

West Virginia WIC's

"Learning for Health" Project



12 Interactive Lesson Plans focused on healthy eating, increased physical activity, promoting health and preventing disease.

2001

**West Virginia Bureau of Public Health
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women,
Infants and Children**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many local and state WIC staff members contributed to the success of this project. Their time, interest, ideas, thoughtful review and willingness to contribute are gratefully acknowledged.

Thanks to the members of the project steering committee:

**Ester Brannon, Outreach/Special Projects Coordinator
Sandra Daubman, WV WIC State Nutritionist
Denise Ferris, WV WIC State Director
Sandra Miller, Director, Randolph/Elkins WIC
Heather Venoy, Policy & Procedure Coordinator**

Many thanks to the Nutrition Education Liaisons

**Christine Cooper
Linda DeWilde
Kresta Gray
Sue Gunstream
Vicki Keefer
Karen Korzep
Emma Lafferty
Chilida Ng
Andrea Palm
Darla Retton
June Rhodes
James Servino
Peggy Williams**

**Project Consultant:
Susanne Gregory, MPH**

West Virginia WIC's "Learning for Health" Project

12 Interactive Lesson Plans for WIC participants focused on healthy eating, increased physical activity, promoting health and preventing disease.

Overview of Project, Lesson Plans & Tips for Successful Educators

Lesson Plans

1. "Growing" a Happy, Healthy Child
2. Fun in the Morning - Quick and Easy Breakfast Ideas
3. I'm Thirsty!
4. New Food Adventures
5. Super Snacking!
6. Food - Make it SAFE!
7. Beautiful Teeth and Gums - Keep Up the Good Work!
8. It's Family Time - Hassle-Free Dinners
9. Power Lunches in a Snap!
10. A Little Help - Shopping & Cooking with Your Kids
11. Smart Shopping
12. Get Moving! Be Active!

Overview of Project and Lesson Plans

The lesson plan topics are broad and focused on prevention to address the needs of lower-risk WIC participants through interactive group education sessions.

The learning objectives reflect potential changes in participant attitude, knowledge and modest behavior change based on a 20-30 minute interactive group education session. Most lesson plans include an objective that asks the participant to select or choose something that they will act on in immediately (usually within the next 3 days). Asking adults to verbalize a commitment helps to reinforce the anticipated behavior change.

Each session plan includes a flexible "menu" of basic content, interactive discussion questions, activities (adult and child-focused) that will allow local agency nutrition staff to customize the session topic to their setting and audience.

Each session plan includes FUN, FLEXIBLE, POSITIVE education messages and materials with recipes. Recurrent feeding and nutrition issues prominent with WIC participants (extended use of bottle, high sugar/fat intake, overweight/obesity, low fruit/vegetable intake, choking prevention, food safety, nurturing through the feeding relationship) may be the topic and also may be woven into other session plans. For instance, there may be a session on dental health for everyone that would include specific info on using a cup/stopping bottle. This same message can be included in the session on picky eaters, snacking to reinforce the concept/message but from a slightly different angle.

You, the nutrition educator, are an essential factor in the success of the sessions with participants. If you get excited about the topic and the activities then you will bring the right attitude to the session. Your ability to stay fresh, ask open-ended questions to get participants involved in the discussion and activities and LISTEN will ensure that participants get the most out of their visit to your WIC program. In a sense, you are the ambassador to good health. If you "connect" with participants and share your enthusiasm and lighter side, chances are they will become more excited about nutrition and health issues in their own lives.

Tips for Successful Educators

- ☆ Adults learn by taking in new information in the context of their life experiences. They think and integrate new information and behaviors into their world. They learn best when they can discuss and process new information with others. It is not very helpful for most adults to listen to lectures and remember facts. Talking “with” as opposed to talking “to” adults is a major goal for effectiveness as an educator.
- ☆ Less is More... It is OK to talk about fewer things and discuss those things at greater length than to “overload” participants with too much information.
- ☆ Be realistic about how much you can do - choosing learning objectives that require large behavior changes will not be reasonable after a 20 minute group education session. It may be more realistic for participants to choose one specific thing they will try to do within 2 hours of leaving the session - like drink a glass of skim milk with dinner instead of a soda or eat a piece of fruit for a snack when she gets home.
- ☆ Stages of Change - every adult varies in their openness and motivation to adopt new behaviors. Recognize the nonverbal and verbal signs of someone who is ready to make a change and tailor your message to provide a more satisfying session for both you and the participants.
- ☆ Try to connect with participants on a personal level. Everyone will feel more comfortable and participation will improve. Ask participants to quickly introduce themselves by sharing their first names and something about themselves like the names and ages of their children or their favorite food. The introduction time should not be used as a time to pre-assess knowledge or ask content questions.
- ☆ Pep up sessions by changing the activities or questions based on what worked well in previous groups. Make changes to keep you and the participants fresh and interested.