



Welcome to CIP-WIC's January Newsletter!

HELLO 2025!!

As we step into 2025, CIP-WIC remains steadfast in our commitment to empowering NWA members and the families they serve. Our priorities this year include advancing equity, expanding access to culturally responsive resources, and fostering innovation to address the evolving needs of WIC participants.

Looking ahead, our vision is to build a future where every WIC Agency is equipped to deliver impactful services that promote equity, belonging, and resilience across all communities.

**Together**, we will continue to strengthen WIC's legacy and ensure it thrives for generations to come.

To support these goals, we are excited to announce the launch of [CIP-WIC's new webpage](#) on the NWA website ([nwica.org](http://nwica.org)). This new resource hub will provide updates, tools, and insights to help our partners implement meaningful changes in their communities. Thank you for your dedication to this vital work. We look forward to achieving great milestones **together** in 2025 and beyond!

*The CIP-WIC team took a moment during our final meeting of 2024 to reflect on the year and share the personal themes we'd like to embody moving into 2025. Here's what our team members are focusing on:*

COMMUNITY  
FORAGING  
BETAIN. MATHEMATICAL  
CURIOSITY  
UNDERSTANDING  
BUILDING CONFIDENCE  
UNDERSTANDING  
UNDERSTANDING  
UNDERSTANDING  
LEARNING  
FOR MATHEMATICS



Emily O'Hara, El Paso County Public Health

Erin Brock, Open Door Services

Erin Mason, El Paso County Public Health

Jade Chiu, Guilford County

Jentsy Philpot, Butler Health County  
Department

Jenna Davis, St Louis County PHHS

Jean Zanni, Community Action Program

Jordan Pratt, Panhandle

Katie Caster-Horn, VNA Central NJ

Kristi Lozinto, Sonoma County Indian Health

Mary Walcott, North Central Health District

Melissa Satler Gordon, El Paso County Public  
Health

Wendy Wither, Passaic County WIC

*Here's to a bright new year and to making a difference for WIC families!*



## **Exciting News: NWA Receives \$1.6 Million to Improve the WIC Participant Experience!**

The National WIC Association is thrilled to announce a [\\$1.6 million two-year grant](#) to center and understand the WIC participant experience. Advancing Health Equity to Achieve Diversity & Inclusion in WIC (AHEAD) 3.0 will continue work conducted in AHEAD in WIC and AHEAD 2.0. AHEAD 3.0: Advancing Equity throughout the WIC Participant Journey will enhance

understanding of and address barriers to WIC participation, and explore how experiences differ for Black, Brown, and Indigenous participants and other disadvantaged, under-resourced communities.

The grant will focus on four bodies of work: 1) journey mapping the full continuum of the participant experience 2) developing recommendations and identify promising practices to address barriers and challenges that State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Agencies can implement 3) redesigning NWA's Participant Advisory Council to include Black, Brown, Indigenous, and geographically diverse WIC participants to provide direct feedback on their experience, and share their expertise and recommendations to help inform NWA's priorities for increasing enrollment and retention, and participant satisfaction and 4) conduct a 2025 WIC Multi-State Participant Satisfaction Survey, which will analyze results by race and ethnicity and build upon the 2023 survey, which included more than 38,000 participants across 19 states, one Indian Tribal organization and one territory.

If you have questions about this project, please email [cipwic@nwica.org](mailto:cipwic@nwica.org).

[Read Press Release Here!](#)

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## NWA is Seeking a Journey Map Consultant!

The National WIC Association is seeking a consultant to assist in the development of a comprehensive Journey Map as part of the AHEAD 3.0: Advancing Equity throughout the WIC Participant Journey project. The consultant will look to understand successful participant experiences and key pain points in enrollment, participation, retention, and service delivery, particularly exploring experiences that might differ for Black, Brown, and Indigenous families.

Proposals are due by **5:00 PM ET on Monday, February 3, 2025**. The deadline for question submissions is **Friday, January 24, 2025**. An electronic copy of the proposal shall be emailed to [CIPWIC@nwica.org](mailto:CIPWIC@nwica.org). Submission of missing application components or after the deadline will not be accepted. All questions must be submitted via email to the Center for Innovative Practices in WIC (CIP-WIC) at [cipwic@nwica.org](mailto:cipwic@nwica.org).

[View the RFP!](#)

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## AHEAD 2.0: Translation of Materials Subgrant Award Announcement!

Thank you to everyone who applied for NWA's AHEAD 2.0: Translation of Materials Subgrant Award! In December, we offered subgrant funding to State and Local WIC Agencies to support the translation of participant-facing materials into various languages. This initiative was driven by member feedback and the 2024 Membership Survey, which underscored the ongoing need for translation services in WIC agencies nationwide.

The proposals were highly competitive, with limited funding available. We received 11 applications, due to funding constraints, we were only able to award grants to four agencies.

**Champaign (IL) - \$8,000**

**Forsyth (NC) - \$8,000**

**Franklin County WIC (OH) - \$8,000**

**Schenectady (NY) - \$4,100**

NWA appreciates everyone who took the time to apply for this opportunity, we look forward to sharing the produced materials of the awarded Agencies with NWA membership!

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### What are your new years goals at your agency?

We encourage you to think about what theme you would like to embody for yourself. Share them with us and we will highlight them in next month's newsletter.



[Share Your Vision 2025!](#)

[National WIC Association](#)

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CIP-WIC

Center for

**Innovative Practices**  
in WIC

40  
YEARS  
National WIC  
Association

Welcome to CIP-WIC's February Newsletter!

HAPPY BLACK HISTORY MONTH!



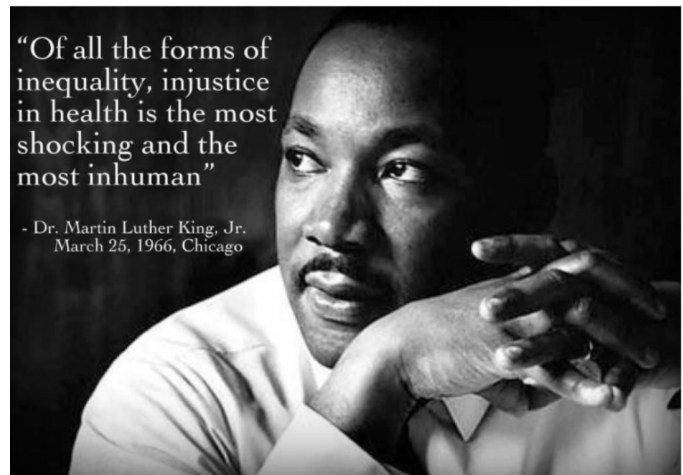
**BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

***“Advancing Black maternal health is about more than providing prenatal and postpartum care. It's about creating systems that genuinely value Black lives.”- Stacy Davis, Director of CIPWIC***

Each February, we honor and celebrate the rich heritage, excellence, resilience, and invaluable contributions of Black communities. Since its earliest days, WIC has played a vital role in supporting the health and well-being of Black families by providing access to nutrition, education, and essential resources. As we reflect on Black history, we also recognize the ongoing need for equity in maternal and child health, striving to ensure every family has the support they need to thrive.

**#BlackHistoryMonth #WIC #HealthEquity.**

CIPWIC stands united in our commitment to advancing diversity, racial and health equity, and addressing the systemic barriers that continue to affect Black maternal and child health outcomes. As we celebrate Black joy and resilience this month and throughout the year, we reaffirm our dedication to the ongoing journey toward liberation and justice. This commitment guides our work, shapes our practices and programs, and inspires our actions to create a more equitable future for Black mothers, children, and families.



## Resources for Black History Month!

- [Championing Black Maternal - WIC as a catalyst for change](#)
- [Black Maternal Health Resource List](#)
- [All About Black Maternal Health](#)
- [Black History Month Toolkit](#)



## NWA Awarded Kaiser Permanente Grant to Strengthen WIC-Healthcare Partnerships

The National WIC Association (NWA) is excited to announce that we have been awarded a

The National WIC Association (NWA) is excited to announce that we have been awarded a \$195,936 grant from the Kaiser Permanente Fund at East Bay Community Foundation to support the project Strengthening Information Exchanges between Healthcare and WIC Providers. This two-year initiative, which will run from December 1, 2024, to November 30, 2026, aims to improve the coordination of care for marginalized families by enhancing information exchanges between healthcare and WIC providers.

Project activities will include conducting an environmental scan to identify best practices for information- sharing between healthcare providers and WIC. NWA will then disseminate the findings to WIC agencies and healthcare partners, providing technical assistance to promote the adoption of best practices.

The project will also create a WIC Technology community of practice and an online repository of resources to share knowledge and foster ongoing learning. NWA is excited to partner with Kaiser Permanente to strengthen WIC-healthcare collaboration and advance maternal and child health outcomes.

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## Food Package Updates!

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On Monday, January 13, NWA released its [2025 policy agenda](#), which includes supporting the implementation of the updates to the WIC food packages that are under way. NWA also sent a [letter](#) to the Trump transition team sharing these priorities.

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## Good To Know!

