
Healthy Lifestyle Promotion Toolkit



Promoting and Increasing Opportunities for:

- **Physical Activity**
- **Healthy Eating**
- **Healthy Weight**

New York State WIC Program

Introduction

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Introduction

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) has widespread access to preschool children in low income families. These children are among those at greatest risk of overweight and obesity. Early intervention to prevent overweight, obesity, and associated health problems is important and the best approach. Prevention is the key.

Due to a growing prevalence of childhood obesity, the New York State's Division of Nutrition (DON) has targeted this public health issue since 1997. The DON initiative, Eat Well Play Hard (EWPH), focuses on five strategies to encourage children over age two and their families to:

1. Increase developmentally-appropriate physical activity;
2. Decrease exposure to television and other recreational screen time;
3. Increase consumption of vegetables and fruits;
4. Increase consumption of low-fat and fat-free milk for children over age 2; and
5. Increase the initiation and duration of exclusive breastfeeding.

The New York State Department of Health developed the first-ever New York State Strategic Plan for Overweight and Obesity Prevention. The plan is the product of a broad collaborative effort to identify strategies promoting opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating to prevent and reduce overweight and obesity across the age span. The goals that apply to the WIC Program are:

- Increase early recognition of overweight and/or excessive weight gain;
- Improve management of people who are overweight, obese, or have obesity-related diseases;
- Increase initiation, exclusivity and duration of breastfeeding during infancy;
- Improve lifelong eating and physical activity; and
- Decrease exposure to television and other recreational screen time.

As the goals imply, positive behavior changes are the key to improving health. A local agency plan based on the principles of behavior change and tailored to participants' and community needs is key to successful prevention interventions.

Your local agency needs to identify problem areas related to obesity that are specific to your community and develop an action plan that will work in your setting with your participants. This tool kit was designed to assist you with developing a healthy lifestyle program in your agency. The design process takes you through the assessment, implementation and evaluation of your healthy lifestyle activities. Information was gathered from NYS WIC local agencies who successfully implemented a variety of activities. Utilize the resources provided in this toolkit and the Fit WIC Resource Book to make your healthy lifestyle promotion efforts effective and meaningful for participants, their families and WIC staff.



*"If the only tool you have is a hammer, all of your problems will look like nails."
—Mark Twain*

Steps to Develop and Implement Your Healthy Lifestyle Promotion Plan

This section outlines the steps needed to develop your healthy lifestyle promotion plan. For each step, information is provided to assist you through the process of developing a plan. The complexity of each step will depend on the scope, size, and frequency of the activities being considered. In the Resources Section of the tool kit, there is a list specifically for project development and planning to assist you with these steps. Sample forms are also available in this section. An excellent resource for program development is Moving to the Future Tools for Planning Nutrition and Physical Activity Programs at (movingtothefuture.org.)

Designate a staff person as the lead for your healthy lifestyle promotion action plan. This staff person can be responsible for the necessary steps in the development and implementation of your healthy lifestyle promotion interventions.

1. Assess:

Assessment is the process of gathering and analyzing information. It is an essential step for setting goals, determining outcomes, collaborating with community partners, but also in your ultimate success. The results will determine your plan.

Assessment can be simple or very complex. It needs to provide useful information. Assessing community needs can be as simple as taking a walk through the neighborhood or as complex as conducting a survey of the community. The important thing is to focus on the participants, generate buy-in, and establish a connection with participants, your local agency and your community.

Below are several ways to assess your community/participant needs. Choose those that best fit your agency's capacity and scope. A short-term project should be less time consuming than a long term one, which may require more in-depth assessment and utilization of resources.

1. Brainstorm: Gather staff, participants or other community programs to discuss issues and needs.
2. Dream: Ask what needs to be changed. If we all won the lottery for community use, what would we do or change? How would we go about doing it?

3. Walk: As mentioned, take a walk through the community. Write down what you see; take pictures. Take note of community resources or partners such as organizations, businesses, and recreation centers. This will help you target your interventions in a realistic fashion.
4. Meet: Hold a meeting among the community stakeholders or participants. Ask them for input, and collect their thoughts and support.
5. Ask: Conduct a survey. Include questions such as:
 - a. What problems do you see in the community or face as a parent?
 - b. What are the most pressing issues?
 - c. What project or activity would be most helpful?
 - d. List two things you would change.

