

**Title of Project:** Alabama Breastfeeding Data Hospital Survey

**Agency Name:** Alabama WIC Program

**State:** Alabama

**Key Word Descriptors:** Survey, Data Collection

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending the presentation, the audience will be able to describe the importance of establishing a uniform system for collecting breastfeeding data.

**Description of Project:** This annual survey provides a consistent mechanism for reporting breastfeeding data among private and public health on a statewide basis. This project establishes a uniform system of collecting breastfeeding data from Alabama Hospitals with obstetrical services in order to determine the actual number of women who chose to initiate breastfeeding during their hospital stay.

**Results of Project:**

- Establishes an accepted statewide system of gathering breastfeeding information
- Provides breastfeeding information to compare to PRAMS data
- Provides information on lactation services available on a statewide basis
- Indicates hospitals that need more breastfeeding training
- Provides breastfeeding data that will be compared to breastfeeding data from the Newborn Metabolic Screening
- Results of the project will be sent to WIC clinics, hospital administrators, hospital breastfeeding contacts, Health Statistics, Nutrition Area Coordinators and the Public Information Division of the Bureau of Health Promotion.

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Alabama WIC Program

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**Title of Project:** “Walk for Health” Obesity Prevention Project

**Agency Name:** ACLWIC Program

**State:** New Mexico

**Key Word Descriptors:** (Health promotion, obesity prevention)

**Key Skills Learned:** (i.e. After attending the presentation, the audience will be able to identify the 3 types of effective nutrition education strategies for one-on-one and group counseling used by this State agency.) 1. How to start and encourage participants to meet the goals set to accomplish a walk-healthy lifestyle change. 2. How to keep motivated using recorded walking steps. 3. Using individual & group education topics that motivate toward the goals of walking for health.

**Description of Project:** Due to the large and ever-growing problem of obesity, this project was undertaken to show participants that a goal to increase walking can help them reduce weight, improve health and self esteem while gradually increasing exercise.

- Start by determining a target audience & number of participants. (who and how many
- Explain the goals of a walking program and how to get started using a pedometer setting the stride, record steps on a personal pocket calendar as a measure of their progress, show how to read the pedometer and reset)
- Motivate with regular one-to-one counseling at least 2x in a 6 month time period where individual measurements are taken and goals are set or goals are evaluated.
- Motivate with sign-on incentives: “Walk for Health” t-shirt, water bottle, pocket calendar, on-going incentives: healthy recipe book. Offer challenges each month: individual with most # of steps, most # of inches lost, most % body Fat lost, receives a gift: i.e., set of weights, or stretch bands or exercise ball, Poster with proper stretching exercises, etc.
- Continue to offer specific education topics related to walking for health (“Choosing a fun, healthy breakfast, break out of the routine”, “How much is enough water?”, “Ways to keep active with a busy lifestyle”, “How to eat healthy on the Run”, etc)

- Grand finale after a 6 month exercise lifestyle change: Plan a community-wide “**Walk for Health**” 2-5 mile walk, encourage families and other health promotion programs to participate, give t-shirts, water bottles to first 50 that show up and offer a special certificate of completion to the original target audience.
- Do a post evaluation 6 months later to see if participants are still walking.

**Results of Project:** .Project will not be completed until September 2004. So far, we have had a lot of enthusiasm for keeping up with all the walking and recording and education sessions.

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**Title of Project:**           **Healthy Living – Childhood Obesity Initiative**

**Agency Name:**           **Arkansas Department of Health - WIC Program**

**State:**                       **Arkansas**

**Key Word Descriptors:** self-study modules, professional development and training, competency-based nutrition education, counseling with overweight and at-risk-for-overweight clients

**Key Skills Learned:** After participating in the study modules, the professional educators will have increased their abilities to counsel with parents and families on overweight and obesity issues, including recognition of health concerns.

**Description of Project:** This project is a direct result of the USDA Southwest Region’s initiative to present the most current data, research and techniques in the area of childhood obesity in two previously held teleconferences. The professional educators of the Arkansas WIC Program will benefit directly from the completion of these self-study modules with an increased nutrition background and enhanced skills in the areas of recognition, counseling, facilitation and anticipatory guidance with the WIC participants.

**Results of Project:** The project will be evaluated upon completion of each module as to its ease of use, effectiveness, job relativity and other areas.

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**Title of Project:**           **Healthy Living – Reading Readiness Initiative Pilot**

**Agency Name:**           **Arkansas Department of Health - WIC Program**

**State:**                   **Arkansas**

**Key Word Descriptors:** family interaction, reading with kids, brain development, improved health and wellness of Arkansans

**Key Skills Learned:** After participating in this project, the families involved will have increased their knowledge about the link between literacy, early brain development and the ability to make decisions about health and wellness. It is our intent also to increase the number of WIC families who have access to books for children.

**Description of Project:** This project is a collaborative effort between the Arkansas WIC Program and the AR Well Child Reads coalition. This coalition combines professionals from all areas of health and wellness, including physicians, lawyers, community volunteers and literacy council members to increase the knowledge about literacy concerns for Arkansas children and to put books in the hands of children and families who might not otherwise have access to those books.

**Results of Project:** The pilot project will be evaluated as to its effectiveness, community relations promotion, increased knowledge of parents and families as to literacy concerns and their self-efficacy to make reading a priority with their children.

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**Title of Project:** Targeting Funds for Local Agencies to conduct RQNS Activities.

**Agency Name:** Department of Health Services WIC Branch

**State:** California

**Key Word Descriptors:** RQNS, funding; lesson plans, training, needs assessment, customer service.

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending this presentation, the audience will be able to identify ways to select and fund local agencies quickly for RQNS projects.

**Description of Project:** Quickly approving and awarding project funds to local WIC agencies is an ongoing challenge. California WIC resolved this problem by developing a check list application process for special RQNS projects. The check list application enabled local agency staff to select from a wide range of pre-approved projects of varying scope and then embark on the project development and implementation during the fiscal year. The RQNS application also allowed WIC local agencies to propose unique projects not on the checklist. The State office then authorized local agencies by letter to spend reserve funds previously allocated to the contract and to proceed with their projects.

For Federal Fiscal years 2003 and 2004, California WIC provided the opportunity for its 82 local WIC agencies to apply for funds targeted for RQNS in the following areas:

- Develop/revise learner-centered lesson plans and purchase accompanying materials and supplies;
- Develop/revise/translate nutrition education materials;
- Develop and/or conduct training for frontline staff in learner-centered methods;
- Allow release time from the WIC service site for staff to enable them to participate in coalitions, community partnerships and other networking and leadership activities;
- Assess local agency policies for customer and nutrition services impact and revise as needed;
- Evaluate the WIC service site environment for the extent to which it is family-friendly and contributes to learning; plan for needed purchases.

This application consisted of a checklist of potential revitalization projects and acceptable purchases, so that local agency staff did not need to write any project descriptions or justifications. Local staff simply checked off which activities they planned to carry out and identified the funding level they were requesting.

State staff reviewed the applications and approved about 70 projects within one week. Staff then notified local agencies of their approved projects by telephone and followed up with confirmation by letter.

As local projects were completed, state staff posted lesson plans and other products developed with RQNS funds and also published “best practices” projects on the state WIC web site at [Http://www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov) so other local WIC agencies can benefit from the work.

**Results of the Project:** In the words of one local agency director, “This is the best money we have ever received from the State!” The expected deliverables were concrete and specific and local agencies desperately needed the funds to complete the work. Hundreds of lesson plans were revised to be more learner-centered and thousands of local WIC staff attended training. Facilities were assessed and modified with one-time funds to improve the service delivery/learning environment. One significant outcome of this project is a lesson plan sharing component on California WIC’s website. WIC local agencies completed a self-assessment to determine if they met their project objectives and identified any remaining activities needed to achieve their goals.

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**Title of Project:** Learner Centered Nutrition Education for WIC Participants

**Agency Name:** Department of Health Services WIC Branch

**State:** California

**Key Word Descriptors:** Learner Centered Education (LCE), staff training

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending this presentation, the audience will identify four learner centered education principles and hear ways to incorporate learner centered education into their WIC services.

**Description of Project:** Imagine hearing the following comments about your participant nutrition education and WIC services:

- *“The whole concept is great - revamps old traditional method [of education] and makes learning more beneficial.”*
- *“Usually they [participants] want to go - this time they were laughing, having fun. They wanted more. They were learning - they were excited.”*
- *“Now, some people even ask, okay when do I get my NEXT class?”*

These quotes illustrate the impact of revitalizing WIC education in a way that appeals to participants, is relevant to their needs, and engages them in meaningful dialog. A comprehensive learner centered approach involves a philosophical shift in how staff provides WIC services. Successfully making this shift creates an equal partnership between WIC staff and participants in the learning experience, and moves away from traditional didactic learning. Learner centered lesson plans, staff training, and participant friendly environments support the participant focus.