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### **WIC Policy Memorandum #2025-3: Use of Banked Human Breast Milk in WIC**

#### **USDA Updates Policy on Banked Human Milk in WIC Program**

The USDA and FNS issued an update early late month on guidance for banked human milk in WIC programs. WIC Clinics can support access to donor milk while addressing current infant feeding challenges. While banked human milk cannot be provided as a WIC benefit, the new policy allows WIC clinics to serve as collection depots through partnerships with milk banks. This change enables WIC to strengthen connections with healthcare providers and expand support for families facing infant feeding challenges. Particularly beneficial during formula shortages, WIC staff can now educate caregivers about banked human milk, provide referrals, and promote milk donation efforts. By enhancing access and awareness, this update helps ensure equitable optimal nutritional support for infants in need.

[Read More Here!](#)

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## HEC Spotlight: Meet Brisa Chavez!

**Brisa Isela Chávez, Community Outreach Coordinator, WIC Lead Educator, Garfield County Public Health**

Brisa was born in Mexico and raised in Colorado since the age of four. As a daughter of immigrants, Brisa is passionate about her work in community advocacy. She enjoys facilitating conversations and fostering greater awareness and engagement. Brisa has worked in public health for over 22 years. She graduated from Colorado Mesa University with a Bachelor of Arts with a focus in communication, literature, and English. She is committed to empowering and elevating marginalized voices and spends part of time volunteering on different community councils. Brisa was appointed to the State Board of Human Services in 2021 and has seen the amazing community work being accomplished in the State of Colorado. Brisa has lived in Garfield County with her husband and two amazing sons for over 27 years. She enjoys spending time outdoors with her family.



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**We asked Brisa,**

**What is something fun or relaxing you have done this winter break?**



Having a senior in High School this year and almost being an empty nester is stirring new feelings to make more family memories. So, this winter I have made it a point to do things that my children enjoy doing. My weekends are filled with snowshoeing and helping at our small farm. We have seven sheep (first time having sheep!) and a beautiful horse. I say I am going to help, but in reality, I just go and watch my kids and take pictures, documenting memories that will last a lifetime. The freedom when I am surrounded by nature and animals is indescribable- it is where I feel at peace.

**Can you share any insights, workshops, or books you have participated/read in this year that guided you in your WIC career?**

Through my years working in nutrition and offering guidance on healthy eating and living, I strive to set my own achievable goals. For the past year, my commitment has been to my mental health. I purposely find time to work out three times a week either by going to the gym or hiking and being outdoors with my family and friends. The fresh air and the outdoor surroundings ground me to feel and hope for a healthier future for my own family.

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## Strawberry "Nice" Cream!



1 Cup Frozen or Fresh Strawberries

2 Bananas

½ cup plain yogurt

½ cup of milk

Blend and freeze to enjoy later!

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**Beckford (New Castle County) Chong Yi (Kent & Sussex County)**



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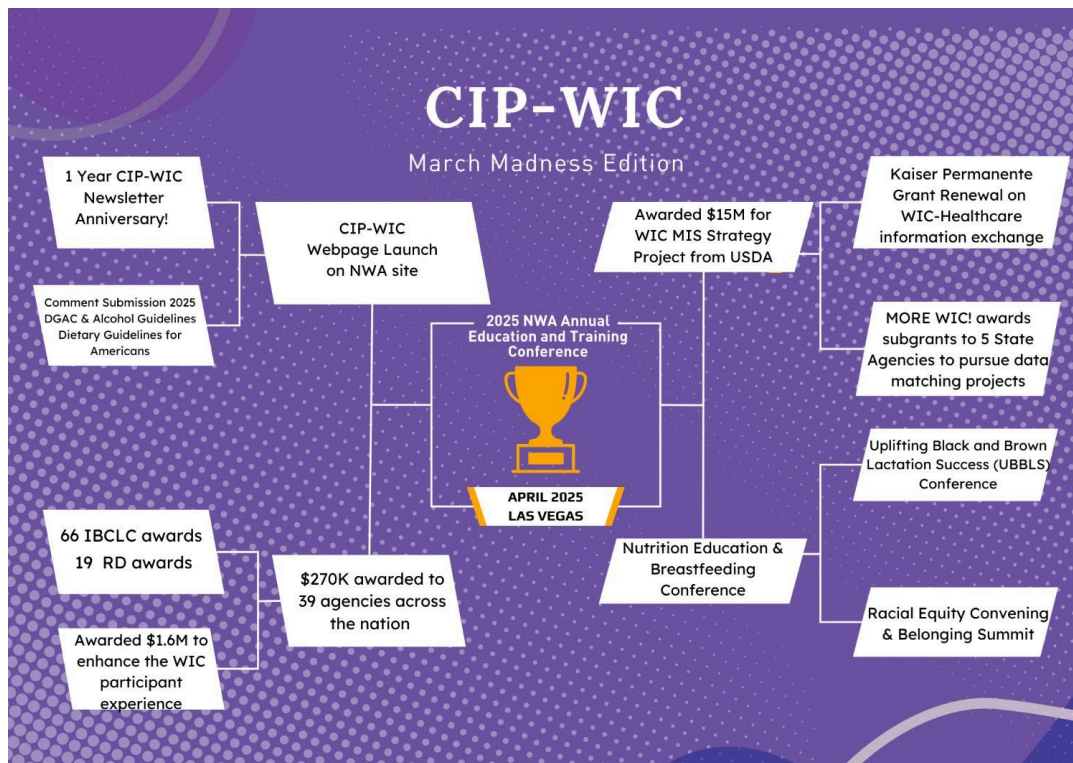
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**Hello March!**

**Below is a recap of what CIP-WIC has been up to as we gear up for the NWA Annual Education and Training Conference, taking place April 22-25, 2025!**



***Be sure to visit our table for free swag, enter our raffle, and learn all about the CIP-WIC!***

***\*Click Here To See What's Inside!***

## Click Here To See What's Inside!

Explore the latest Research to Practice Newsletter, where we highlight:

- ✓ Key findings from USDA, NWA, and academic research
- ✓ WIC caseload trends and insights
- ✓ Updates from the member-led Evaluation Committee
- ✓ Upcoming webinars and research opportunities

### Join Us In Celebrating IBCLCS, RDs, RNDTRs!

**National Nutrition Month - March 1st-31st**

**IBCLC Day - March 5th**

**Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) Day - Wednesday, March 12th**

**Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered Day - Thursday, March 13th**

In honor of the month, CIP-WIC's intern, Nicola Acosta, connected with IBCLCs, RDs, and NDTRs to share their strategies, secrets, and stories to success. WIC staff from across the country share nuggets from exam-taking tips to what makes their work truly special. These professionals shared wisdom that will inspire current and aspiring nutrition and lactation professionals.

“ Don't rush. Talk to other IBCLCs and learn from their knowledge. You don't need to do this alone. ”

Amy Resnik, an IBCLC with the Maryland WIC Program

“ I find it tremendously fulfilling to offer support to moms who may not otherwise have access to these valuable services. ”

Danielle McMillan, an IBCLC with the Lenowisco Health District, Wise VA

“ There are no bad days when you are working with moms and babies. You will also be surprised by the success of your moms. ”

Christina Lowe, an IBCLC with the Valley Health - Cabell Co. WIC

Head over to [NWA's Instagram](#) page to see more posts honoring NDTRs, RDs. and IBCLCs in WIC!

## DID YOU KNOW?

NWA has certified an IBCLC or 6 RDs on staff! To honor their contributions, we asked them to reflect on the most rewarding aspects of their work beyond their certifications, the unexpected ways their expertise shows up in their lives, and their hopes for the future of nutrition and lactation support.



“ Be it their own nutrition questions, questions about feeding their baby, questions about their toddler's eating, I love being able to help people feel seen and heard and more calm about their situation, so they can be empowered to move forward. ”

Sarah Younker, RDN, Senior Membership and Events Associate

“ Seeing a parent gain confidence in their ability to nourish their baby or hearing that a family feels supported because of my guidance makes it all worthwhile. ”

Stacy Davis, IBCLC, Director, Center for Innovative Practices in WIC

“ I have a lot of optimism around the ways our profession has changed to be more responsive to where people are at, and to be less judgemental. I hope we can continue prioritizing work to diversify our profession... ”

Alison Hard, RD, Public Policy Director

“ The most rewarding part of being a WIC dietitian has been building relationships with families and being part of the support system WIC provides during formative years of life. ”

Chloe Dillaway, RD, WIC Innovation and Technology Manager

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## CIP-WIC News & Updates

**NEW: Announcing the WIC Technology Community of Practice**



**CIP-WIC is thrilled to announce a new [WIC Technology Community of Practice](#) hosted on the NWA Online Community.**

The Community of Practice will launch as part of the *Strengthening Information Exchanges between Healthcare and WIC Providers* project, funded by the Kaiser Permanente Fund at East Bay Community Foundation. Over the next 2 years, the initiative aims to improve care coordination for WIC families by enhancing information exchanges between healthcare providers and WIC.

The Community of Practice will provide a space where WIC State and Local agency staff can share best practices and resources, explore challenges, and advance state and local-level initiatives to strengthen coordination between healthcare providers and WIC. NWA will also offer learning opportunities and uplift promising practices in the Community of Practice through webinars, resources, and other collaboration opportunities.