Identify resources and gather information about your community and participants such as statistical, health, community and environmental information.

Statistical:

Race, ethnicity, age, income level, education level of participants

Health:

Prevalence of certain illnesses and levels of physical activity and obesity of participants and their correlation with statistical data

Built Environment:

Land use - industrial versus residential

Type of housing - single homes or multiple occupancy buildings

Transportation systems - urban versus rural

Services available - shopping, restaurants, banking, health care, etc.

Public resources - parks, museums, libraries etc.

Community:

Investment - Is the community interested in making the needed changes to support a healthy lifestyle?

Capacity - What resources does the community have (people, organizations, money) to help make changes?

Contact the health department (state and local) and social service agencies especially for statistical and health data. Investigate whether your county has been awarded grants by the state and federal government to promote healthy lifestyle changes through Eat Well Play Hard (EWPH), Healthy Heart Program, and Steps to a HealthierNY, etc. These agencies or organizations have done community assessments as part of their grants and are willing to share their information with you.

2. Plan and Develop:

After your assessment, identify the issue(s) or problem(s) you plan to address. You may start with a general idea of the problem or issue you want to address. Think of issues as opportunities.

- What are the issues you would like to address?
- What are your goal(s) and objective(s)?
- Why is this goal(s) and objective(s) worth pursuing?
- What difference will it make if your goal(s) and objective(s) are reached?

Example of identified issues: Your local agency has determined that WIC mothers are concerned about limited safe areas to play and the cost of toys with their limited budgets.

Set Your Goal(s) and Objective(s):

A goal or outcome specifies the overall end result to be achieved as a result of the plan. These could be in the areas of behavior, knowledge, attitudes or any combination of these three.

Determine the overall goal of your plan and possible interventions based on the identified needs or concerns. When choosing interventions, consider the following:

- Staff to develop and implement the plan and interventions.
- Time for development, training and implementation.
- Time and space for ordering, storing and assembling of any materials or activity kits.
- Space if you are doing any group activities.

Document the overall goal, objective(s) and the planned intervention(s).

An objective is a more specific goal based on the interventions or activities planned. Your objective should answer: **Who, What, How Much, and When?** Be sure that the objectives are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely).

The objectives are used to plan activities and provide a framework for your evaluation. What specific behavior(s) or action(s) do you hope will change as a

result of your plan? As you choose a focus for your plan, think about what you learned in the assessment.

Example: Your local agency has chosen ‘improving lifelong physical activity’ as the overall goal based on the results of your assessment. Your specific objective is to increase low cost age and developmentally-appropriate physical activity for children between the ages of 2 and 5. The chosen intervention is to develop and distribute low cost Family Physical Activity Kits to your WIC families with children between the ages of 2 and 5. There is a blank Work Plan and a completed sample Work Plan at the end of this section on pages 13-14.

Develop a general outline based on these considerations:

- Description - What are the objectives and goals of your plan?
- Targeted Population – Who is the target audience? How will you:
 - Identify potential participants?
 - Recruit participants?
 - Keep the participants involved?
- Intended Goals and Objectives - What are the goal(s) and objective(s) for the plan?
 - Are the local agency goals/objectives consistent with national and state physical activity and healthy eating goals/objectives?
 - How many participants and/or families do you want to reach?
 - What kinds of activities will help you meet your goal(s)/objectives?
 - What percentage return on your survey and/or follow-up process are you looking for?
 - What percentage of positive behavior change or response are you aiming for with this activity?
- Estimated Time Schedule - When will the activity be implemented?
- Estimated Cost - How much will the intervention/activity cost?
 - Individual cost of an activity should include production, shipping and handling costs, if applicable.
 - Activity kits should cost less than \$25 total including the bag and contents.
- Evaluation Process - How do you plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention/activity in achieving the intended goal(s) and objectives? Does your work plan allow for evaluation of effectiveness?

Questions to help guide the evaluation process:

What do you want to know?

There are many aspects of a program that can be measured. You need to focus on only what you want to know.

For example, if you want to know if offering a walking program for new moms helps them shed post-pregnancy pounds then you would measure pre- and post-program weight. However, if you want to know whether the same program helps reduce baby blues, you would use a brief depression questionnaire.

Compared to what?