**Lesson Plans:** Learner-centered education begins with well-designed lesson plans. These lesson plans are field-tested, incorporating input from participants, frontline staff, administrators, and nutrition experts. State and local staff have developed guidelines for learner-centered classes, and redesigned numerous lesson plans using key learner-centered principles and practices, such as “RISE” (Respect, Immediate Usefulness, Safety, and Engagement) principles, pair work, and open questions. These classes also feature activities to let participants practice using the knowledge and skills offered in the class. Learner centered lesson plans are posted on the California WIC website at [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov).

**Staff Development and Training:** Understanding, implementing, and sustaining learner centered principles and practices is not an easy task. It involves ongoing

training, reinforcement, and commitment from all levels of a WIC organization. To address this need, California WIC has developed an intensive year-long training program entitled, *Finding the Teacher Within*, designed to assist frontline staff in improving learner centered skills. This training model provides train-the-trainer meetings, a two-day frontline staff workshop, time to practice learner centered skills, mentoring, observations, opportunities to talk with peers, and additional reinforcement in services. Managers are encouraged to model these learner centered principles and practices on a day-to-day basis in their WIC agencies. In addition, staff has provided customer service training, *Be a Service Star*, which helps staff identify ways to build rapport with participants, use active listening, handle challenging situations, and recognize their contributions to creating a participant friendly environment.

**Environment:** The final component of the comprehensive approach to learner-centered education and WIC services is setting the stage in WIC offices for successful participant education. This strategy involves creating a physical and psychological environment that is comfortable enough to invite learning. Participants learn more easily when they feel comfortable and welcomed. The learning process is enhanced with visually appealing WIC classrooms and waiting rooms. Examples include arranging classroom chairs in a circle, using colorful artwork, incorporating relevant class props, creating children's play areas, and separating waiting areas from class space.

**Results of the Project:** The initial results are very positive! All agencies in California have integrated learner-centered principles into their operations to some degree. Participants are showing more openness and enthusiasm for classes and staff appear to enjoy teaching classes more. We are planning on additional evaluation to determine the impact on learner centered education and behavioral outcomes. We feel confident that the learner-centered approach has helped us start making more profound benefits to our participants' lives.

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**Title of Project:** Support for the WIC RD

**Agency Name:** California Department of Health Services WIC

**State:** California

**Key Word Descriptors:** Professional support, skill building, mentoring, medical needs.

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending this presentation, attendees will identify three ways in which WIC RDs/Nutritionists experience challenges in serving high-risk participants in WIC offices and list three tools that enable WIC professionals to effectively serve high-risk participants.

**Description of Project:**

Consider the following participant re-certification. A mother with three children on the WIC program requests soy formula for her one-year-old infant who was born 12 weeks premature weighing two pounds. The mother tells you that her baby has breathing issues, spits up a lot, is still very small and her feedings are 36 oz of formula/day. There is not an identified medical provider, because she takes the baby to a large medical clinic where the majority of low-income individuals in the county obtain care. The mother says she is frustrated because the physician is hurried when she sees him and she is concerned that this baby is not growing like her other children.

As a frontline Nutritionist in the WIC program, what would you do? And where would you start?

Nationally, special needs children now make up 30 percent of the pediatric population with 13 percent requiring specialized medical care. Also nationally, premature infants now make up 11 percent of all live births, which increased from 7.6% in 2000. These national trends further impact California where WIC provides services to 60 percent of the infants born in the State. Combine more children with increased risks plus a flailing health care system, the result is stressed WIC staff along with some very frustrated parents. Support for the WIC RD includes:

- An automated triage system to sort the participants most in need of professional services within the WIC setting;

- An on-line Individual Nutrition Education Plan for faster and easier documentation of individual participant contacts.
- Clear and relevant WIC policy and forms for assessing and processing exempt formula requests and to encourage communication with medical providers.
- A readily useable WIC Formula Guide to provide technical references and answers that are specific to the WIC pediatric population.
- WIC Formula training sessions offered regionally together with local Children’s Hospital dietitians to orient WIC RDs to the WIC Formula Guide, to analyze common nutrition-related conditions and apply to participant situations.
- Direct phone consultation between branch nutrition specialists and local agency WIC staff to distill and apply relevant nutrition information, assist with prioritization of issues, understand policies and communicate with the medical provider and/or the health maintenance organization as needed.

**Results of Project:**

Quality assurance occurs by reviewing exempt formula requests which when approved are provided through direct distribution from the State. Branch staff reviews participant records and formula request forms to determine if the WIC formula policy is properly implemented. The phone consultation and WIC formula trainings provides feedback regarding WIC RD’s experiences with high-risk participants. Some of our results are:

- 50 percent decrease in exempt formula use;
- Increased referrals for medical care for specific conditions;
- Improved nutrition education plans; and
- More sophisticated questions asked by WIC RDs.

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**Title of Project:** Family, Food, and Fun Activities

**Agency Name:** Chickasaw Nation WIC Program

**State:** Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma

**Key Word Descriptors:** new approach to group education

**Key Skills Learned:** The audience will be inspired to rethink the methods of nutrition education currently in practice in their own agencies

**Description of project:** It had long been our desire to create a new approach to our nutrition education strategy. We created a nutrition education team which consisted of three WIC Paraprofessionals who had a Family and Consumer Science background, led by the WIC nutritionist. Together they developed a ‘menu’ selection of classes from which clients select the topic of interest to them. The nutrition education plan consists of six categories of topics such as: Nutrition and the Family, Infant/Prenatal Series, Physical Activity, Activities That Get 3-5 Year Olds Involved, Shopping/Food Preparation/Food Budget, and Eat Your Colors. Within these topics a variety of interesting and creative lessons were written. Some of the most popular lessons with the clients have been:

- I Can’t Get My Child to Eat (Or Stop Eating) help for frustrated parents
- Winter Fun-indoor activities for children
- “Mom, I’m bored”- alternatives to TV”
- WIC on the Move/Family Fitness
- Storytime: Make Your Own Vegetable soup
- Cooking with Kids
- Grow Your Own Garden
- Fun With Fruits and Vegetables/Cooking Ideas to Stretch Your Food Dollars
- Storytime: My Foods and ...Five a Day
- “Get Fresh”-a traveling cooking show which utilizes a vegetable and fruit of the month in coordination with the color of the month.

- All staff dress in the appropriate color to create more awareness.  
This class is part of the Food Stamp Nutrition Education provided to FDP and WIC participants.

**Results of the Project:** We will conduct our survey in September after the conclusion of our first year under this new approach. Clients verbally report to be enjoying the opportunity to select a subject that is of interest to them. Class attendance has improved.

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**Title of Project:** WIC State Agency Employees Shaping Up!

**Agency Name:** D.C. WIC State Agency

**State:** Washington, DC

**Key Word Descriptors:** (Exercise, team work, health and wellness, creativity)

**Key Skills Learned:** Attendees will be able to identify 3 fun team and skill building activities that can be used in an employee wellness program.

**Description of Project:** In light of D.C. WIC State Agency hosting the MARO 2005 Regional Nutrition Conference with the theme of "Helping Ourselves to Help Others" focusing on WIC State and Local Agency staff putting the messages we give to our participants into practice, the Nutrition Programs Management launched an employee wellness program as a pilot at the State Agency. The primary strategies for this employee wellness program involved games and classes to encourage increased activity, demonstrating healthy eating habits and introducing stress reduction and relaxation techniques.

We began by assessing the support and interest for an employee wellness program. The employees were surveyed on:

- Preferences with regards to time of the day for fitness, length of sessions, frequency, kinds of fitness opportunities and facilities
- Willingness to pay for or lead fitness activities
- Self assessment of current activity and fitness level
- Equipment and activities that employees had found effective in the past
- Readiness to adopt healthier lifestyle habits

To generate interest and buy-in for the program in the work environment, we created healthy competition among State Agency staff by randomly assigning teams with a prize at the end of for the winners. Each team was directed to plan at least 3 physical activity sessions and a healthy meal for a week.

The resulting energy and enthusiasm far exceeded our expectations. The following list is a sampling of the activities for the first four weeks:

- A kickboxing class led by a Head Start dietitian
- Facials offered by a local beautician
- Meditation room within our office created by the Spring into Health team
- Nutritional analysis with lunch

- Boot Camp Calisthenics led by one of the DC Parks and Recreation Trainers
- Ergonomics lecture and demonstration
- Latino dance lessons led by coworkers of Latino origin
- Nutrition games (wheel of fortune, treasure hunt, jeopardy, etc.)
- Wellness screenings (blood pressure, hemoglobin, BMI, weight)
- Daily nutrition, stress reduction and fitness tips

### **Results of Project:**

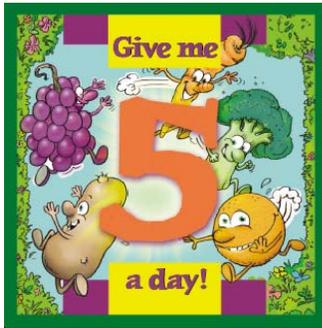
While this program generated many positive results, the team and morale building benefits were the most notable. Since the teams were created randomly, staff members from different areas were given a unique opportunity to work with each other to create a cohesive program. Feelings of healthy competition added to the team spirit and highlighted many skills and talents their team members possess but seldom put on display in the work environment.