Whether your agency is looking to implement new streamlined referral and data sharing systems with healthcare providers, or is a leader in the field, the WIC Technology Community of Practice will offer a supportive space for learning and collaboration. Access the group [here](#) and click “Join” to connect with peers, hear real-world case studies, and discuss topics that matter most to you!

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## **Register for the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program Landscape Scan Report Findings Webinar!**

When: 3:00 - 4:00 PM EST on April 3, 2025

This webinar will present the findings of the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) Landscape Scan Report conducted under the *“Increasing Access to Healthy Food through Farmers’ Markets”* project. The presentation will expand upon findings in the Landscape Scan Survey administered to WIC State Agencies in Spring 2024 and in-depth interviews with WIC participants and farmers’ market staff conducted in Fall 2024 regarding FMNP practices across the nation. Learn about successes and challenges to implementation and redemption of FMNP benefits!

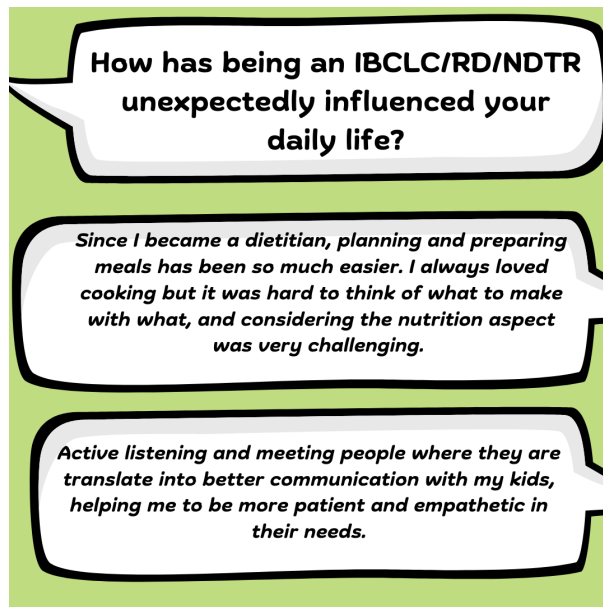
[Register Now!](#)

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**Food Package Update**

In February 2025, NWA submitted two comments on behalf of the WIC community- one for the [2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Scientific Report](#) and another regarding [Alcohol Guidance in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). The DGAs provides a standard by which WIC and many other communities measure nutrition adequacy within populations, and influences WIC's nutrition education as well as the WIC food package. NWA is committed to ensuring the WIC voice is represented in these comment opportunities.

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Thank you to all our healthcare heroes in supporting families!

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## Celebrating Black Maternal Health Week- April 11-17!

This year's BMHW theme, *"Healing Legacies: Strengthening Black Maternal Health Through Collective Action and Advocacy"*, honors the resilience of Black Mamas while addressing systemic injustices that shape Black maternal health outcomes. Through advocacy, policy change, and community engagement, BMHW highlights the power of Black-led perinatal, maternal, and reproductive health organizations in driving systemic change and fostering community healing. This week highlights the necessity of collaboration, policy change, and community-based solutions to advance Black maternal health equity.

**#BMHW2025**



Maternal health is a key indicator of a functioning health system.

In the US, there is a serious maternal mortality crisis, [Black women are 3x as likely to die from pregnancy related complications postpartum than White women](#). This is due to systemic racism that exists within healthcare. Health disparities are enlarged by SDOH (Social Determinants of Health) based on race, socioeconomic status, age, and environment, directly impact health outcomes, and continues to expand the gap in access to equitable care. During BMHW use your voice to raise awareness, activism and build community around Black maternal health.



## Black Maternal Health Organization Spotlight

[Cinnamoms](#): Space supporting Black/African American families through breastfeeding and parenthood support circles, located within PHFE WIC Offices in Los Angeles County.

[Black Mamas Matter Alliance](#): Black, women led alliance dedicated to the well-being of Black mothers championing maternal health through birthing justice, empowerment, and advocacy.

[Melanated Mammary Atlas](#): Atlas portal displaying mammary related conditions on Black and Brown individuals. This tool is specifically used by lactation specialists, midwives, doulas, ObGyns, family practioners etc., to normalize equitable care and treatment for the Black and Brown community.

## Legislation & Publications

- [Mominibus Act - The Solution to America's Maternal Health Crisis](#)
- [8 Guiding Principles for Improving Black Maternal Health through Community Collaboration](#)
- [BMHW Toolkit from Black Mamas Matter Alliance](#)

***Thank you doulas*** for providing compassionate, culturally competent care and support during pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum period!

***Thank you midwives*** for patient-centered care that centers the needs and experiences of Black mothers!

***Thank you nurses*** for being front-line advocates working to improve maternal health outcomes & reduce racial disparities in healthcare!

***Thank you nutrition/Lactation professionals*** for providing access to resources, education, and support to Black mothers and families!



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## **Alert: New Blog Post!**

### **Day in My Life as a Farmers Market Booth Manager**

CIP-WIC Intern Nicole Acosta is making an impact beyond her internship, working as a farmers' market booth manager at The Denton Community Market (DCM) in downtown Denton, Texas!

As a booth manager, Nicole arrives at the market to help with setting up chairs and tables for customers to sit and enjoy, setting up tents for musical performances, and arranging the DCM info booth for kids activities and FMNP, SNAP and Double-Up Food Bucks (DUFb) voucher/token pick up. She coordinates with her fellow booth managers and the market coordinator to ensure that all FMNP, SNAP, and DUFb recipients understand how the programs work at the market, as well as provide them a list of the farmers that accept these benefits every week. She works hard to ensure that everyone who comes to the market feels welcomed, and assists vendors with any issues that may arise during the duration of the market day.

Nicole's experience working on the, "Increasing Access to Healthy Food Through Farmers' Markets Initiative," helping families receiving WIC services redeem their benefits at farmers'

★ Nicole's and Hanna Griffin's development of a social media toolkit which launches in **May!**

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***"Could you please guide me through a normal day at the farmers market?"***

The Denton Community Market (DCM) is open every Saturday from 9am-1pm! As a Booth Manager, I arrive at the market at 7am to help with setting up chairs and tables for customers to sit and enjoy, setting up tents for musical performances, and arranging the DCM info booth for kids activities and FMNP, SNAP and DUFB voucher/token pick up. During the active hours of the market, I work with fellow Booth Managers and the Market Coordinator to ensure that all FMNP, SNAP, and DUFB recipients understand how the programs work at our market, as well as provide them a list of the farmers that accept these benefits every week. We work hard to ensure that everyone who comes to our market feels welcomed as they are, and assist vendors with any issues that may arise during the duration of the market day. I stay about an hour or two after the market is over along with other market staff to clean up. On a slow day our market averages about 2,500 attendees and on busy days it can get up to 4,000 attendees!



***"Has anything you learned at the farmers market supported you with your internship?"***

One of my favorite parts of working at the Denton Community Market is that I can apply the boots on the ground experience that I have learned to nationwide projects that I'm working on with the National WIC Association. One of these projects titled, "Increasing Access to Healthy Food

Through Farmers' Markets initiative," is a 3-year grant funded project from the Elevance Health Foundation designed to help families receiving WIC services redeem their benefits at farmers' markets, making it easier for those families to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs. I have been working closely with NWA's Research and Evaluation Manager, Hanna Griffin, to construct a Social Media Toolkit as a part of this project meant for WIC Participants, Farmers, and State and Local WIC Staff, which launches in May! I've gained many perspectives in my 6 months of working at DCM and 7 months interning with NWA, which have informed many of my suggestions for the toolkit as well as suggestions on how to make our market run smoother for food program participants. To increase farmer buy-in at DCM, I created a 1-pager detailing the positive effects that FMNP has on communities in North Texas and the effects the program has on fighting food insecurity. This was inspired by the NWA WIC State Fact Sheets, located on NWA's website. In addition, many participants that come to our booth inquiring about the FMNP program, aren't familiar with all of the details as to how the program operates. I was able to compare how we run FMNP at our market compared to other states so when creating the toolkit, we were intentional about using clear and precise language to make it as participant centered as possible.

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## Upcoming Webinar!

### Register for the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program Landscape Scan Report Findings Webinar

When: 3:00 - 4:00 PM EST on April 3, 2025

This webinar will present the findings of the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) Landscape Scan Report conducted under the *"Increasing Access to Healthy Food through Farmers' Markets"* project. The presentation will expand upon findings in the Landscape Scan Survey administered to WIC State Agencies in Spring 2024 and in-depth interviews with WIC participants and farmers' market staff conducted in Fall 2024 regarding FMNP practices across the nation. Learn about successes and challenges to implementation and redemption of FMNP benefits!

[Register Here!](#)

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## Welcome New CIP-WIC Team Members, Shan & Tamika!

**Shanzida** is a Project Associate working with



the CIP-WIC team to provide administrative support to WIC stakeholders, healthcare providers, and federal partners across CIP-WIC's portfolios. Shanzida is an emerging health administration professional dedicated to health equity with a focus on innovation and modernization in healthcare delivery.