There are many ways to make comparisons. You can compare:

- Participants' scores on a pre-test to those on a post-test survey they complete once the activity is over.
- One activity to another.
- Frequency of the occurrence of a specific activity before and after counseling/education.
- Results obtained to standards such as Healthy People 2020.

What is the time frame?

There are several points where you can collect data. Your choice will depend on what you want to learn and what comparison you will make:

- Before the activity begins
- Right after the activity ends
- 3-6 months after the activity ends

What types of data do you want to collect? This will be determined by your goal(s) and objectives.

Quantitative data focuses on capturing the numbers of your program:

- Average pounds lost.
- Number of minutes of physical activity.
- Number of people attending a session.
- Percent of people switching to fat free milk.

Qualitative data provides the words that people use to determine needs, interests and resources:

- Discussion groups with the target audience to determine needs, interests and resources.
- Participants' descriptions of strengths and weaknesses.
- Observations of sessions.
- Participants report on what new things they will try.

You may want to collect both kinds of data.

How is your data collected?

At this stage, think about what is practical and appropriate for your participants. If you plan to use written surveys, think about:

- Readability level of the survey, and
- Literacy level of your clients.

Remember:

Increasing knowledge is not enough for behavior change. Behavior is influenced by perceptions, emotions, motivations, skills and the environment (access and availability).

Example of plan: You will be providing the low cost Family Physical Activity Kits to 200 families with children between the ages of 2 and 5 during the months of April, May and June. Your objectives are that each family will:

- Complete a short survey on how they used the physical activity kit to be returned at their 3 month follow-up visit in July, August or September. For families who do not return the survey, staff will complete the survey with them at this visit. You would like an 80 % return rate. There is a sample survey for this example at the end of this section on page 17.
- Play with their children, using the items provided, at least once a week during the 3-month period.

You also want to determine which item in the kit was the most useful. Your decision to repeat, repeat with changes, or discontinue this intervention will be based on this information. There is a blank Evaluation Work Plan and a sample completed Evaluation Work Plan on pages 15-16.

Keep a copy of your general outline (including your Work Plan.) If requested, submit the general outline to your Regional Office (RO).

3. Implement – Take Action:

Now it is time to put your plans into action. The first step is to complete all the tasks needed to be able to fully implement by a set start date. Assign staff to complete certain tasks based on their interest or involvement in the planning process. Some possible tasks are:

- Ordering necessary supplies.
- Developing any needed educational materials.
- Developing evaluation materials (surveys etc.).
- Training other local agency staff.

When everything is ready, fully implement your plans. Document all information on your general outline and keep a copy available for all staff to use as well as your records. Update as needed. Also keep copies of any materials developed.

Example: Your Family Physical Activity Kit will include a music CD, scarves, sponge ball, yarn ball and an active kid's book. The kit itself will be an inexpensive backpack. Staff has been assigned to order the necessary supplies while others are working on the survey. Additional staff will be assisting with the assembly of the kits and training of all staff.

During implementation, it is very helpful to have regularly scheduled meetings to discuss how implementation is going. Suggested discussion topics are:

- What is working well and what isn't?
- Are staff having problems implementing the activity?
- Identify positive and negative aspects of the activity.
- How can these problems be resolved? Brainstorm resolution ideas.
- What changes need to be made to the activity?

Maintain documentation of these meetings for evaluation of future plans.

Evaluate:

Collect evaluation data and results, using the appropriate tools and techniques, and then evaluate. Evaluation offers a way to determine whether your activities were implemented in the ways you intended and whether doing the activities produced the results you expected. Once you have gathered all your data look for trends and any surprises. What might have happened that you were not expecting? When you have identified the trends and surprises in your data, you can begin to put together a story of what happened.

Create a report that provides the information that your audience needs. Program details and evaluation data can support your conclusion(s) and help you present a well-rounded story.

Ask:

- Was your plan effective (based on participant and staff evaluation)?
 - Did you reach your target audience and number of participants and/or families?
 - Did you get the targeted percentage return on surveys or follow-up process?
 - Did you get the desired positive change or response percentage?
 - Did you complete the activity as scheduled for time and cost?
- What is the possibility of repeating the plan;
- What is the reason for repeating the activity; and
- What changes should be made?