Many teams demonstrated exceptional planning and organizational skills. Teams really bonded and became cohesive units despite the rigorous demands imposed by other work projects that also required their attention. Staff needed to make compromises along the way, which is a necessary skill within the workplace and elsewhere. Several weeks after the initial 4-week program ended, the energy created by the teams is still in the air.

In addition to the team skills that emerged through this program, staff remains energized and positive. We are taking better care of ourselves and continuing to be physically active together three times a week through a variety of activities such as strength training, power walking, jumping ropes, pilates, yoga, dancing, etc. Last but not least, quite a few pounds have been shed; some employees have lost a whole clothing size. It will be exciting to see where our fitness journey takes us as we share our experiences with other stakeholders and build momentum across the city to replicate the most successful components for employees at D.C. Department of Health, other DC government agencies and WIC Local Agency Clinic staff.

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**Title of Project:** *Give Me 5 A Day!* Children's Book

**Agency Name:** Florida Department of Health—Bureaus of WIC and Nutrition Services and Child Nutrition Programs

**State:** Florida

**Key Word Descriptors:** Preschool children's book with a nutrition and physical activity theme.

**Key Skills Learned:** Parents and children learned the importance of eating at least 5 fruits and vegetables each day.

**Description of Project:** The Florida Department of Health introduced a new literacy initiative in October 2002, called "Read for Health." Department of Health staff were encouraged to identify ways that reading could be integrated into the public health mission. Staff from the Bureaus of WIC and Nutrition Services and Child Nutrition Programs researched the availability of nutrition books appropriate for children in WIC clinics and child care centers, and it was determined that a good, effective book teaching the 5 A Day message in a fun and interactive way could not be found. Staff then decided to author a book themselves! The final product is a children's book called *Give Me 5 A Day!*, aimed at preschoolers. A copy of the book was given to each WIC family and approximately 5,700 Child Care Food Program sites received a copy of the *Give Me 5 A Day!* book. The book teaches both the children and the reader (parent or caregiver) about the importance of eating 5 fruits and vegetables each day. The book also encourages the child to be physically active and promotes reading and counting. It is available in English and Spanish. The book can be reviewed at this website (ordering information is also included at this website):

<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/family/wic/index.html>

**Results of Project:** The first printing of the book included over a quarter of a million copies in both English and Spanish. Preliminary evaluations of the book have been very positive. A sample of 365 WIC parents from around the state were surveyed two months after the *Give Me 5 A Day!* book was given out to their children. The average number of times the book was read to a child was 12.99. In addition, 71.2 percent stated that their family is eating more fruits and vegetables than it did 2 months ago.

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**Title of Project:** 5 A Day the Florida Way!

**Agency Name:** Florida Department of Health (Bureaus of WIC & Nutrition Services, Child Nutrition Programs, and Chronic Disease Prevention)

**State:** Florida

**Key Word Descriptors:** Interagency (governmental and educational) nutrition education campaign.

**Key Skills Learned:** Florida's citizens will understand the importance of eating five or more servings of vegetables and fruits every day, and will change their dietary behaviors to include five or more servings of vegetables and fruits into their families' diets each day.

**Description of Project:** The Bureaus of WIC & Nutrition Services, Child Nutrition Programs, and Chronic Disease Prevention within the Florida Department of Health collaborated to implement a statewide nutrition education campaign called: *3 vegetables + 2 fruits = 5 A Day the Florida Way!* The campaign was launched during National Nutrition Month<sup>®</sup>, March 2003, in response to USDA's challenge to promote consistent nutrition messages throughout Florida. Below is an outline of the various resources that were developed and distributed as part of the campaign:

- **5 A Day the Florida Way! Kit**—these were three-ring binders which included lesson plans, coloring sheets, handouts, and a recipe booklet (in English and Spanish). Kits were distributed to all WIC agencies and 5 A Day Coordinators at the 67 county health departments throughout the state, as well as to members of the Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee for distribution to their customers.

- ***5 A Day the Florida Way! Materials***—materials that were developed included: 4 posters (each in English/Spanish); bookmarks; cling posters; temporary “tattoos”; cutting boards; and magnet calendars. These materials were provided to county health departments, WIC participants, Child Care Food Program participants, and the Florida Interagency Food and Nutrition Committee members for distribution to their customers.
- ***5 A Day the Florida Way! Display***—The Bureau of WIC & Nutrition Services created a display that consists of 12 interchangeable pieces that can be used together for a large display or selected pieces can be grouped for a smaller display. In addition, four recipe cards with healthful nutrition tips—available in English and Spanish—were developed to complement the display. A complete display was provided to each local WIC agency.

**Results of Project:** Several surveys were done to assess the usefulness and success of the materials that were developed and distributed for this campaign. Feedback from staff indicated that the tattoos were the most popular and well-received of the materials among clients from all the programs; the cutting boards and posters were also voted very high in the surveys. In addition, child care facilities participating in the Child Care Food Program responded to a 5 A Day pre and post nutrition campaign survey to determine the number of times child care sites served vegetables and fruits at breakfast and snack during a given month. The pre-campaign survey results indicated a weekly average of 3.6 servings of vegetables and fruits (excluding juices) being served at breakfast and 1.2 servings of vegetables and fruits (excluding juices) at snack time. The post-campaign survey results indicated a slight increase with a weekly average of 3.75 servings of vegetables and fruits (excluding juices) being served at breakfast and 1.83 servings of vegetables and fruits (excluding juices) at snack time.

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**Title of Project:** Families Understanding Nutrition (FUN) Club  
Evaluation Project

**Agency Name:** LaGrange WIC Program

**State:** Georgia

**Key Word Descriptors:** Evaluation, group class, lesson plan, training

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending the presentation, the audience will be able to identify core components of the FUN Club nutrition and physical activity intervention; the steps taken to set up the evaluation component for the FUN Club; and preliminary results of the evaluation.

**Description of Project:**

The Families Understanding Nutrition (FUN) Club was started in the LaGrange Health District WIC Program, in response to a Georgia State Agency requirement that an overweight prevention plan be developed in each local WIC agency. The WIC staff developed a plan that targeted all children 2-5 that were certified as overweight and at-risk for overweight. These children are assigned to attend FUN Club classes every two months, and were given a calendar of activities to complete during the alternate months. Classes are hands-on and involve activities such as preparing healthy snacks and teaching moms active games they can play with their children.

The main problem with the class was inconsistent attendance, even though class participants evaluated individual classes as being very good, their own interest as high, and declared intent to incorporate the lessons into their daily lives. The local agency requested assistance from the State agency in evaluating the program for effectiveness and helping to identify and overcome barriers to participation. The steps taken by the evaluation team included development of a logic model, participant and potential participant surveys, focus groups, and identification of process and outcome variables to be evaluated. State and local staff will collaboratively review evaluation results and implement modifications as appropriate. This process will be used as a model for incorporating an evaluation component into other special projects being developed in the local WIC agencies in Georgia.

**Results of Project:**

- The evaluation team looked at diet intake, physical activity assessment and changes in body mass index (BMI) as measures of program impact. Because of the short time the program had been in existence, inconsistencies in diet and physical activity assessment, and high turnover rate of participation, the evaluation team was unable to measure program impact.
- Class evaluations indicated a high level of satisfaction with the teaching methods and class topics; and participants indicated they would implement changes at home.
- Because a strong evaluation component was not built in to the original project design, a State Agency team comprised of evaluators, an epidemiologist, the State obesity project coordinator and a State nutrition consultant undertook the task to develop an evaluation method that could be used not only for the FUN Club, but as a standard methodology for evaluating other local agency nutrition projects.
- A new State agency policy now requires that local agency projects be submitted to the State agency for approval, prior to implementation. The State agency will then work with the local agency to assure that a more formal evaluation component being incorporated into the local agency planning process.

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**Title of Project:** Obesity Mini Grants

**Agency Name:** Illinois Department of Human Services

**State:** Illinois

**Key Word Descriptors:** Obesity, Prevention

**Key Skills Learned:** WIC Families learned how to prevent/manage obesity through: breastfeeding, increasing fruit and vegetable intake, decreasing TV viewing, increasing physical activity, and improving feeding relationships. Education was provided through a variety of group and individualized settings.