Before joining NWA, Shanzida gained valuable experience in pre-K teaching, where she learned about nutrition and early childhood development. Shanzida holds a Bachelor of Science in Public Health from George Washington University and will be graduating this May with a Master of Health Administration (MHA). She is eager to continue learning how technology and the power of personal stories can work together to improve healthcare systems and participant outcomes.



*Shanzida Alam, Project Associate*

***How do you see the role of Management Information Systems (MIS) and AHEAD 3.0 in advancing health equity and improving healthcare access?***

I'm especially excited about the modernization and journey capture efforts that will make it easier to reach families who previously faced challenges, such as those in rural areas or non-English-speaking communities. With improved data integration and accessibility, we can bridge administrative gaps in care and ensure that more WIC families get the support they need.

***Provide a fun fact about yourself! (hobbies, etc).***

In my free time, I like learning about music production and how songs are engineered. I especially enjoy artists like Billie Eilish, The Fray, & Olivia Rodrigo.

***What are you most looking forward to this Spring/Summer!?***

I am looking forward to fishing, bike riding on the boardwalk, and spending time with my new baby nephew, Elias!

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**Tamika** is the Research Project Manager working with the CIP-WIC team. She brings





*Tamika Wallace, MPH - Research Project Manager*

Working with the team she brings over 15 years of public health experience to her role at NWA, where she leads the WIC MIS Modernization Strategy Project. In this role, she collaborates with partners to assess the current WIC Management Information System (MIS), develop modernization strategies, and support system improvements that enhance efficiency for WIC agencies and participants. She works closely with stakeholders to gather insights, analyze data, and develop technical assistance resources that inform the future state of WIC MIS. Previously, Tamika worked as a nutritionist in WIC local agencies and later led operations management for the MIS Unit of the New Jersey State WIC Agency.

She holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Connecticut and a Master of Public Health from Benedictine University. She is committed to leveraging her expertise in program operations, user acceptance, and technical training to help create impactful strategies to improve community services and access.

***1. How do you see the role of Management Information Systems (MIS) in advancing health equity and improving healthcare access?***

I'm excited about the future of MIS helping to ease the burden that is put on the frontline clinic staff. This will allow them to have higher quality interactions and focus on building trust with their communities. By streamlining data management, MIS should ensure accuracy while it empowers our WIC nutritionists to become key community advocates and champions for improved health equity.

***2. Provide a fun fact about yourself! (hobbies, etc).***

If I'm craving screen-free time, you'll find me reading or crocheting a stuffed toy for my kids.

***3. What are you most looking forward to this Spring/Summer?***

I'm looking forward to having lots of family trips to the beach this summer.

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## NWA Seeks a Graphic Designer Consultant

NWA received [\\$14.9 million](#) from USDA FNS via a four-year cooperative agreement to modernize WIC Management Information Systems (MIS) through the “WIC MIS Modernization Strategy” Project. NWA and its partners will assess the current WIC MIS landscape, plan for and support transitional improvements, develop a future state MIS product and market strategy, and assist USDA and State Agencies in implementation.

NWA received a [\\$1.6 million two-year grant](#) to support “AHEAD 3.0: Advancing Equity throughout the WIC Participant Journey,” which aims to center, understand, and address barriers to WIC participation, particularly for Black, Brown, and Indigenous participants. The project will map the WIC participant journey through Journey Mapping, develop recommendations that WIC Agencies can implement, expand the Participant Advisory Council to amplify diverse voices, and conduct a 2025 Multi-State WIC Participant Satisfaction Survey.

NWA is seeking a Graphic Designer Consultant to assist with activities related to both the MIS Strategy and AHEAD 3.0 grants. For the MIS Strategy Project, the consultant will assist in design and development of visual reports, infographics, and data visualizations. For the AHEAD 3.0 Project, the consultant will assist in development of the Journey Map to visually depict the full continuum of the WIC participant experience.

We encourage all qualified firms with experience in graphic design, focusing on nonprofit, public health, maternal child health, public health nutrition, WIC, and/or public policy to apply, and NWA members, partners, and stakeholders to share with their networks. Please submit questions about the RFP to [cipwic@nwica.org](mailto:cipwic@nwica.org) by April 4, 2025. Proposals are due by 5:00 pm ET on April 10, 2025.

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## Are you attending the Annual Education and Training Conference in Las Vegas?

Stop by the CIP-WIC booth to meet the CIP-WIC team, learn about our projects, and enter for your chance to win CIP-WIC swag! Be sure to look for your chance to win a CIP-WIC-themed water bottle, notebook, and more in your conference tote bag!

### Instructions

1. All Bingo cards will be placed in the tote bags that you receive when you check in!
2. Please provide your name and email on your Bingo card so we can contact you if you win.
3. Network and have connections sign your card!
4. Once you have filled out the full sheet, turn in your bingo card after the last concurrent session for each day at the NWA CIP-WIC table! All drawings will take place the following morning for the previous day.

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## Are you sitting for the RD or IBCLC Exam this Spring?



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### [National WIC Association](#)

1099 14th Street, NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20005

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in WIC



Spring is Here, Embrace the Season of Renewal with CIP-WIC!



## Annual Conference: Session Highlights



✨ WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program: Landscape Report Findings and Recommendations

Speaker: Dr. Kimberley Broomfield-Massey

We want to thank Urban Metrics Consultants for presenting NWA's Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Landscape Scan Report. The data analyzed was collected from the 2024 Landscape Scan Survey and in-depth



✨ Modernizing WIC's Management Information System: A Collaborative Approach to Shaping the Future

Speakers: Lucia Graves Jimenez, Carrie Harris, Claire Sadegzadeh, & Chloe Dillaway

In this session, attendees learned about the WIC MIS Modernization Strategy Project, a 4 year cooperative agreement between USDA-FNS and NWA, in partnership with Nava PBC

2024 Landscape Scan Survey and in-depth interviews with state staff, local staff, farmers, and farmers' market managers. In her presentation, Dr. Kimberley Broomfield-Massey touched on how both quantitative and qualitative data from State and Local agencies has shaped the current landscape and understanding of FMNP programs across the nation.



### ✨ WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program: Social Media Toolkit

Speakers: Hanna Griffin & Victoria Micalizzi

NWA is excited to announce the launch of the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Social Media Toolkit in May! This toolkit uses the findings from the Elevance Landscape Report and includes social media captions, customizable templates, and participant facing infographics that serve to increase awareness and redemption of FMNP benefits all over the country!

FNS and NWA, in partnership with Nava PBC and Code for America. Panelists discussed how research is uncovering challenges with current systems such as lack of interoperability, and opportunities to improve the participant experience. They also highlighted that local agency staff are centered in the planning and implementation of new updates. Overall, the session showed how important it will be to modernize the WIC MIS systems to support WIC families and staff!

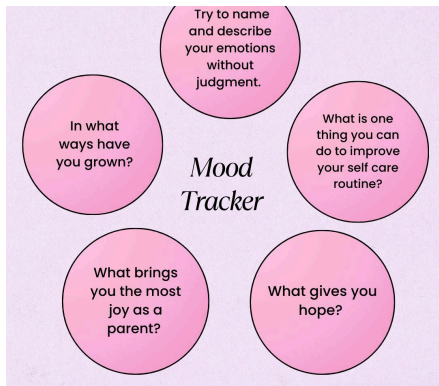


### ✨ Bridging the Gap: Solutions for Safer Pregnancies and Birth Outcomes

Speakers: Stacy Davis, Dr. Tyra Gross, Mona Liza Hamlin, & Olivia Harper

Our speakers did a wonderful job articulating the importance of maternal health awareness, especially in Black communities in the United States. We are so lucky to have connections with such dedicated and hardworking professionals who work every day to provide safe and culturally informed care to moms and babies!



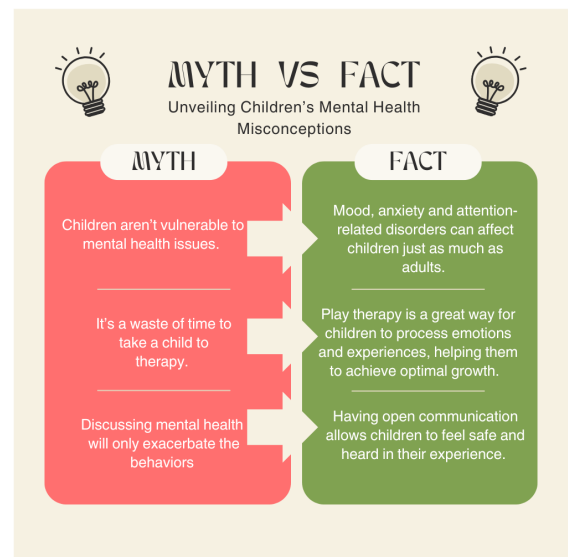


## Mood Tracker for Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week! (May 5-11)

Journaling offers a safe and private space to release built-up stress and overwhelming emotions. With so many changes - physically, emotionally, and mentally - writing things down can help process feelings that might be hard to say out loud. The purpose of this Mood Tracker is to allow moms to reflect on their experiences and gain clarity, all while creating a space for healing!