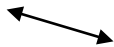
Example: Based on the analysis of the survey results, you have determined that you met your goal and objectives. Specifically, you found that:

- The music CD provided was the most used item followed by the yarn and sponge balls.
- 75 % of parents used the items in the kits at least once a week during the past 3 months.
- The survey rate of return was 82%.
- There is a strong likelihood of repeating this activity with some changes to the items provided in the physical activity kit.

Document these results as part of your work plan and report on your activities as directed by the New York State WIC Program.

Work Plan

GOAL:



Objective:

Interventions: _____

Action Steps	Due Date	Staff Responsible	Resources Required

How will you monitor and evaluate the strategy and/or action steps?

Sample Work Plan

GOAL: Improve
Life Long Activity

Objective: Increase Safe, Low-Cost, Age and Developmentally-Appropriate Physical Activity.

Intervention: Develop and distribute safe, low-cost age and developmentally-appropriate Family Physical Activity Kits (FPAKs) to families with children between the ages of 2 and 5.

Action Steps	Due Date	Staff Responsible	Resources Required
Determine what to use for the Family Physical Activity Kit (FPAK) and its contents (toys and other items).	October 2009	Jane Smith Healthy Lifestyle (HL) Committee	Time Information on possible items (cost, suppliers etc)
Determine the number needed and order the music CD, scarves and books for kids.	November 2009	Jane Smith	Funding Source Space to store items.
Determine the number needed and purchase the supplies needed to make the yarn and sponge balls.	November 2009	Jane Smith	Funding Source Space to store supplies.
Develop Survey/Calendar to provide with each FPAK.	January 2010	Jane Smith HL Committee	
Make the yarn and sponge balls.	February 2010	Jane Smith, HL Committee Volunteers	Volunteers Space to assemble and store the balls.
Compile the FPAKs.	February 2010	Jane Smith HL Committee Volunteers	Volunteers Space to assemble and store the completed FPAKs.
Train all staff on distributing the FPAKs to families.	March 2010	Jane Smith HL Committee	Time
Distribute the FPAKs in clinics to families with children 2-5 years old with regularly scheduled meetings to monitor progress and resolve issues.	April, May June 2010	All staff	Time Space to keep the FPAKs in clinic.

How will you monitor and evaluate the strategy and/or action steps?

Have each family return the completed calendar and survey at their visit in 3 months (July, August, and September 2010.)

Evaluation Work Plan

Expected Outcome: _____

Evaluation Action Steps	Due Date(s)	Staff Responsible	Resources Required

Expected Outcome: _____

Evaluation Action Steps	Due Date(s)	Staff Responsible	Resources Required

Sample Evaluation Work Plan

Expected Outcome: Each family will complete the Family Physical Activity Kit (FPAK) Survey and Calendar and return at their 3 month visit in July, August or September 2010. Goal: 80% Return Rate

Evaluation Action Steps	Due Dates	Staff Responsible	Resources Required
Collect the completed surveys and calendars at the 3 month visit in July, August or September 2010.	July-September 2010	Jane Smith All Staff	Time
Complete surveys and calendars for families who forget to bring them at their 3 month visit.	July –September 2010	Jane Smith All Staff	Time Extra copies of survey and calendar
Compare the number of surveys returned to the number of FPAKs distributed to determine the survey return rate.	October 2010	Jane Smith All Staff	Time
Share results with all staff.	November 2010	Jane Smith	Scheduled Meeting

Expected Outcome: Each family will play with their children using the items in the Family Physical Activity Kits (FPAKs) at least 1 time per week for the next 3 months.

Evaluation Action Steps	Due Dates	Staff Responsible	Resources Required
Compile and review survey question responses and calendars.	October 2010	Jane Smith HL Committee	Time
Analyze survey question responses and calendar and determine average frequency of use, item used most, and item used least.	October 2010	Jane Smith HL Committee	Time
Share results with all staff.	November 2010	Jane Smith	Scheduled Meeting

**XYZ WIC Program
Family Physical Activity Kit
Survey**

1. On average, how often did you use the items in the kit in a week during the past 3 months?

- Once
- Twice
- 3 Times
- 4 Times
- 5 Times
- More than 5 Times

2. Please rank the items provided in order of most used to least used (1 for most to 5 for least)?

- Music CD
- Sponge Ball
- Yarn Ball
- Scarves
- Kids Book

3. Why did you rank the item most used? _____

4. Why did you rank the item least used? _____

5. Do you have any other comments? _____

Please return the completed survey at your next WIC visit.