**Description of Project:** To address the issue of child overweight in Illinois WIC 26 local agencies began work on Obesity Mini-grants in the summer of 2003. By the end of January 2004 many innovative methods had been used to deliver education including:

- Offering education through the monthly Parent and Child Together group (part of the local Head Start). The session was taught by WIC staff and counted as a WIC secondary education contact.
- A “Covering All the Bases” program which provided fresh fruits and vegetables, along with simple recipes, to WIC families. Families were also provided a Family Calendar with stickers to track lifestyle changes. The program was concluded with “Home Run Family Day.”
- Incorporating “Giggle with the Wiggles” into a child education session.
- Expansion of the “Super Kids Obesity Prevention Program.”
- Offering Family Fitness Fairs and Fit Together education sessions.
- Conducting “Lunch and Learn” sessions based on Team Nutrition’s Eat Smart, Play Hard theme. Children in these groups were referred to as “Power Panther Friends.”
- Providing scrapbooking activities during a breastfeeding support group.

**Results of Project:** Some agencies reported seeing improved BMIs in their participants. Most agencies reported positive feedback from participating families and from staff.

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**Title of Project:**                **Cooking Schools – WIC and Extension Partnership**

**Agency Name:**                **Illinois Department of Human Services**

**State:**                                **Illinois**

**Key Word Descriptors:** Cooking School, Extension, Food Centers

**Key Skills Learned:** Participants will learn basic cooking techniques, nutrition information, how to shop on a budget, and ways to keep their family in good health.

**Description of Project:** During July 2004, cooking schools were offered to WIC participants at the WIC Food and Nutrition Centers. The Food Centers include full demonstration kitchens, which are available for nutrition education; and 4 Centers offered the cooking schools twice during July. WIC Coordinators identified interested participants and were invited to attend as well. Participants met daily (Monday – Friday) from 9 AM to 1 PM and received a certificate of graduation for attending. University of Illinois Extension educators conducted the schools. The schools were recognized as meeting the nutrition education requirements for WIC. Childcare and transportation vouchers were provided and participants were given some basic cooking supplies.

**Results of Project:** Providing nutrition education at the WIC Food and Nutrition Centers has been well received. Evaluation was an integral part of the cooking school curriculum and was conducted each day of the cooking school. Feedback from both clinic and WIC participants will be used when planning additional cooking schools. In addition, this was a successful partnership between the Illinois WIC Program and the University of Illinois Extension.

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Title of Project: Expanding Nutrition Education in Illinois WIC Food Centers

Agency Name: Illinois Department of Human Services

State: Illinois

**Key Word Descriptors:** Food Centers, Kiosks, Technology, Computers

**Key Skills Learned:** Food Center customers received messages related to good health and feeding relationships through kiosks, computers and group education in conjunction with their grocery shopping.

**Description of Project:** The goal of this project was to enhance the Illinois WIC Program Nutrition Education for WIC Food Center customers by broadening their access to nutrition education and including technology as a scope of their learning experiences. Customers had opportunity to receive nutrition messages through flexible learning experiences which count for secondary nutrition education, including classes, computers and kiosks. Kiosks were accessible during Center operations, and a rotating schedule of nutrition education sessions, health screenings and other services were also available at the center for customers to take advantage of before or after shopping, or on a day independent of their grocery shopping.

**Results of Project:** The Food Centers offered a unique opportunity to implement and evaluate innovative nutrition education programs and newly developed materials for WIC customers. This technology equipped clients with the tools they required to make better choices in their eating habits, thus impacting their overall health. This approach allowed more individualization of nutrition education contacts and counseling and addressed issues within the scope of nutrition, and the feeding relationship.

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**Title of Project:** Choose 1% or Less

**Agency Name:** Kentucky WIC Program

**State:** Kentucky

**Key Word Descriptors:**

**Key Skills Learned:**

**Description of Project:**

During the past year we have distributed the Choose 1% or Less elementary, middle and high school *videos and lesson plans* to 57 agencies that cover 120 counties. With our collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education, we also distributed these same videos to approximately 1300 public schools across the state. The lesson plans and activities were included with each set of videos.

**Results of Project:**

The exciting work of the Choose 1% or Less Steering Team has been to determine methods to reach and impact the 30 to 50 year olds in rural Kentucky and 40 to 60 year olds in urban areas. Focus group testing has been conducted using existing Choose 1% or Less education materials and results have been very interesting. The activities for 2004-2005 will be to key in to the changes requested by the focus groups. We have also been working with the Tweens group (age 9 to 12 year olds), another group who has lower consumption of dairy products and will target some messages and materials for them during the next fiscal year.

**Contact person for more information:**



**Title of Project:**            **Active Play, Every Day**

**Agency Name:**            **Louisiana WIC Program**

**State Agency:**            **Louisiana**

**Key Word Descriptors:** group class, education pamphlets, lesson plan, poster, and self-instructional training manual

**Description of Project:**

Active Play, Every Day is a project that targets prevention of overweight/obesity in children while implementing facilitated group discussions during secondary nutrition education. The project consists of a self-instructional training manual on how to conduct “Sharing Sessions” or group facilitated discussions. The manual is self-paced and includes self-checks for review. A Supervisors Guide is included that contains training instructions and post-tests with an answer key. Active Play, Every Day also contains a lesson plan and outline for para-professionals to utilize when conducting Sharing Sessions on nutrition and activity. WIC participant education pamphlets were developed in conjunction with the lesson plan. Each pamphlet is age appropriate; entitled “Baby Play”, “Toddler Play” and “Child Play” and contains information for parents and caregivers on the importance of activity and nutrition in a child’s health plan. The pamphlets are easy to read and contain full color photographs of parents and children engaged in fun activities. A coordinating poster was created for all WIC clinics to promote the concepts of Active Play and Nutrition to all WIC participants. Additional materials were developed and distributed to integrate reading readiness into nutrition education Sharing Sessions. They consist of; an age appropriate reading list, a guide to homemade toys, turn off the television pledge materials, and “The Berenstain Bears and Too Much TV” children’s book. The project was presented at the annual Louisiana State WIC Breastfeeding and Nutrition Education Conference in July 2003 and was implemented statewide in March 2004.

**Results of the Project:** A pilot test conducted in early 2003 revealed a positive response from WIC participants and staff. Participants were excited to learn new information regarding their child’s health and staff reported a new enthusiasm for providing secondary nutrition education.

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**Title of Project:** Providing Nutrition Messages through the Use of Emerging Technologies

**Agency Name:** Maine WIC Program

**State:** Maine

**Key Word Descriptors:** alternative educational methods

**Key Skills Learned:** age-specific guidance on child nutrition, child development, and physical activity for children (WIC Web Ed); smoking cessation, breastfeeding, physical activity, healthy habits, cashing WIC checks and the Farmers' Market Program (WIC Education on DVD).

**Description of Project:** The Maine WIC Nutrition Program has been working to provide nutrition messages and education through alternative methods, utilizing technologies as they become available.

- "WIC Web Ed"--this project included the development of education modules for parents of children 12-36 months of age. Parents can access modules on-line at their convenience and learn about aspects of nutrition, child development and physical activity for their child, with guidance that is age-specific.
- WIC Education on DVD--borrowing from a project that was successful in the past, Maine WIC took the education modules that had been developed for our kiosk project and transferred them to DVD. This will enable parents who have DVD players to take these education modules home and view them as they are able. The topics include Smoking Cessation, Breastfeeding, Physical Activity, Healthy Habits, Cashing WIC checks and Farmers' Market.

**Results of Project:** WIC Education on DVD is just getting underway; formal results are not yet available.

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**Title of Project:** Loving Support Campaign  
**Agency Name:** Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians WIC Program  
**State:** MS Choctaw Reservation

### **Breastfeeding Outreach Promotion**

We are excited about our efforts to increase breastfeeding across the Choctaw Reservation. The MBCI WIC Program is leading the way to increase initiation of breastfeeding and breaking barriers that have caused Choctaw mothers to not breastfeed their children. Promotion of its benefits has been important in our Loving Support Campaign. After the Loving Support Breastfeeding Training in January 2004, we have helped set up a breastfeeding room in the Choctaw Health Center. It is located inside the Women's Wellness Center. It is open to the public and staff that would like to nurse their baby or choose to pump. This is just one of the strategies that we are completing to make the Choctaw Health Center more breastfeeding friendly. This Breastfeeding room will be a guide to other partnering programs or interested companies for ideas in setting up an area in their worksite.

### **Training**

A training and strategic planning workshop was held in Choctaw, MS on January 28<sup>th</sup> and January 29<sup>th</sup>. Cathy Carothers and Linda Inglis from Best Start Social Marketing and Laura Wright from the Mississippi State Department of Health facilitated the workshop. 40 WIC and Community partners throughout the Choctaw reservation and Mississippi attended the workshop. Day 1 included an overview of the social marketing principles, the Loving Support campaign and how the Loving Support campaign has been successfully implemented. The evening session provided more in-depth information on "How Mississippi Worked" with the materials they produced and utilized as part of the Loving Support campaign. Day 2 was a working session for the attendees. There were 5 groups that worked through planning exercises to identify target subgroups, specific behaviors we want to change, the motivators and the deterrents to change behavior, strategies to address the barriers and who might be the lead agency. The five areas included staff education and communication, client and family education and support, public awareness, health provider outreach and community interventions.