## Debunking Myths: Children's Mental Health Awareness Week! (May 3-9)

Debunking myths about children's mental health ensures that they get the support that they need without stigma or delay. Misconceptions can prevent early intervention, which is key for healthy emotional development. We create a more informed and compassionate environment where children feel seen and heard when we challenge these myths.



### Sources:

- Gill, Jess. "The Power of Play: How Play Therapy Turns Toys into Tools for Healing | the Graduate School of Education and Human Development | the George Washington University." *The Graduate School of Education and Human Development*, 2024, [gsehd.gwu.edu/child-centered-play-therapy](https://gsehd.gwu.edu/child-centered-play-therapy).
- Kalia, Saira, and Jacquelin Esque. "Busting Myths: Understanding Children's Mental Health." *The University of Arizona Health Sciences*, 5 May 2024, [healthsciences.arizona.edu/news/blog/busting-myths-understanding-childrens-mental-health](https://healthsciences.arizona.edu/news/blog/busting-myths-understanding-childrens-mental-health).



# Food Allergy Awareness Week! (May 9 – 15)

*It's Recipe Remix time! Enjoy a couple of your favorite meals, but subtract the allergens.*



## Baked Sweet Potato Bites - Peanut Free

### Ingredients:

- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup corn flakes, crushed

### Recipe:

1. Microwave or bake sweet potatoes until soft; scoop out flesh and mash.
2. In a mixing bowl, combine the mashed sweet potato, butter, brown sugar, orange juice and cinnamon.
3. Shape mixture into 1½ inch balls; roll in crushed cornflakes and place on a baking sheet coated with cooking spray.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes or until cornflakes are golden and sweet potato balls are heated through. Makes 12 balls.

Source: <https://texaswic.org/recipes/baked-sweet-potato-bites>

## Better Than Store-Bought Hummus - Dairy Free

### Ingredients:

One 15-ounce can of chickpeas (garbanzo beans)

¼ cup tahini

¼ cup fresh lemon juice (about two lemons)

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 garlic clove, minced

3 tablespoons aquafaba (canned chickpea liquid), and more as needed for desired consistency

Salt to taste

Optional toppings: sprinkle of sumac, paprika or ground cumin and additional olive oil

Source: <https://texaswic.org/recipes/better-store-bought-hummus>

### Recipe:

1. Drain chickpeas, reserving liquid (aquafaba) in a small bowl.
2. Combine tahini and lemon juice in a blender or food processor, and blend for 30 seconds.
3. Scrape sides and blend for an additional 20-30 seconds until mixture appears whipped.
4. Add olive oil, garlic, ½ can chickpeas and blend for one minute.
5. Scrape sides, add remaining chickpeas and reserved aquafaba. Blend for 1-2 minutes until smooth and creamy.
6. If hummus is too thick, add additional aquafaba one tablespoon at a time and blend to reach desired consistency.
7. Add salt as needed for desired taste. Because aquafaba usually contains added salt, only add salt after tasting the hummus.
8. Sprinkle desired toppings on hummus and add a drizzle of olive oil before serving.

# Happy Mother's Day from NWA!

## PAC Member Spotlight!

*"How has your experience in WIC empowered you as a mother?"*

“ WIC BRINGS MY FAMILY AN EXTRA SENSE OF SECURITY THAT ALLOWS ME TO HAVE PEACE OF MIND WHILE CARING FOR THE NUTRITIOUS NEEDS OF MY FAMILY. I'M AT EASE KNOWING THAT I DON'T HAVE THE EXTRA WORRY WHEN IT COMES TO FOOD AND I CAN FOCUS ON PLAYING, LAUGHING, AND ENJOYING MY CHILDREN'S CHILDHOOD. THE FINANCIAL STRESSES CAN BE A LOT AND TO HAVE THIS PROGRAM BE SO ACCESSIBLE AND LOVELY, IS JUST AN ADDED PLUS ”

- Lucia, New Hampshire WIC Participant

“ HELPED ME TO GIVE MORE NUTRITIOUS FOODS TO MY SON AND HELPED TO FEED HIM IN HIS EARLY INFANCY, WITH FORMULA BEING SO EXPENSIVE. ”

- Shannon, Alabama WIC Participant

## Project Updates

### NEW RELEASE: Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Landscape Scan Report

The National WIC Association is thrilled to announce the release of the *Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Landscape Scan Report*. This report was developed under the three-year *Increasing Access to Healthy Food through Farmers' Markets* initiative funded by the Elevance Health Foundation.

Guided by an equity-focused, mixed-methods approach, this evaluation draws on data from the NWA's Farmers' Market Landscape Analysis Survey with responses from 32 WIC Agencies across 27 states and in-depth interviews with 26 WIC stakeholders across 6 states. By synthesizing quantitative and qualitative insights, the report highlights promising practices that can enhance program accessibility and improve redemption rates.

### MOREWIC! Data Matching Community of Practice

Join the MORE WIC! Team for the second quarterly MORE WIC! Data Matching Community of Practice – a space for State and Local WIC Agencies to connect, share strategies, and learn from peers.

The next meeting is scheduled for **May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 3:00 PM EDT/12:00 PM PDT** and will feature a robust discussion on effective ways to contact WIC-eligible individuals and families identified through data matching for the purpose of WIC enrollment.

Don't miss this opportunity to collaborate and gain insights from others in the field. Staff from WIC State and Local Agencies, as well as from their data matching partner agencies, are welcome to join. [Sign up today](#) to receive your meeting invitation!

*The MORE WIC! Project (Matching, Outreach, Referrals for Enrollment in WIC) is led by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in partnership with the National WIC Association and funded through a cooperative agreement with USDA's Food and Nutrition Service.*

Read the Full Report

Sign Up Here

## NEW: Announcing the FMNP Community of Practice!



CIP-WIC is thrilled to announce a new [FMNP Community of Practice](#) hosted on the NWA Online Community.

The Community of Practice will launch as part of the *Increasing Access to Healthy Food through Farmers' Markets* initiative funded by the Elevance Health Foundation. This three-year project aims to increase access to fruits and vegetables by helping WIC participants redeem their FMNP benefits and the core WIC fruit and vegetable Cash Value Benefit (CVB) at farmers' markets.

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) Community of Practice is a collaborative space for sharing best practices and resources, exploring challenges, and advancing the WIC FMNP through innovative solutions. The Community of Practice aims to strengthen FMNP implementation and increase the use of FMNP and WIC Cash Value Benefit (CVB) benefits at farmers' markets.

The Community of Practice will foster peer learning and knowledge exchange through interactive webinars, the development of new resources, and the collection and centralization of existing FMNP materials for easy access and use. Members will collaboratively explore programmatic and technical challenges, elevate promising practices, and accelerate the adoption of strategies that enhance access, advance equity, and increase impact across State and Local Agency FMNP efforts.

Access the group [here](#) and click "Join" to connect with peers, share best practices, review FMNP

resources, and strengthen WIC FMNP together!

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[National WIC Association](#)

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## Dad's Make a Difference: NWA Father's Day Spotlight

### WIC Dad Feature!

This month, we want to shine light on Jeffrey Larsen, a WIC dad whose unique experiences have contributed to his family's health and nutrition journeys. See what he has to share about how WIC has supported him as a caregiver and what fatherhood within WIC means to him.



**What insight has your experience in WIC provided to you that you wouldn't have known otherwise?**

That men are eligible for WIC help as well.

**What do you wish that the WIC community knew more about when it comes to fatherhood?**

More single fathers need to know about this program. I feel like even less single fathers know they are eligible for this program than women.

World Pride: Inclusion for Every Family & Rainbow Wellness Kits!



(June 1 - June 30)

Pride Month is a powerful reminder of the importance of equity, visibility, and inclusion. At CIP-WC, we recognize that not all families reflect a traditional structure, and we support all families, including LGBTQIA+ parents, chosen families, and other non-traditional caregivers. Every family deserves access to care, support, and respect.

We invite you to explore our “Rainbow Wellness Kits,” which consist of two colorful and delicious recipes and inclusive parenting resources designed to celebrate and uplift every kind of family.

