impressive to me during the training was how facilitators modeled the behavior and service that should be delivered to our WIC customers, such as: active listening, meeting each trainee at their needs and moving them forward, welcoming questions, and providing useful tools to perform successfully on the job.

Both written and interactive evaluation tools were used to determine how well the concepts covered during training were received. Breastfeeding Jeopardy was a blast! At the end of the week, I felt equipped with the knowledge to head back to clinic and provide quality service focused on the individual nutritional needs of my WIC customers. ■

## PENNSYLVANIA'S ALLEGHENY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT WIC PROGRAM AT TURTLE CREEK HELPS WITH TOY DRIVE

By Candis Sines-Westerberg, MEd

Pennsylvania's Allegheny County Health Department WIC Program in Turtle Creek participated in the annual toy drive sponsored by the Westinghouse Valley Human Services Center (WVHSC) in Turtle Creek, PA. The Turtle Creek WIC staff, Danielle Beck, Nutritionist, and Elaine Brisson, Nutrition Services Assistant, contributed \$35 to the WVHSC and collected names of the WIC participants who wanted to receive toys.

On December 21, Danielle and Elaine distributed the toys to approximately 150 children. The families expressed their appreciation for the very nice gifts (trains, dolls, trucks, etc.) the children received. The toy drive was a great way for the WIC staff to give back to the community and the families they serve! ■



*A GREAT GIFT — Jason Boyd with his new truck.*

## MARWIC TIMES Calendar

PA Breastfeeding Coordinators' Annual Training. Harrisburg, PA. June 18-19. WV WIC Outreach Partners Strategic Planning Team Meeting. John 23rd Pastoral Center. Charleston, WV. June 26-27. PA Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA) Statewide Training. Harrisburg, PA. July 16-17. Handbook 901 Training. Philadelphia, PA, July 21. Bi-regional Cross Program Nutrition Conference. Philadelphia, PA. July 24-25. Monmouth Ocean (NJ) Breastfeeding Consortium Conference. Amy Spangler, "Breastfeeding Keep it Simple." For more information, call 732-471-9306. July 29. WV Local Agency Directors Meeting. Pipestem Resort. Pipestem, WV. July 29-31. PA Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA) Statewide Training. Pittsburgh, PA. July 30-31. Passaic (NJ) WIC World Breastfeeding Week Party. Passaic, NJ. August 4. Delaware WIC Program Annual Breastfeeding Celebration. Chase Center on the Riverfront. Wilmington, DE. August 7. West Virginia State Fair. Fairlea, WV. August 8 -16. PA WIC Directors' Meeting. Harrisburg, PA. September 17-18. NWA Nutrition and Breastfeeding Conference. Louisville, KY. September 23-25. 2008 WV Local Agency Directors Meeting. Morgantown, WV. October 7-9. The deadline for the Fall issue of MARWIC TIMES is July 15, 2008. Please submit articles, photos and calendar events to your State editor. No Polaroid pictures used. 5" x 7" digital photos (saved as JPGs, please) preferred. All photographs must include a detailed caption.

## US MARINES TEACH TRINITAS (NJ) WIC PARTICIPANTS ABOUT EXERCISE

The second Tuesday of each month, Rosa Tamayo, PVA, RD, conducts Childhood Obesity Prevention Sessions. Marine Sergeant Gustavo A. Serpa and Staff Sergeant Jason Tucker made a grand appearance to describe what a real workout is like. They discussed the importance of keeping fit, daily exercise and increasing physical fitness gradually.

Water bottles were provided to stress the importance of staying hydrated while exercising. Drinking water helps you feel full and decreases the urge to over-eat after a workout.

Nutritionists conducted several other activities during Nutrition Month, including education sessions on food labels and the junk in junk food. ■



*HERE COME THE MARINES — WIC participants listen as a Marine describes a real workout.*

## HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT PA'S COMMUNITY ACTION SOUTHWEST

By Leisa J. Shawley, Information Technology Manager/Outreach & Retail Store Coordinator

### 13th Annual Mom's Shower

Community Action Southwest WIC Program held their 13th Annual Greene County Mom's Shower in April. The shower is a community project developed and staffed by a committee from local service organizations. More than 20 exhibitors were present to distribute valuable information on the services they provide and had many giveaways for the participants.

### WIC Program holds "Happy Baby" Training

Certified Happy Baby Educators provided a class at a local "Pennsylvania Early Learning" training. Attendees included child care providers and parent educators. During the interactive session, participants viewed sections of the parent video and were provided additional information on happy baby techniques. After the presentation, the attendees successfully demonstrated the 5 S's, explained the safety points, and everyone received certificates!

Through funding from Penn State Cooperative Extension, all those attending received a "Happy Baby" parent kit with the hope that they will share all the information with parents.

The training was a huge success! Don't we all love a Happy Baby? ■



*A SHOWER OF FUN — Enjoying some of the displays is Debbie Ramey with her son Cole.*



*DRESSING BABY — Brenda Yeater, Day Care provider, practices the techniques of swaddling.*