### **The Breastfeeding TaskForce**

A taskforce or steering committee for the Loving Support project will be formed to coordinate the implementation of the plan activities. The group will be comprised of attendees of the training workshop, representatives of the local MBCI WIC Program. Additional members will be recruited to focus on specific target areas, such as employers/business leaders for the worksite outreach portion of the plan.

### **Networking and Sharing**

A system for sharing the project implementation progress, to coordinate the implementation activities, to share successful strategies and to network among others in the breastfeeding community will be developed. Additionally, a system for providing and tracking the resources

developed by the Mississippi Department of Health and other Loving Support materials will be developed.

### **Worksite and Childcare Support**

Returning to work has been identified as a barrier for continued breastfeeding for many women on the MS Choctaw Reservation. One of the priorities of the plan activities will be to conduct an assessment of employers for policies and awareness of workplace support for breastfeeding mothers. From the results of this assessment, a comprehensive employer outreach plan will be developed and implemented. Partners will also be encouraged to assess their own environment and the breastfeeding support for employees. Improvements in worksite environment and policies will serve as a model for other community employers. An outreach and training plan targeted to childcare providers will also be developed and implemented.

### **Health Provider Outreach**

Health care providers play a vital role in promoting and supporting breastfeeding. Health care providers will be targeted for the public awareness campaign, which will include training. The physician's and health care provider breastfeeding support kit created by Best Start will be adopted or materials of that nature will be provided to partners. A Breastfeeding Resource Guide for use in clinics, daycares and schools will be developed. Partnership with the Choctaw Health Center on providing mandatory breastfeeding orientation for new employees will be established. Annual breastfeeding training will be offered to health care providers through traditional in-services and training modules already established by the health provider. The MBCI WIC Program will begin to set up a peer counselor program.

We are making plans to conduct breastfeeding training to the staff of Choctaw Health Center. We are also applying for "Cost Amendment" funds to develop a Choctaw specific breastfeeding promotion and instruction video. We are very excited about the video. We have asked Choctaw Indian families including mothers, fathers and grandmothers to participate in the developing of this video.

### **Upcoming Events**

We are very encouraged about the recent peer-counseling program that was approved by USDA. We are in great need of an individual of similar social and racial background of our breastfeeding mothers. The peer counselor can give the support and encouragement that our mothers need during their breastfeeding experience, especially at the beginning. We are thankful to all the support and encouragement that other states in the Southeast Region have given to us. We are proud to be a part of this region.

Iva Denson  
MBCI WIC Director

**Title of Project:** Nutrition Education on the Internet  
Midwest Regional Nutrition Services Project

**Agency Name:** State of Michigan WIC Program

**State:** Michigan

**Key Word Descriptors:** Internet, Persuasive Communication, Primary Prevention, Behavior, and Nutrition

**Key Skills Learned:** The MWR Nutrition Education on the Internet project ([www.wichealth.org](http://www.wichealth.org)), in its third year of funding, is a nutrition education internet site used to engage WIC participants in commitment toward behavior change associated with parent-child feeding issues.

**Description of Project:** [www.wichealth.org](http://www.wichealth.org) was developed to provide alternative nutrition education to WIC participants in the six-state Midwest region. This project represents an innovative, behavioral approach for providing quality nutrition services to WIC Program Participants. The learning modules are designed to be response-driven, client-oriented and specific to the clients' educational needs and interests. The nutrition education modules use proven learning theories: stages of change, persuasive communication, behavioral intent, and division of responsibility. The first three modules, developed in FY02, are on parent-child feeding issues:

- Providing regular meals and snacks,
- Not giving in to picky/demanding eating behavior, and
- Not overfeeding through use of guilt/manipulation.

These modules were implemented in FY02. Intercept surveys with women in WIC clinics in Michigan and Indiana were the basis for module name changes. In FY 03, two more modules were added related to parenting skills:

- Feeding skills, *parent providing what's appropriate for child's development;*
- Trust skills, *child trusts parent and child trusts self;* and
- Feeding environment skills, *parent controls what's happening in the environment that can disrupt normal eating.*

New modules being developed in FY04 focus on

- Physical activity and nutrition for toddlers
- Issues to improve duration of breastfeeding

- Postpartum wellness.

**Results of Project:** This program demonstrates good potential to help WIC clients adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors that last a lifetime. First and second year evaluations have consistently found high results in measures of user satisfaction concerning the helpfulness and ease of use of the site (84-99%), belief in ability to make changes with what has been learned (87-90%), and interest in using the Internet to learn about other WIC topics (84-86%).

Evaluation results consistently indicate:

- Michigan and Illinois account for nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of all participant use.
- Nearly 70% of clients access the site from home or work, with the greatest use at the beginning of the week and most users between the 18 and 34 years.
- Meals and snacks were perceived to be most useful by users.
- Evidence of WIC participants spending time on the site is the amount of time and depth of pages visited -- participants are not just clicking through the website in order to get to the certificate.
- Almost all participants believe the website is easy to use, a fitting way to gain parent-child feeding behavior skills, think it saves time, like learning from the web better than traditional education methods and would like to learn more.
- The greatest stage movement is in the picky eater module, showing that [www.wichealth.org](http://www.wichealth.org) is an avenue to assist in dealing with picky eater issues.
- Participants average 1 stage movement per module, with those in contemplation stage having the greatest likelihood of movement.
- The site is popular with participants in the more active stages of readiness to change (maintenance, action, and preparation), with significant movement in intent toward action in all modules where clients started in earlier stages.

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**Title of Project:** FAMILY FITNESS FUN

**Agency Name:** Dakota County WIC Program

**State:** Minnesota

**Key Word Descriptors:** group classes, parent-child activities, community collaboration, community resources, physical activity

**Key Skills Learned:** Parents will be able to identify new ways to be physically active with their children.

**Description of Project:** In response to the growing obesity problem, Dakota County WIC is using a health service provider grant to collaborate with ECFE, Child and Teen Check-Ups, and a local community health collaborative in order to help families learn healthy exercise habits. This effort includes:

- Drop-in parent/child music and movement classes that do not require English proficiency
- Reduced financial and transportation barriers for participants because classes are offered at WIC clinic for no charge.
- Power Panther T-shirts, stickers and temporary tattoos as incentives for documented activity (Logo and materials from USDA *Eat Smart. Play Hard.*)
- Brochure with ideas for being active in the home (English and Spanish)
- Resource listing of free or reduced-cost places to be active in each Dakota County community (English and Spanish)

**Results of Project:**

- Thirty-six families participated in the initial offering of classes.
- Exit surveys showed that 100% of families attending felt they had learned new ways to be active with their children.
- 100% of participants surveyed said they would like to attend additional classes in the future.
- More free classes are planned for fall 2004.

- Written materials, especially the resource listing, have been well received and are now used by other Dakota County Public Health programs in addition to WIC.

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**Title of Project:** Attitudes, Perceptions, and Opinions of Staff and Current and Eligible Program Participants

**Agency Name:** North Dakota WIC Program

**State:** North Dakota

**Key Word Descriptors:** Focus groups, job and customer satisfaction, perceptions of nutrition education, WIC eligible non-participants

**Key Skills Learned:** *Provide customer service and nutrition education based on respect, empathy and the client values.*

**Description of Project:** During the summer of 2001, the North Dakota WIC program commissioned six focus group discussions with WIC staff, clients, and eligible but non-participating clients. The purpose of this study was to assess:

1. Job and customer satisfaction among WIC staff;
2. Customer satisfaction and perceptions of nutrition education program among current WIC clients; and
3. Perceptions among WIC-eligible non-participants.

**Results of Project:** While there are a number of findings from the focus groups, two are presented here, along with the study recommendation and how ND WIC addressed them.

Finding #1. WIC staff members enjoy their job and feel they are making a difference in the lives of the people they serve. Staff noted that they had different values than their clients, which made their jobs more challenging.

**Recommendation:** *Provide training and experiences that make staff aware of how values can interfere or enhance communication. The perceived values gap between “we” and “them” is a barrier to effective communication because it results in feelings of frustration for the staff and feelings of judgment by the clients. It also results in job stress for staff and program dissatisfaction for clients.*

ND WIC Follow-up #1. *“Bridges Out of Poverty” presented at our 2002 WIC All-staff by Jody Pfarr from aha Process, Inc. provided a powerful daylong session on the culture of poverty. Staff gained insight into both their own “economic” class culture and values, and learned about the other culture’s hidden rules. “This was the best information I have ever received” were common comments on Jody’s presentation.*

Finding # 2. Without exception, current WIC participants appreciated and valued the WIC food products. All remembered receiving nutrition education but said that the topics were sometimes boring and the delivery was at times condescending.