## Honey Lime Fruit Salad



Ingredients	Instructions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 lb fresh strawberries, diced</li><li>• 1 lb fresh pineapple, diced</li><li>• 12 oz blueberries</li><li>• 12 oz red grapes</li><li>• 4 kiwis, peeled and diced</li><li>• 1 mandarin orange</li><li>• ¼ c honey</li><li>• 2 tsp lime zest</li></ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Combine honey and lime zest together and set aside.</li><li>2. Mix all fruit in a large bowl and drizzle the honey mixture over it and combine.</li></ol>

**Nutrition Information: 8 Servings**  
**Calories per serving:** 122  
**Total Carbohydrates:** 36 g  
**Total Fat:** 0.5 g  
**Total sugars:** 25 g  
**Fiber:** 3.5 g  
**Vitamin C:** 75 mg  
**Cholesterol:** 0 mg  
**Potassium:** 307 mg  
**Protein:** 1 g  
**Vitamin K:** 24 mcg

Source: [Food Bank of Delaware](#)

## Stir Fry



Ingredients	Instructions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 tbsp vegetable oil</li><li>• 1 lb beef/chicken in strips</li><li>• 1 ½ c broccoli florets</li><li>• 1 red bell pepper, sliced</li><li>• 2 cups cooked brown rice</li><li>• 1 green onion, chopped</li><li>• 2 tbsp soy sauce</li><li>• 1 tsp minced garlic</li><li>• 2 carrots, thinly sliced</li></ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Chop &amp; slice vegetables accordingly</li><li>2. Heat vegetable oil in large frying pan over medium-high heat. Cook and stir beef/chicken until cooked well-done. (3-4 min)</li><li>3. Add broccoli, bell peppers, carrots, green onion, and garlic. Cook and stir vegetables for 2 minutes.</li><li>4. Season mixture with soy sauce. Continue to cook and stir until vegetables are tender, about 2 more minutes.</li><li>5. Serve over cooked rice!</li></ol>

**Nutrition Information: 4 Servings**  
**Calories:** 359  
**Fat:** 13 g  
**Carbohydrates:** 31 g  
**Protein:** 30 g  
**Sodium:** 544 mg  
**Fiber:** 4 g

Source: [Utah WIC](#)

## Inclusive Family Resources

🌈 **Rainbow Families** supports, educates and connects LGBTQ+ families, parents and prospective parents by offering a wide variety of education programs, support groups, opportunities to connect and more. Rainbow Families is a volunteer led non-profit organization supported by members, community sponsors, private and public grants and foundations. (<https://rainbowfamilies.org/>)

🌈 **Eisner Health** is committed to empowering patients of all gender identities and sexual orientations. They foster a welcoming and supportive environment for you and your family while

providing complete medical, dental, behavioral health, and specialty services to meet patients' needs. (<https://eisnerhealth.org/fatherhood-programs/> )

🌟 **Jose Luis Diaz**, WIC Director, CCI Health Services, identifies as a cisgender gay male and is committed to continuing to find ways to ensure that the WIC program is an inclusive space for all. Read his blog to learn more about his perspective of inclusive care that is delivered through evidence-based, person-centered strategies such as active listening, peer learning, and culturally responsive communication. (<https://www.nwica.org/blog/wic-programs-are-a-welcoming-place-for-all-including-lgbtq-individuals>)

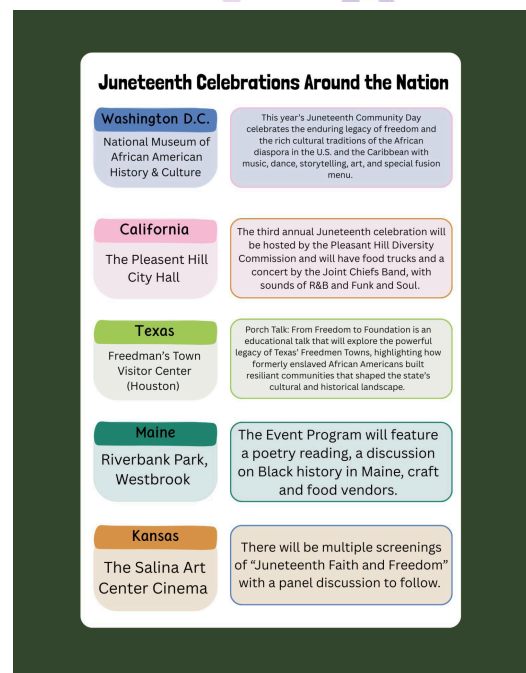
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## Juneteenth: Honoring Freedom, Culture, and Community!

Juneteenth, observed on June 19th, marks a pivotal day in American History - the day in 1865 when enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, learned they were free - more than 2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued. Communities across the country observe the day with parades, music, storytelling, and family and community gatherings, honoring the enduring strength, culture, and contributions of Black Americans.

As we celebrate Juneteenth, we also recognize the ongoing pursuit of justice, equity, and liberation.

🎉 **How is your community celebrating?**  
We'd love to hear about the local events, traditions, or personal reflections that make this day meaningful to you.



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## Project Updates

**NEW RELEASE: Farmers' Market Nutrition Program**

# Landscape Scan Report with Appendix and Social Media Toolkit!

## The National WIC Association Unveils the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Landscape Scan Report

The National WIC Association is pleased to announce the release of the **Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Landscape Scan Report**, complemented by an **Appendix** and a **Social Media Toolkit**.

This comprehensive report and toolkit were developed under the **Increasing Access to Healthy Food through Farmers' Markets** initiative, funded by the **Elevance Health Foundation**.

Employing an equity-focused, mixed-methods approach, this evaluation utilizes data from the NWA's Farmers' Market Landscape Analysis Survey, featuring responses from 32 WIC agencies across 27 states, alongside in-depth interviews with 26 WIC stakeholders from 6 states. By synthesizing both quantitative and qualitative insights, the report illuminates promising practices aimed at enhancing program accessibility and improving redemption rates.

The newly added **Appendix** encompasses:

- **2024 NWA Landscape Survey Questions**
- **Interview Guides** used with FMNP non-implementing agencies, high-redemption paper voucher implementers, and high-redemption eFMNP implementers
- **FMNP State Profiles**, derived from data submitted by State Agencies participating in the Landscape Survey

This expanded resource offers profound insights into the methodology of the landscape evaluation.

The findings from the Landscape Scan Report reveal valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities within the FMNP, underscoring critical areas where heightened awareness and education could foster improved participation. These insights have directly informed the development of the Social Media Toolkit, designed to bridge these gaps by providing resources and engaging content to effectively promote the program.

[Read the Landscape Report Here!](#)

[Access the Full Social Media Toolkit Here!](#)

# Join the FMNP Community of Practice



**CIP-WIC is thrilled to announce a new FMNP Community of Practice hosted on the NWA Online Community.**

The Community of Practice will launch as part of the *Increasing Access to Healthy Food through Farmers' Markets* initiative funded by the Elevance Health Foundation. This three-year project aims to increase access to fruits and vegetables by helping WIC participants redeem their FMNP benefits and the core WIC fruit and vegetable Cash Value Benefit (CVB) at farmers' markets.

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Access the group [here](#) and click "Join" to connect with peers, share best practices, review FMNP resources, and strengthen WIC FMNP together!

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## NWA Seeks a Videographer Consultant!

NWA is seeking a **videographer consultant** to assist with activities related to two projects: the **WIC Management Information Systems (MIS) Modernization Strategy** and the **AHEAD 3.0**.



## **WIC Management Information Systems (MIS) Modernization Strategy and the AHEAD 3.0: Advancing Equity throughout the WIC Participant Journey projects.**

The MIS Strategy project is a four-year cooperative agreement between USDA FNS and NWA, in partnership with Nava Public Benefit Corporation and Code for America. NWA and its partners will assess the current WIC MIS landscape; develop a near-term transitional plan for improvements to current MIS; develop a long-term MIS planning, product, and market strategy; and assist USDA and State agencies in implementing the strategy. . For this project, the consultant will develop videos to highlight research findings and create compelling visual assets to accompany reports and publications.

NWA received a \$1.6 million two-year grant to support “AHEAD 3.0: Advancing Equity throughout the WIC Participant Journey,” which aims to center, understand, and address barriers to WIC participation, particularly for Black, Brown, and Indigenous participants. NWA will map the WIC participant journey through Journey Mapping; develop actionable recommendations for WIC Agencies; expand the Participant Advisory Council to amplify diverse voices; and conduct a 2025 Multi-State WIC Participant Satisfaction Survey. For this project, the consultant will develop videos that illustrate the full WIC participant journey as well as videos presenting solutions to pain points in WIC participation.

We encourage all qualified firms with experience in videography, focusing on nonprofit, public health, maternal child health, public health nutrition, WIC, and/or public policy to apply, and NWA members, partners, and stakeholders to share with their networks. **Please submit questions about the RFP to [cipwic@nwica.org](mailto:cipwic@nwica.org) by June 13, 2025. Proposals are due by 5:00 pm ET on June 26, 2025.**

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## **WIC Agency Referral & Data Sharing Practices Survey - Deadline Extended!**

### **Share Your Agency's Experience with WIC Referrals and Data Sharing with Healthcare Providers!**

Thank you to all the Local and State Agencies who have already completed NWA's survey on WIC referrals and data sharing with healthcare providers! Your insights are incredibly valuable.

To ensure we capture as many perspectives as possible, we're extending the deadline by **one week**. You now have until **Friday, June 6th** to complete the 15-minute survey. **[Click here to take the survey now!](#)**

This survey is part of NWA's two-year initiative, funded by Kaiser Permanente, to improve care coordination for WIC families by strengthening referrals and data sharing between healthcare

providers and WIC Agencies. Your input will guide future recommendations and tools to support WIC agencies.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Chloe Dillaway at [cdillaway@nwica.org](mailto:cdillaway@nwica.org).

Thank you again for your participation—we look forward to learning from your agency!