XYZ WIC Agency Family Physical Activity Kit Tracking Calendar

April 2010

May 2010

June 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Instructions:

1. Put an 'X' on the day(s) you play with your children using any-thing from the kit.
2. Note what item or items you used.
3. Return the completed calendar at your next WIC visit.

Healthy Lifestyle Plan Interventions

This section provides information on plan interventions: General Information, Staff Activities, Clinic Environment, and Participant Activities. In each section, information is provided on a variety of interventions. A resource list of the local agencies who have successfully implemented these interventions is available on the Common Drive with more details on how they were implemented.

General Information

Nutrition education items related to the activity should be part of an overall goal related to physical activity or healthy eating. Not all activities require the purchase of education items provided to each participant.

When nutrition education items are given, consider the following:

- Any items provided must be related to the activity, at a reasonable cost and deemed necessary.
- Choose age and developmentally-appropriate nutrition education items for children.
- Always purchase enough to provide to all participating in the activity.
- For items redeemed or used at another place i.e. free pass to zoo, a system needs to be in place to ensure that only participants use the materials. Check with your regional office (RO) if you have any questions.

If there are drawings planned for larger prizes, based on completion of the activity, these prizes must either be donated by retailers or purchased using donated funds.

Any handouts used in activities are more effective if they are:

- Short and simple using easily understandable language.
- Child-friendly and fun if children are your target audience.
- Up-to-date and revised as needed.

If activities are planned for staff, all materials provide must be either donated or purchased using non-WIC funds.

If exercise groups are planned include:

- Activities that both children and adults can do together.
- Monitoring of children who do not want to participate.

If group activities are planned for sites other than the clinic:

- Get permission from your sponsoring agency.
- Choose a place that is safe, appropriate and accessible for participants.
- Work with your sponsoring agency and insurer to develop a waiver form for all participants to sign in advance. There are some sample waivers in Resources Section.

If your plans include food demonstrations:

- Choose healthy recipes (low in sodium, sugar and fat).
- Choose recipes that feature either WIC provided foods or seasonal vegetables and fruits available locally.
- DO NOT provide or serve highly allergenic foods i.e. nuts.
- Demonstrate food safety and sanitation practices and techniques.
- Include vegetables and fruits in demonstrations whenever possible.
- Include whole grains in demonstration whenever possible.



Staff Activities

Role Modeling - Staff should be encouraged to role model positive healthy lifestyle behaviors. These include:

- Eating healthy foods, especially vegetables, fruits, whole grains and low fat dairy products.
- Choosing healthy beverages especially low fat dairy products and water.
- Being physically active.

Involvement in Activity Process - Staff should be involved in all steps of the process from assessment to evaluation. They provide valuable insight into participant needs, their own needs, and have great ideas to share. As they are the ones who will probably be doing the actual implementation, their input on the evaluation of the activity is key.

Using Participant-Centered Skills - Staff need to learn participant-centered skills. Start with staff attending valuable counseling trainings. Don't forget to plan opportunities for staff to practice these skills. As staff use these skills to interact with families, they will improve.

Promoting Work Site Wellness - As the WIC Coordinator, you can make your clinics healthier places to work by promoting worksite wellness for employees. Ask your sponsoring agency for assistance and support. Refer to your Fit WIC Resource Book for some ideas on worksite wellness. For more information on ways to promote worksite wellness, go to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) website at www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/worksite/. Some ideas include:

- Promoting employee wellness by having a walking contest for all employees with pedometers provided and prizes.
- Working with the sponsoring agency to provide a discounted onsite Weight Watchers Program open to all staff including WIC.
- Implementing a healthy meeting food policy.
- Implementing a Healthy Steps Program for staff.

Healthy Meetings/Trainings - Promoting healthy lifestyles includes encouraging both healthy meals and snacks, and physical activities at meetings and training sessions.

Salad bowl lunches are a great way to have an inexpensive meal for a large group. To implement a salad bowl luncheon, ask each person to sign up to bring one food item to contribute to the meal. Other ideas include:

- Stocking only low fat milk in the staff break room.
- Staff donations for purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables to eat during breaks.
- Providing only healthy foods at staff meetings and training sessions.
- Incorporating physical activity breaks into meetings and training sessions help to keep staff motivated.