***Recommendation: Create a new vision of nutrition education. Educators need training in how to ask questions that allow clients to direct the topic, content and delivery of nutrition education. Educators may also benefit from shifting their roles from a problem solver to those who simply guide the clients to their own solutions.***

#### ND WIC Follow-up #2.

1. Dr. Joye Norris energized the staff at our 2001 all-staff meeting with her presentation on Teaching so They Will Remember” (a fun session on adult learning principles) and “Handling Ourselves-Handling Others” (which focused on emotional intelligence and dignity-friendly listening). Staff left excited. Ready to try new ideas in working with clients.
2. Pam McCarthy joined us at the 2003 WIC All-staff meeting, to talk about “The Ten Top Ways to Change Behavior” and “Education with Heart”. These sessions challenged the staff to step outside their comfort level and to add an emotional message to nutrition education.
3. In 2002 we applied, and are now approved, for a FNS grant for a 3-year Motivational Interviewing project. Currently our sites have been selected and training is underway initiative. MI is a client-centered approach that intentionally directs clients to examine, explore, and resolve the ambivalence they have about their behavior.

Comment: Staff recognize the importance of not just providing nutrition education, but looking at where the client is coming from, their values, their interests and needs and the necessity of providing nutrition education in that context. During monitoring we see that staff have moved away teaching to being more engages in conversations with clients. They are asking clients about their concerns and interests and reaching a goal of clients talking 50% of the time.

**Additional Follow-up:** As a result of the focus groups we have changed questions about WIC on our web-site to address those questions raised by WIC eligible non-participants and we have added some “emotional” customer satisfaction questions to our client survey like, “WIC staff and I discuss *my* needs or concerns.”

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**Title of Project:** Pediatric Weight Management Toolkit

**Agency Name:** New Hampshire WIC Program & New Hampshire Nutrition Education Coalition (NHNEC)

New Hampshire Department of Health & Human Services  
Office of Community & Public Health  
Bureau of Nutrition & Health Promotion

**State:** New Hampshire

**Key Word Descriptors:** pediatric toolkit; childhood weight management, growth charts; decision making trees; at risk of overweight; overweight; physical activity guidelines for infant & toddlers; physical activity guidelines for preadolescent children; physical play

**Description of Project:** The toolkit was created by the NHNEC to assist pediatricians to consistently identify and treat children that are overweight or at risk of overweight. The use of BMI, the CDC BMI for Age Growth Charts, and the “Recommended Pediatric Weight Screening Guidelines”, are key components of the toolkit. Additional resources such as educational materials focusing on nutrition, physical activity and local resources are included. The toolkit has been provided to other groups of healthcare professionals as requested.

**Results of Project:** Although a formal evaluation of the toolkit has not been completed, the toolkit has received extremely favorable response from pediatricians and other health care professionals.

The NHNEC is a statewide nutrition network of public and private partners that promotes key messages about nutrition and healthy eating. The Coalition’s goal is to promote optimal health by improving the eating habits of New Hampshire residents. In addition to WIC Program, the NHNEC members include the 5 A Day for Better Health Program, the NH Department of Education, UNH Cooperative Extension (Nutrition Connections), the New England Dairy & Food Council, the NH Food Stamp Program, the Bureau of Special Medical Services, Northern NH Area Health Education Center, NH School Food Service Association, the New Hampshire Dietetic Association, Southern New Hampshire Services Head Start Program, a private practice Registered Dietitian and Pediatrician.

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**Title of Project:** “Positive Images of Breastfeeding” Calendar  
**Agency Name:** WIC Program/Statewide Breastfeeding Task Force  
**State:** New Mexico

**Key Word Descriptors: Breastfeeding Promotion Calendar**

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending the presentation, the audience will become familiar with the how to collaborate with other breastfeeding advocacy groups to produce a breastfeeding promotion calendar.

**Description of Project:**

Sixteen years ago, the New Mexico WIC Program helped develop the New Mexico Breastfeeding Task Force, a statewide coalition of breastfeeding advocates from various organizations and communities throughout New Mexico. Through joining forces with other breastfeeding advocates in the Task Force, New Mexico WIC staff has been able to better motivate and educate the larger community about the importance of breastfeeding. A project which well displays the benefit of the WIC Program’s collaboration with the Breastfeeding Task Force is their production of a “Positive Images of Breastfeeding” Calendar. This calendar, produced in 2003 and 2004, features beautiful photos of New Mexican families, as well as breastfeeding facts, resources and statewide referral information. WIC’s commitment to annually print approximately 5,000 of the calendars for WIC clients, and to coordinate the printing and distribution of all calendars through the Department of Health Print Shop, brings the production cost for the calendar down to a feasible amount for the Task Force. Task Force members contribute the time and energy needed to put together a photo contest, work with additional sponsors to provide prizes for contestants design the calendar and publicize it through community displays. It is because of this collaborative effort between New Mexico’s WIC Program and Breastfeeding Task Force that the “Positive Images of Breastfeeding” Calendar is produced each year to inspire mothers to breastfeed their babies, as well as to provide families and health care providers with important breastfeeding information and resources.

## **Results of Project:**

- Over 6,000 families in New Mexico each year receive a “Positive Images of Breastfeeding” calendar, and over 1,000 are distributed to health care provider offices around the state.
- The calendar features only New Mexican breastfeeding families; each month features a specific theme that summarizes one of the many benefits of breastfeeding; interspersed throughout are quotations from nursing mothers; and the calendar contains the most comprehensive, up-to-date guide to breastfeeding resources throughout the state of New Mexico.
- The Task Force sponsors a Calendar Contest each year to determine which photos will appear in the calendar; winners also receive cash and merchandise prizes.
- Each year a different local chapter of the NM Breastfeeding Task Force sponsors a Calendar Contest Judging Event during World Breastfeeding Week; the photos submitted through the Photo Contest are judged by local prominent political figures, government representatives, radio personalities, artists, health care professionals and public health clients.
- A traveling display has been created from the pool of photo images submitted by contestants; this display is used by local chapters of the NM Breastfeeding Task Force and the WIC Clinics to use at fairs, conferences and other public events to publicize the contest and to create an avenue for discussing the cultural barriers that impact breastfeeding initiation and duration.
- The Task Force works to continue improving the calendar each year to include more cultural diversity and encourage more WIC mothers to submit photos.

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**Title of Project:** Healthy Heroes

**Agency Name:** Ohio Department of Health, Ohio WIC

**State:** Ohio

**Key Word Descriptors:** Nutrition education modules and outreach initiative

**Key Skills Learned:** The overall goal of the Healthy Heroes initiative is to reinforce good nutrition and formation of healthy habits. Each nutrition education module has an objective.

1. Topic: I eat healthy foods every day.

Module: Coping With a Picky Eater

Objective: Participants will name two ways to help their child eat better.

2. Topic: I stay active, I play and explore the world around me.

Module: *Is Your Child Healthy and Fit?*

Objectives: Participants will list new activities that the family will try and list changes they will make in eating habits.

3. Topic: I brush my teeth at least two times a day.

Module: *Happy Smiles for Healthy Heroes*

Objectives: Caregiver will list healthy snacks and identify how many times per day a child's teeth should be brushed.

4. Topic: I buckle up in my car seat.

Module: *Foods to Go*

Objectives: Caregiver will name safe foods for travel stops and state why it is unsafe to eat in the car.

5. Topic: I get my shots and health check-ups.

Module: *Healthy Heroes Prepare for School*

Objectives:

- Caregiver will be able to state one reason shots are critical;
- list one reason why it is important to read to your child; and
- list one food their child likes that they can serve at breakfast.

**Description of Project:**

Healthy Heroes is a nutrition education and outreach promotion campaign that incorporates the use of attractive, eye-catching, easy-to-understand promotion and education messages and materials.

Child participants and parent/caregivers learn five key nutrition education messages by completing individual modules along with nutrition education provided by WIC health professionals.

Reinforcement tools emphasize the health and nutrition messages. For example, foam balls and bottled water for physical activity and toothbrushes for dental health. The reinforcement tools are used as outreach materials. Healthy Heroes display boards and an educational video highlighting the five key nutrition messages are used for outreach intervention opportunities.

**Results of Project:**

Provides a fun, colorful, and imaginative nutrition education and outreach method to retain current child participants as well as attract new participants.

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**Title of Project:** WIC Advanced Health Professional Training

**Agency Name:** Ohio Department of Health, Ohio WIC

**State:** Ohio

**Key Word Descriptors:** Interactive nutrition education training for experienced WIC health professionals

**Key Skills Learned:** After completing the Advanced Health Professional training, experienced WIC health professionals will:

1. Identify the role perceptions play in health professional-participant interaction and state strategies to assist them in improving interactions.
2. Demonstrate or list participant-centered counseling techniques that can be used in difficult situations.
3. State one time saving strategy to use during the participant-centered counseling session.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the WIC Policy and Procedure Manual by identifying pertinent policy in the new CD-ROM format and correcting the contents of simulated charts.

**Description of Project:**

This single-day training enhances the State Nutrition Education Plan. The content includes material based on health professional feedback provided by pre-training surveys. The training is updated based on changes on emerging trends, policy, technology, etc.