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## Welcome to the NWA Research to Practice Newsletter

Welcome to the NWA *Research to Practice* Newsletter! In this quarterly newsletter, we highlight research from USDA, NWA, nonprofit organizations, and academic institutions. We will also provide insights on WIC caseload trends and updates from our member-led Evaluation Committee. If there are studies or reports you would like us to highlight in the next issue, please contact Hanna Griffin, NWA's Research and Evaluation Manager ([hgriffin@nwica.org](mailto:hgriffin@nwica.org)). If you are conducting research and would like support from the NWA, we invite you to complete the [NWA WIC Researcher Survey](#).

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### Evaluation Committee

Supplemental foods are one of the most important benefits offered by the WIC program. Following behavioral, health, medical, and risks assessments during a client's certification appointment, supplemental food benefits are assigned to the WIC clients, tailored for the nutritional needs, and given to them via electronic benefit transfer card. Research over the years has shown the vital role these foods play in improving the health outcomes of the WIC population. However, the value of these foods can be perceived differently by various stakeholders -- for program administrators, some understand the value of the food benefits being provided from program management and outreach perspective as administrators, whereas knowing the monetary value, type, and quantity of foods they can receive may be necessary in WIC participants and potential clients' decisions to participate and stay enrolled in the program.

As Agencies implement the [finalized food package updates](#) within a year, WIC programs and participants will reassess their experience of the value of the food package. The Final Rule aims to provide WIC participants with more food choices based on evidence-based research and the latest scientific findings and provides WIC State Agencies with more flexibility to meet or accommodate participants' needs.

To get a deeper understanding and present the various complexities of value with respect to the



To get a deeper understanding and present the various complexities of value with respect to the food package, the Evaluation Committee has planned a series of webinars to discuss food package value in different forms and what it means to the WIC community. The webinars are intended to give WIC State Agencies ideas and tools to examine their approach to valuing food packages and present value to participants as a way to conduct outreach, improve client retention, and assess program management.

The first webinar on this topic was presented by Dr. Erica Kenney on the *Cost-effectiveness of improved WIC food package for preventing childhood obesity*. She shared the effect of the 2009 food package changes on the WIC population, presented inputs and outputs of the CHOICES model, and elaborated on a strategy that models cost-effectiveness for the WIC food packages in the prevention of childhood obesity. This information can be beneficial to State Agencies and researchers planning to evaluate the effect of these WIC food package updates on other important maternal and child health outcomes.

### **Save the Date Thursday, July 31st 3:00 - 4:00 PM EST**

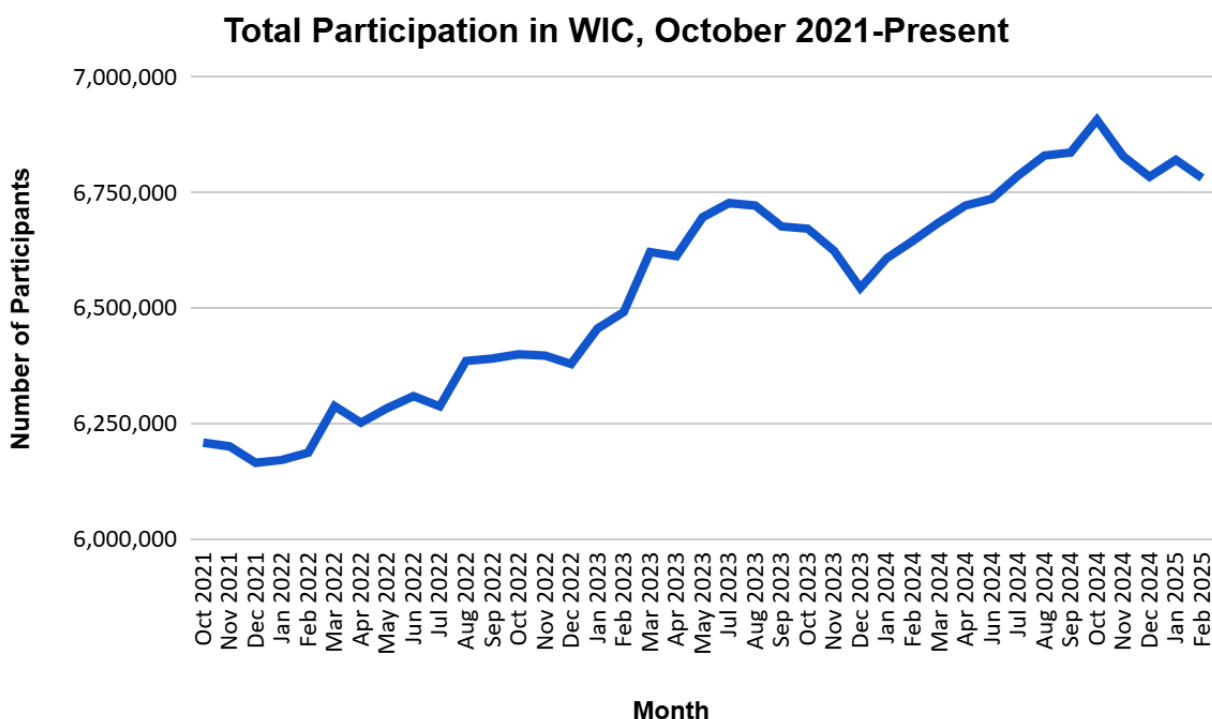
Join the Evaluation Committee for another discussion on the value of the WIC food package! This upcoming webinar will turn to client perspectives of food package value and will take a closer look at the impact of increased CVBs in Michigan.

If you have questions or comments for the Evaluation Committee, please contact the Committee Chair, Bagya Kodur ([KodurB@michigan.gov](mailto:KodurB@michigan.gov)). Stay tuned for next quarter's issue for ongoing priorities and updates from the Committee!

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### **WIC Caseload Trends**

In each newsletter, we will present the latest WIC participation data. According to preliminary data from FNS, WIC caseloads steadily increased from January 2024, with the highest participation seen in October 2024. In October, total WIC participation reached 6.9 million, up from 6.83 million in September 2024. Since October, WIC participation has slowly decreased, at 6.82 million in November and 6.78 million in December. There was an increase in participation in January at 6.82 million. However, in February 2025- the most recent month for which data is available, total WIC participation dropped from 6.82 million to 6.78 million participants, reflecting a 0.57% decrease in participation in one single month. For a deeper dive into state-level participation, food costs, participant breakdown, and additional data, please visit the [FNS WIC data tables](#).



## USDA Research



### USDA, FNS Research Updates

#### **NEW RELEASE: Development of a WIC Participant and Program Characteristics Longitudinal Data Set**

On April 15th, FNS published the [“Development of a WIC Participant and Program Characteristics Longitudinal Data Set”](#).

Since 1992, FNS has collected Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program Characteristics (PC) data every two years. The WIC PC data are a census of WIC participants and describe participant-level information on demographics, income, nutritional risks, anthropometrics, hematology, breastfeeding status, and food package prescriptions during the month of April for each WIC PC year. Currently, WIC PC data can only be used to identify population trends in the program over time. Because the WIC PC data lack identifiers to link participants over time, individual-level longitudinal analyses such as participant retention cannot be measured. This report describes the process of working with one WIC state agency to create a pilot WIC PC longitudinal data set of infant and child participants and the challenges and successes of this effort.

## **NEW RELEASE: WIC and FMNP Modernization Annual Evaluation Report, 2024**

On April 21st, FNS Published the “[WIC and FMNP Modernization Annual Evaluation Report, 2024](#)”.

In 2021, Congress provided the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) with \$390 million and waiver authority for outreach, innovation, and program modernization in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). The [WIC and FMNP Modernization Evaluation](#) tracks the progress and outcomes of these efforts.

This first annual report provides an overview of the WIC and FMNP modernization efforts underway and highlights early implementation findings, covering activities from September 2022 – September 2024.

### **Key Findings:**

- FNS awarded grants to all 88 WIC state agencies to modernize technology and service delivery, improve the shopping experience, and improve access to farmers' markets.
- As of September 2024, many WIC and FMNP state agency projects were in the planning stage.
- Total WIC participation increased from 6.24 million participants in FY 2021 to 6.58 million in FY 2023. This upward trend continued into FY 2024. WIC participation grew to 6.84 million in September 2024. As WIC and FMNP modernization progresses, the WIC and FMNP Modernization Evaluation will determine whether these efforts are associated with changes in participation and other outcomes.