Refer to your Resources for more information on healthy meals and snacks from NYSDOH.

Clinic Environment

Policy Changes

Make local agency policy changes to promote healthy lifestyles and behaviors. Policies could specify what foods and/or beverages are allowed on staff desks during clinic hours.

Vending Machines

If there are vending machines near your clinic, work with your sponsoring agency or building management to consider moving the machines to another area or offering some or more healthy choices for staff, participants and their families.

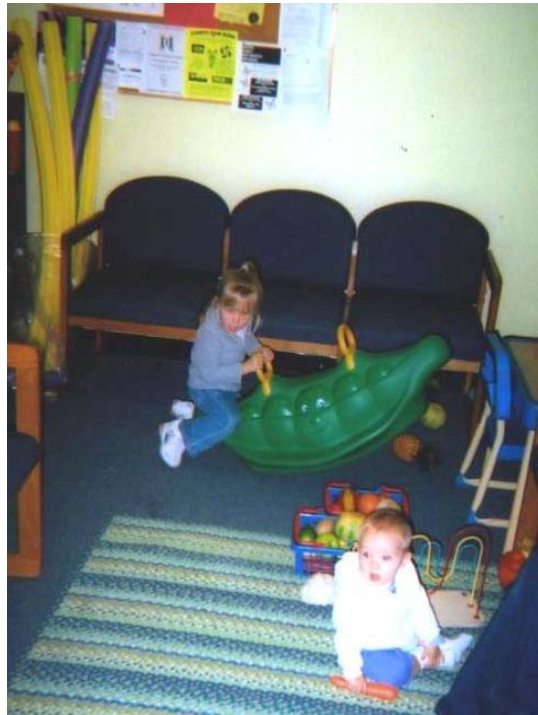
Waiting Room or Area

The setup of the waiting room is very important to promoting physical activity. Chairs can be arranged to provide children a safe place to be active while parents can supervise them. A variety of appropriate toys that promote activity should be available for the children to play with. Walls can be painted with murals or pictures to make the waiting room or area more inviting.

Consider the size of your waiting room or area when purchasing active toys and DVDs. If space in the waiting room or area is an issue, consider other places in the

clinic where active toys can be provided - perhaps in the nutritionist's office for the children to play with during the appointment.

- Active Toys/Posters/DVDs - Purchase items promoting healthy and active lifestyles for your clinic waiting room or area. Active toys and DVDs will allow and encourage the children and family members present to be active. Lists of active toys, posters, and DVDs are available in the Resources section.
- Arrangement of Waiting Room or Area - Look at your waiting room or area. Consider what changes need to be made to your furniture to promote more physical activity.



Participant Activities

Individual and Family Activities

These include any activities done by individuals or families at home, with direction provided by local agency staff. Develop a record to document the activity. The documentation is returned at the next visit or perhaps mailed in for follow-up discussion.

Kids or Family Activity Calendars - Having families track their activities is a great way to promote and increase both family time and activity. Calendars are used to track specific activities. Upon completion of the calendar, they are returned and reviewed with the WIC Competent Professional Authority (CPA).

Walking Clubs - Walking is an easy first step toward becoming more physically active. This can be done in a variety of ways.

Gardening - Learning how food is grown is a great way for families to connect and try new foods. Ideas include:

- Purchasing raised boxes to work with participants in growing vegetables involving Cooperative Extension Master Gardener's Program. Foods can be prepared using the vegetables, taste-tested, and recipes shared with the participants and their families.
- Providing a container, soil and seeds for children to start a vegetable plant while at WIC to take home and watch grow.
- Providing a pedometer and water bottle for interested participants. All participants who provided documentation of their step counts are then eligible for entry into raffle drawings for nutrition-related prizes.

Partner with Local Attractions - Connecting physical activity to a local attraction can increase a family's activity level while enriching their lives. There are several ways this can be done:

- Set up a special time for WIC families to visit and provide a free day pass. Local agency staff can plan and coordinate special events.
- Families can be given free day passes and a coordinated activity kit to use. While visiting the facility, they are asked to complete an activity, i.e. a

scavenger hunt. Completed or partial lists returned are put in a drawing for a limited number of donated larger prizes such as year passes to the facility.