Health Professionals must be employed in WIC for at least 5 years before attending the single-day training.

**Results of Project:**

WIC Health Professionals refine their skill set required for providing quality nutrition services. Post-training surveys indicate attendees are very satisfied with the training.

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**Title of Project:** ATTITUDE is everything!

**Agency Name:** Ohio Department of Health, Ohio WIC

**State:** Ohio

**Key Word Descriptors:** Customer Service Standards

**Key Skills Learned:**

After attending the training sessions and review of policy, WIC staff will incorporate Ohio WIC customer service standards that support quality nutrition services.

**Description of Project:**

Quality customer service is the cornerstone of WIC, 30-years strong. Customer Service Standards have been developed as a tool for WIC Project Directors to use to develop and implement customer service policies in individual projects. By emphasizing the importance of good customer service, creating policies with a customer service focus, and monitoring employees to see that good customer service practices are followed, WIC Directors can ensure that all customers feel comfortable while in the WIC clinic and will have a positive experience that they can share with others.

The Customer Service Standards are embodied in the acronym ATTITUDE:

- A**ttitude is everything
- T**eamwork builds on everyone's strengths
- T**reat everyone with respect
- I**nform and educate the participant
- T**reat others as you would like to be treated and make their day
- U**nderstand the participant – listen and empathize
- D**evelop and utilize problem-solving skills
- E**ncourage growth – challenge and nurture yourself

The first phase of the project included the *ATTITUDE is Everything* presentation to over 300 WIC staff at the biennial WIC Symposium, April 2004. Subsequent trainings, such as Support Staff Training, New Directors Training, and health professional trainings will occur. The next phase is inclusion of the standards into policy, and the subsequent monitoring of the implementation of these standards.

**Results of Project:**

No formal results at this time. The Ohio WIC Customer Service Standards were introduced at the biennial WIC Symposium, April 2004 and the tally of the evaluation results is currently occurring. After inclusion of the standards in the Ohio WIC Policy and Procedure Manual in fiscal year 2004, State staff will observe implementation of the standards during biennial management evaluations of each local project.

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**Title of Project:** Nutrition Education Plan

**Agency Name:** Ohio Department of Health, Ohio WIC

**State:** Ohio

**Key Word Descriptors:** State Nutrition Education Plan

**Key Skills Learned:**

Implementation of the Plan provides WIC health professionals with counseling skills that enhance quality nutrition services. Participants and caregivers have the opportunity to learn about healthy lifestyle components such as healthful eating and increased physical activity.

**Description of Project:**

Prevent childhood obesity by promoting healthful eating, physical activity, and positive parenting via interactive counseling provided by WIC health professionals.

Introduction of interactive counseling techniques, such as the 3-Step Counseling Technique and Brief Negotiation, at the WIC Symposium 2002.

Reinforcement of counseling and lifestyle messages at New WIC Health Professional Training, Advanced Health Professional Training, and the Back to Basics breastfeeding training.

State staff monitors and consults with WIC health professionals during management evaluations and technical assistance visits conducted at local WIC projects.

Follow-up information and materials communicated and distributed to local project. Examples include State directives, sample lesson plans, and handouts for participants.

**Results of Project:**

WIC Health Professionals obtain nutrition counseling skills to provide quality nutrition services. WIC participants/caregivers in turn have opportunities to learn healthful lifestyle information.

Preliminary survey results are very positive. Local projects report success and challenges to State office quarterly. State monitors implementation during visits to local WIC projects.

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**Title of Project:** What's up & Cooking with WIC

**Agency Name:** Oklahoma State Department of Health WIC Service

**State:** Oklahoma

**Key Word Descriptors:** electronic learning, lesson plans, staff training

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending the presentation, the audience will be able to identify two methods of utilizing videoconferencing technology for nutrition education and training purposes.

**Description of Project:**

**The Oklahoma State Department of Health utilizes videoconferencing technology to provide:**

1. Quarterly updates to WIC service providers statewide, known as *What's up with WIC*, and
2. Quarterly nutrition education presentations to WIC participants statewide, known as *Cooking with WIC*...

*What's up with WIC* serves the purpose of a newsletter, but in an electronic format. A variety of presenters provide updates related to their specific area of expertise. Topics and presentations consist of, but are not limited to, formula and food package information, upcoming educational opportunities, policy and procedure updates, vendor issues, introduction of new staff, etc.

Agendas and evaluations are distributed electronically prior to the broadcast. Each transmission concludes with a roll call, allowing opportunity for WIC clinics to ask questions and interact with state agency personnel and each other.

***Cooking with WIC* was undertaken to provide teaching strategies to WIC nutrition educators that are not feasible in the traditional WIC clinic setting. Strategies include videotapes of grocery store field trips, cooking demonstrations, and interviews with experts such as a child development specialist.**

Each videotape is supported by a written lesson plan to encourage facilitated discussion, recipes, and supporting handouts. The nutrition lesson plans are initially introduced via a live broadcast. Handouts and evaluations are distributed to participating clinics prior to the broadcast.

A needs assessment was conducted prior to beginning the project to determine topics of greatest interest to WIC participants. Topics include snacks for kids, quick and easy meals, ideas for increasing children's fruit and vegetables consumption, breakfast, and basic cooking skills.

### **Results of Project:**

#### *What's Up with WIC*

- **Provides opportunity for WIC clinic and state staff to interact and communicate on a regular basis.**
- **Provides timely updates without the cost of printing and mailing newsletters.**

#### *Cooking with WIC*

- **Adds the “see” component to nutrition education lessons addressing purchasing and preparing of WIC foods.**

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**Title of Project:** Addressing the Feeding Needs of Premature Babies

**Agency Name:** Washington County Health & Human Services WIC Program

**State:** Oregon

**Key Word Descriptors:** premature babies

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending the presentation, the audience will be able to describe a strategy for addressing the feeding needs of premature WIC babies.

**Description of Project:** Washington County Health and Human Services WIC Program, located in the Portland, Oregon Metropolitan area, serves 11,650 clients a month. Over the last 5 years, Washington County has seen an increasing number of premature infants experiencing feeding problems after hospital discharge, often resulting in readmissions. Many of these babies had very complex feeding needs that were not adequately addressed. In response, Washington County WIC designated an RD to spend one day per week to work with WIC premature babies.

In September 2003, the program implemented a new policy requiring all 24-33 week premature babies identified during pre-screenings be referred to the R.D. The RD certifies each premie in the home and provides follow-up through telephone contacts while they are on WIC.

The RD also does outreach to physicians and works as the health department's Baby's First Program field team liaison.

**Results of Project:** The R.D. has about 70-100 premies on her caseload. On home visit days, she certifies an average of 9 premature infants. Since implementing this service, the agency has experienced better communication with physicians; less premie readmissions to the hospital, as interventions to correct feeding problems are happening earlier; and been enabled to provide referrals to other health providers such as Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists.

In the past, if a premie missed their appointment, they may not have been seen for 6 months and the feeding problems would have set in. Now if they miss their appointment, the R.D. follows up, including visiting them at home if they can't come in. Since some of the babies are born at 24+ weeks, they need PT and OT

earlier, so the RD works with other agencies to arrange for this service. Since the RD is following these babies, she is also able to identify developmental problems.

In addition, the three area NICU's now contact WIC by fax or phone before a premature baby is discharged. Bimonthly meetings with the WIC "Premie" R.D., social workers, and NICU R.D.s are now occurring to share case studies and care practices. Washington County WIC has also established a relationship with the three local Medicaid feeding teams to coordinate services for premature infants. Since December 2003, physicians work with the WIC RD as premies transition off premature formulas. WIC believes the physicians in the community now recognize WIC for its nutrition services which is subsequently strengthening the nutrition program in the county.

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**Title of Project:**           **Obesity Prevention Modules**

**Agency Name:**           **WIC Program**

**State:**                   **Pennsylvania**

**Key Word Descriptors:** staff development tools, skills for facilitating behavior change in clients

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending this session, WIC staff will be able to describe a systematic approach to conversing with participants and helping them to make healthier eating and lifestyle choices.

**Description of Project:** The Obesity Prevention Modules were developed to provide information to local agency staff on key issues related to healthy eating and lifestyle habits. Survey questions were designed on various topics and are intended to be used as the springboard for discussions. The modules consist of the following:

- I.           Introduction
- II.          Increasing Physical Activity/Limiting Television Viewing
- III.        Teaching Children to Enjoy Mealtimes
- IV.        Healthy Snacks
- V.          Limiting Juice Intake
- VI.        Choosing Fast Foods Wisely
- VII.       Increasing Fruits and Vegetables
- VIII.      Choosing Low Fat Foods

The modules were designed for staff training purposes and include the following:

- background information
- staff reference sheet
- script for addressing responses to the survey question
- handouts for clients

In order to insure that local agency staff utilized the modules, they have been a part of our statewide goal for the past four years. The first two years consisted of training all local agency staff on all of the modules. The third year goal involved development of a local agency plan to outline refresher training for existing staff as well as for new staff. To help in this regard, the Nutrition Education Committee developed a series of quiz questions for each of the modules and a Nutrition

Education Contact Evaluation Tool to help evaluate staff skills in conducting an effective nutrition education contact. The statewide goal for the fourth year involves using goal-setting as a method for delivering information from the modules to WIC clients.