## **USDA, ERS Research Updates**

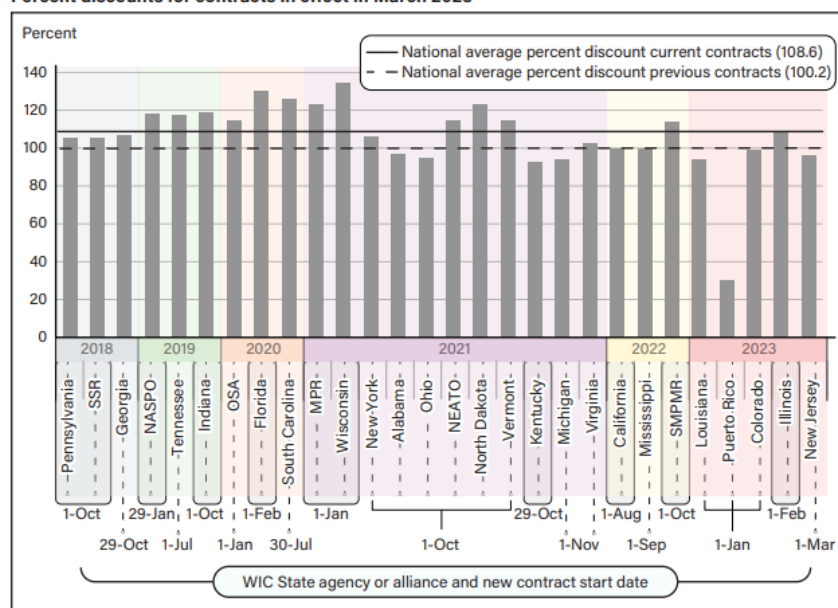
### **NEW RELEASE: Manufacturers' Bids for Infant Formula Rebate Contracts, 2013-23**

This study summarizes trends in infant formula rebate contracts and examines how factors, such as declining shares of infants born in the United States participating in the Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), contribute to these trends. For contracts in effect in March 2023, WIC State agencies, on average, received rebates that exceeded manufacturers' wholesale prices for their formula. This resulted in greater savings to WIC compared with previous contracts. Manufacturers' net wholesale price bids are positively correlated with the share of infants participating in WIC. On average, when the share of infants in a State participating in WIC decreases, net wholesale price bids decrease. Read the report [here](#).

### **Percent discounts for contracts in effect in March 2023**

**(Figure 5 in Manufacturers' Bids for Infant Formula Rebate Contracts, 2013-23 Report)**

Percent discounts for contracts in effect in March 2023



WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. SSR=Southwest/Southeast Regions (Arkansas, New Mexico, and North Carolina). NASPO = National Association of State Procurement Officials (Alaska; Arizona; Delaware, Hawaii; Idaho; Kansas; Maryland; Montana; Nevada; Oregon; Utah; Washington; Washington, DC; West Virginia; Wyoming; American Samoa; Guam; the Virgin Islands; the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona; Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada; Navajo Nation; Osage Nation; and Pueblo of Isleta). OSA = Oklahoma State Alliance (Oklahoma; Chickasaw Nation; Citizen Potawatomi Nation; Eight Northern Indian Pueblos, Incorporated; Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians; Muscogee (Creek) Nation; Ojibwe-Missouri Tribe; and WCD Enterprises, Incorporated). MPR = Mountain Plains Region (Missouri; Nebraska; South Dakota; and North Dakota (beginning 10/1/2021)). NEATO = New England and Tribal Organization (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont (as of 10/1/2021), and Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma). SMPMR = Southwest/Mountain Plains/Midwest Regions (Iowa, Minnesota, Texas, and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma).

Note: The national average percent discount for previous contracts was 100.2 percent. The national average percent discount for current contracts was 108.6 percent.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service based on data from USDA, Food and Nutrition Service.

## Researcher Spotlight

In upcoming editions of this newsletter, we aim to highlight the inspiring work of researchers who are advancing knowledge and improving outcomes within the WIC community. Whether through innovative studies, impactful findings, or creative solutions, these researchers are helping shape the future of WIC services nationwide.

If you are a researcher and would like to showcase your background and expertise, we invite you to complete this [short form](#)!

Your contribution will help us celebrate and amplify the research driving positive change in the WIC community.

## In Case You Missed It: Finalists and Winners of WIC Learning Collaborative Research Impact Awards

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the [NOPREN/HER WIC Research Learning Collaborative](#) announced the finalists and winners for the WIC Learning Collaborative Research Impact Award for 2024.

This year's finalists have made significant strides in evaluating WIC policies and communicating their implications for nutrition, health, and program effectiveness. Please join us in congratulating the authors of this impactful work!

Chancay, J., Gross, S. M., Koegel, K., Pompa, C., Eppes, E. V., Kang, Y., ... & Caulfield, L. E. (2024). A WIC Agency Drip Marketing Campaign Is Well Received and Improves Program Participation and Retention: A Quasi-Experimental Study. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*.

Herrera, Y. M., Vadiveloo, M., Blau, S., Oaks, B. M., Quashie, N. T., & Tovar, A. (2024). Feasibility and acceptability of a personalized, pre-filled online grocery cart to improve benefit redemption and diet quality of grocery purchases among participants of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). *Appetite*, 202, 107647.

Kenney, E. L., Lee, M. M., Barrett, J. L., Ward, Z. J., Long, M. W., Cradock, A. L., ... & Gortmaker, S. L. (2024). Cost-effectiveness of improved WIC food package for preventing childhood obesity. *Pediatrics*, 153(2), e2023063182.



Nitto, A. M., Crespo-Bellido, M., Yenerall, J., Anderson Steeves, E. T., Kersten, S. K., Vest, D., & Hill, J. L. (2024). Mixed methods evaluation of the COVID-19 changes to the WIC cash-value benefit for fruits and vegetables. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 12, 1371697.

Smith, T. A., & Valizadeh, P. (2024). Aging out of WIC and child nutrition: evidence from a regression discontinuity design. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 106(2), 904-924.



## New WIC Publications

In recent months, several noteworthy publications on the topic of WIC have appeared in peer-reviewed journals. Below, we've curated a selection of standout articles. Clickable links are provided for access to each article, and all listed articles are Open Access unless otherwise noted.

### Recently Published Studies by Topic Area

#### ***Benefit Redemption***

## **Benefit Redemption**

Anderson CE, Yepez CE, Whaley SE. WIC service use, benefit redemption, and continued participation among participants in California. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. Published online May 17, 2025. doi:10.1016/j.jand.2025.05.009 (Not Open Access)

## **Coordinated Care**

Ali S, Gibbs SE, Wiseman K, et al. A Qualitative Study To Understand Parental, Health Care Provider and WIC Nutritionist Perspectives on Early Childhood Beverage Choices for WIC-enrolled Families in a Southeastern US Health System. *Matern Child Health J*. 2025;29(5):628-638. doi:10.1007/s10995-025-04075-w

Ma Y, Bailey-Davis L, Moore AM, Ruggiero CF, McCabe CF, Savage JS. Effect of a care-coordinated responsive parenting intervention on obesogenic risk behaviours among mother-infant dyads enrolled in WIC. *Pediatr Obes*. Published online May 15, 2025. doi:10.1111/ijpo.70020

## **Food Package**

Wang G, Bitler M, Schillinger D, Halla M, Stillman S, Hamad R. Impact of the 2009 WIC revision on infant and maternal health: A quasi-experimental multi-state study. *Soc Sci Med*. 2025;373:117974. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2025.117974 (Not Open Access)

Zhang Q, Patel PT, Neupane B, et al. Consumption of the Food Groups with the Revised Benefits in the New WIC Food Package: A Scoping Review. *Nutrients*. 2025;17(5):856. Published 2025 Feb 28. doi:10.3390/nu17050856

## **Telehealth**

Chancay J, Gross SM, Koegel K, et al. A WIC Agency Drip Marketing Campaign Is Well Received and Improves Program Participation and Retention: A Quasi-Experimental Study. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. 2025;125(3):323-334.e3. doi:10.1016/j.jand.2024.07.163 (Not Open Access)

Melnick EM, O'Reilly NV, Acciai F, Lorts C, Jossefides M, Ohri-Vachaspati P. Health Communications Theory-Based Text Message Reminders Boost Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Appointment Attendance Among American Indian Populations. *Nutrients*. 2025; 17(7):1112. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu17071112>

Martinez-Brockman JL, Granner JR, Buchanan B, et al. Evaluation and adaptation of a two-way text messaging intervention in the WIC breastfeeding peer counseling program: A qualitative analysis. *PLoS One*. 2025;20(1):e0313779. Published 2025 Jan 9.



analysis. *PLoS One*. 2025;20(1):e0313779. Published 2025 Jan 9.  
doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0313779

### **WIC Participation**

Choi S, Mendoza Kabua P, Andersen JA, McElfish PA, Brown CC. Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Participation during Pregnancy: Racial/ethnic Inequities among Medicaid-Covered Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and Hispanic Women. *J Racial Ethn Health Disparities*. Published online April 28, 2025.  
doi:10.1007/s40615-025-02452-3 (Not Open Access)

Ayalasomayajula S, Melo Herrera Y, Frank HE, et al. Leveraging Implementation Science to Identify and Address Facilitators and Barriers to WIC Enrollment, Participation, and Retention. *J Nutr*. 2025;155(4):1246-1257. doi:10.1016/j.tjnut.2025.01.035 (Not Open Access)

### **WIC Participant Experience**

Gilbert A, Frank T, McDermott L, et al. Access to and Satisfaction with the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program: Differences Across Race, Ethnicity, Income, and Urbanicity among Missouri Residents. *Food Nutr Bull*. Published online March 19, 2025.  
doi:10.1177/03795721251323312 (Not Open Access)

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The National WIC Association (NWA) is the nonprofit voice of the 12,000 public health nutrition service provider agencies who serve over 6.7 million mothers, babies, and young children served by the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). NWA provides education, guidance, and support to WIC staff; and drives innovation and advocacy to strengthen WIC as we work toward a nation of healthier families.

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