For either option, the local agency must monitor the use of these passes to evaluate cost and effectiveness.

Group Activities

Group activities can be fun because they are done as a group and families get to know each other. Local agency staff provide direction and supervision, and attendance is tracked.

Walking Groups - Walking with a group can be a lot of fun and a great way to make new friends. Try:

- Organizing walks at a local park on a specific day of the week. Participants could be recognized for the most times walked, weight lost, etc.
- Scheduling walks on certain days of the week and advertising them to all participants and families. Those who participated can be eligible for small prizes.



Street Fairs - Street fairs can be fun and a great way to interact with the community. This can be sponsored by either the local agency or the sponsoring agency such as:

- Having a yearly street fair where the theme changes each year – clowns, sports, etc.
- Planning a healthy lifestyles street fair by soliciting local sponsors for financial assistance. Many community agencies including the fire and police departments could partner with WIC, and provide activities and games for all ages.

Exercise/Physical Activity Groups - Promoting planned times for physical activity provides an opportunity for all families to participate and have fun. This can be done in a variety of ways:

- Having a Food Fun and Fitness Club which meets one day a week. Participants and families can come and enjoy doing physical activity together.
- Scheduling art classes with healthy themes and art shows several times per year.
- Having activity groups for participants every week such as Fit WIC children activities several times per week in an afternoon or classes for postpartum women several times per week. One day a week there could be an open exercise time planned and all are invited.
- Providing Mom and Me exercise classes weekly. It's an opportunity for mothers and their children to be active together.

Food Demonstrations

Providing opportunities to try new foods or recipes is a great way to get families to expand their food horizons and promote/increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables. This can be provided by trained local agency staff or through an agreement with a local partner. Food demonstrations of fruits and vegetables are a good way to promote the purchase of fruits and vegetables at farmer's markets. Try:

- Collaborating with Cook Shop or Cooperative Extension to provide food demonstrations.
- Working with Just Say Yes (JSY) to have food demonstrations.

- Conducting milk taste tests.
- Doing your own food demonstrations.
- Involving participants (adults and children) in the food demonstrations.

Family Fun Days/Health Fairs

Family Fun Days, like street fairs, are a great way to interact with your community and promote WIC. For example:

- Hosting a Winter Olympics as a way to promote physical activity during the winter. The event could be held in a gym with many fun inexpensive activities available for the children.
- Having a Family Fun Day for selected families who completed the Activity Calendar. Planned activities and decorations could be planned around a theme such as a circus or rodeo, and all staff dress accordingly. Each family could get a prize donated by local businesses.



Community

Collaborate and Develop Partnerships

Connect with community leaders (religious, political, business, etc.) You will learn about their concerns for the community and what they are already doing to promote healthy lifestyles.

There may already be an active group in the community or within your sponsoring agency concerned with the health and well-being of the community. Find out who the ‘movers and shakers’ of your community are and get involved. You may have common goals and concerns. Support their efforts.

If there isn’t an active group, start one. Many issues may be too big for your WIC local agency to address alone but with a coalition anything is possible. For more information on coalition building, look at the Resources on the Common Drive for website information. Work with other local community agencies as part of their activity planning and promotion.

Some ideas include:

- Distributing bicycle helmets, provided by the County Health Department or referring participants needing infant car seats to a person who provides and installs them free of charge.
- Recruiting and training community members as volunteers to help in healthy lifestyle promotion activities.
- Becoming active in local community organizations and promoting their activities at WIC.
- Partnering with community leaders or teachers/professors and writing a health promotion grant to fund physical activity/nutrition classes.
- Providing opportunities at a community fitness center for participants and staff at a reduced cost.



Resources on the Common Drive

Lists

- Children's Cookbooks
- Children's Music and Videos
- Cookbooks
- Guidelines for Healthy Meetings
- Healthy Lifestyle Nutrition Education Materials
- Helpful Plan Development and Planning Websites
- Helpful Websites
- Helpful Websites for Staff Development
- Local Agencies Doing Healthy Lifestyle Action Plan Interventions
- National Health Observances 2010
- Waiting Room Activities

Sample Forms

- Participant Surveys
- Program Development Evaluation
- Waivers
- Program Materials
- Evaluations

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