**Results of Project:** Both staff and clients seem to enjoy the format established by the modules, and use of the modules appears to have been successfully assimilated into daily use in our local agencies. The modules facilitate client-centered education because the contact is based on the client's response to the survey questions. Unfortunately, there is currently no formal evaluation of this initiative. However there is interest in exploring methods to do so.

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**Title of Project:** Breastfeeding Data Collection Project  
**Agency Name:** Tennessee Department of Health- WIC Program  
**State:** Tennessee

**Key Word Descriptors:** Breastfeeding Data, Personal Digital Assistant

**Key Skills Learned:** After analyzing the data collected, strategies to increase the incidence and duration will be determined.

**Description of Project:** Tennessee has implemented a new technology to collect and analyze comprehensive data from pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers. The purpose of this intensive data collection effort is to determine strategies that are successful in increasing both the number of women who breastfeed and the length of time they breastfeed. In order to improve the incidence and duration of breastfeeding, it is important to gather information from our WIC participants about their breastfeeding experience and factors which encourage or discourage breastfeeding. To this end, surveys were written to identify these factors and programmed into handheld computers, also known as Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). PDAs were purchased for breastfeeding counselors and nutritionists to gather information in any setting. The data being collected includes information on the client's knowledge of breastfeeding benefits, plans to return to work or school, smoking status, any history of breast surgery, family support of breastfeeding, hospital experience, use of hormonal contraceptives after delivery, introduction of solid food, primary reason for breastfeeding and reasons for weaning. Data is being collected during routine visits at the local health department, telephone consultations, and home or hospital visits.

### **Results of Project:**

#### Key Findings

- 83% think a healthier baby is the major benefit of breastfeeding
- 43% identified someone in their home who wanted them to breastfeed
- 7% identified a person who did not want them to breastfeed
- 41% of the women who breastfed reported they did not have a good experience
- 76% reported the baby roomed-in at the hospital
- 64% reported the baby received a bottle or pacifier in the hospital
- 73% reported the hospital gave formula in the nursery or to take home or both
- 54% are planning to return to work or school

- The main reasons for ceasing to breastfeed are concerns about milk supply, baby refuses breast, and returning to work

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**Title of Project:** African American Breastfeeding Promotion Initiative

**Agency Name:** Texas WIC Program

**State:** Texas

**Key Word Descriptors:** Breastfeeding Promotion Campaign

**Key Skills Learned:** Will be unable to present at conference

**Description of Project:**

African American breastfeeding rates in Texas have historically been low. Studies have shown that African Americans are often underrepresented in breastfeeding literature and that certain breastfeeding barriers are more prevalent among African Americans than other ethnic groups (i.e. lack of role models, embarrassment). The African American Breastfeeding Promotion Initiative was started to increase the rates of breastfeeding among African American WIC participants.

Campaign components include:

- Media: Five different radio public service announcements (PSA) and one television PSA.
- *Your Baby, Your Gift* brochure for the pregnant woman,
- *Support Your Partner* brochure for the father of the baby,
- *Support Your Daughter* brochure for grandparents,
- *Act Natural: Breastfeed* poster, and
- African American Breastfeeding Promotion Individual Counseling Guidelines
- Health care provider outreach - WIC breastfeeding representatives visited over 40 doctors, nurses, midwives, school nurses, and hospitals to inform them about the campaign. Each health care provider received:
  - A letter from the Texas Department of Health Commissioner asking for their participation in the campaign.
  - *Doctors Make the Difference: Incorporating Breastfeeding into Prenatal Care* – a recommended protocol for discussing breastfeeding with expectant mothers.
  - *Steps to a Breastfeeding-Friendly Practice* handout that can be used as a written breastfeeding policy and posted in their office.

- Two campaign posters
  - *Act Natural: Breastfeed* poster
  - *As a doctor I feel breastfeeding is the healthiest thing you can do for your baby* poster
- Fifty patient gift bags to hand out to their African American patients - each gift bag contains a mother, partner, and grandparent brochure, a *BreastMilk: 100% Natural Ingredients* baby bib, and a *Ten Reasons to Breastfeed* magnet.
- Church Outreach – To gain community support, campaign components and exhibits are being presented during services in several large African American churches and are being exhibited in church health fairs. Specific materials were developed for church outreach:
  - *Breastfeeding A: A Natural Way to Better Health* information sheet that explains why breastfeeding is important to African American health and how the community can support breastfeeding.
  - *Breastfeeding Support Pledge Cards*

**Results of Project:** The campaign is currently being piloted in SE Texas. SUMA/Orchard Social Marketing is working with the Texas Department of Health to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign prior to statewide rollout. Results of the pilot are not yet available.

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**Title of Project:** “Frontline Support: Your Role on the Breastfeeding Team”

**Agency Name:** Washington State Department of Health

**State:** Washington State

**Key Word Descriptors:** Regional breastfeeding training for frontline staff

**Key Skills Learned:** Breastfeeding training was conducted for local agency frontline staff. Objectives for the training were to 1) explore how our own experiences influence our messages; 2) learn ways to improve listening skills; 3) learn how to provide information and not advice; 4) share verbal and non-verbal ways to promote and support breastfeeding; and 5) identify at least four situations when the client needs further assistance.

**Description of Project:** In 2002, with feedback from local Coordinators, a half-day training for WIC frontline staff was offered at 9 locations around the state. The agenda was developed with input from local agency frontline staff. In order to provide perspective, a training team composed of a WIC Clerk, a WIC client and a breastfeeding specialist conducted the training.

**Results of Project:** The training was well received by the approximately 200 staff who attended. The training team was able to provide answers to staff questions from the perspective of the clerk, the client and the breastfeeding specialist. Ideas were shared on how to promote and support breastfeeding. Notes were taken during the trainings. As a follow-up, a newsletter was developed and distributed to local WIC staff.

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**Title of Project:** Nutrition Education Campaigns  
**Agency Name:** State of Wisconsin WIC Program  
**State:** Wisconsin

**Key Word Descriptors:** Nutrition Education Campaigns, Collaborative Network

**Key Skills Learned:** After attending the presentation, the audience will be able to identify the benefits of collaborating with a statewide nutrition education network to implement nutrition education campaigns.

**Description of Project:** Nutrition education campaigns were implemented as the result of the collaborative efforts from statewide members of the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Network. This network consists of representatives from several agencies collaborating to promote healthful and enjoyable eating so that Wisconsin's low-income individuals and families receive consistent, positive, relevant, accurate, and effective nutrition messages. Examples of program partners include WIC, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP), Head Start, and Elderly Nutrition. Other states have similar networks that they can tap into to revitalize quality nutrition services.

A cooperative Agreement with the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funded the development of the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Network in October 1996. Currently, the network is funded primarily by Food Stamp Nutrition Education funds.

**Results of Project:** The Wisconsin Nutrition Education Network implemented successful nutrition education campaigns in 2000-2003. The campaigns were collaborative, included evaluation components, and the materials were distributed to local agencies or were available to download from a website. The campaigns' success and our ongoing participation in the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Network have helped revitalize quality nutrition education/services in the participating counties across the state. New partnerships and collaborations have been formed. Each campaign has built on the success of the previous campaign and strengthened the level of partnering between participating agencies that provide nutrition education to limited-income audiences.

During 2003, the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Network's "Walk, Dance, Play...Be Active Every Day!" physical activity and nutrition education campaign was held during the months of March, April, and May 2003. This campaign was conducted in 47 counties and two tribes. Our local WIC projects were involved in almost all of the county campaigns and in the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC) and Menomonee Reservation's campaigns. The campaign directly reached 18,968 adults through group lessons/activities and interactive displays. In addition, over 338,121 adults received indirect contact via tip sheets, posters, menu backs, newsletters and the media -- radio, television and newspapers. The campaign was successful in promoting more active lifestyle changes to the target audience and synergistic partnerships of local/state agencies and programs that participated. Combining awareness-raising activities and community-based education was successful in promoting more healthful eating behaviors. Agencies and programs that participated rated the quality of the materials and opportunity for collaboration between partners very highly. The campaign replicated many of the key findings of the successful "JUMP 'N JIVE...Come Alive with Fruit!" 2000-2002 campaigns.

The 2004 "Walk, Dance, Play...Be Active Every Day!" campaign is being implemented from March until August and a new campaign is being planned for 2005. The Wisconsin Nutrition Education Network website with more detailed campaign information is currently located at ([www.nutrisci.wisc.edu/nutrinet](http://www.nutrisci.wisc.edu/nutrinet)).

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