

Secret Ingredient Stories: Each New Experience

WIC has the resources to help caregivers navigate combo-feeding and make informed choices to meet their specific needs.

Meet Nicole in Phoenix, Arizona.

When her first child was born preterm, Nicole turned to WIC for support in making important infant feeding decisions.

Because her baby needed extra calories, Nicole decided to use a combination of specialized infant formula and breastmilk to meet her and her baby's needs. With her second child, she also found that combo-feeding worked best.



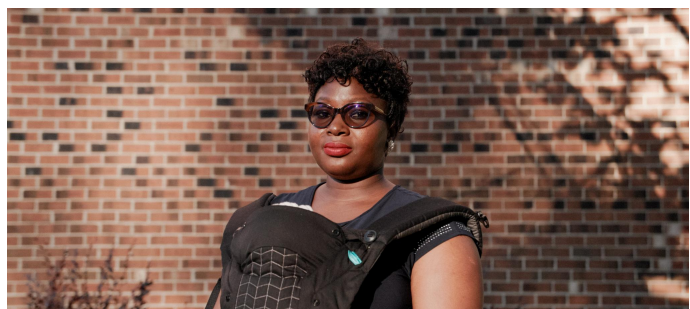
“A lot of times we have parents coming in who are trying to feed their babies and there are bumps in the road. We know that that happens and we want to make sure that they have the information and resources to make the best choice possible. And that can look different for everybody. It’s not all or nothing.” – Ivan Zacarias, WIC Director, Valle del Sol

With each new experience, caregivers must make choices. The best choice is an informed choice. WIC has resources to help caregivers navigate combo-feeding and obtain specialized infant formulas to meet specific needs like preterm infants or those with specific health concerns.

Additionally, formula feeding and breastfeeding do not have to be exclusive, combo-feeding or mixed feeding plans can be implemented successfully.

“My babies were taking both [breastmilk and formula] and they’re thriving, so that’s what was most important to me.” – Nicole, WIC participant

Meet Assanatou (“Assa”) in Carrboro, North Carolina.



When Assa faced challenges with breastfeeding, specifically around latching, she turned to WIC for support and resources. Getting a comfortable and effective latch can be difficult, but seeking support early and often will help. WIC has resources to help caregivers face each new experience.

“I didn’t really feel like a complete mother without my child getting breastmilk. I wanted to do my part.” – Assa

She worked with a WIC breastfeeding consultant who helped Assa access a medical-grade breast pump. The breast pump helped Assa increase her milk supply so that she could decide to combo-feed and meet her goal of providing her children with at least some breastmilk.

“There is no right or wrong when it comes to taking care of your child. We all take different paths to healthy. Options are what give you power in life to make your own decisions for your family’s health.” – Lindsay Kohut, WIC Nutritionist

Feeding infants can be hard. Every situation is unique, and there’s so much advice everywhere—and from everyone—it can be overwhelming trying to make the right choice. Caregivers who engage with WIC breastfeeding support have improved breastfeeding outcomes.

“Without that close relationship with WIC, I wouldn’t be able to breastfeed.” – Assa, WIC participant

In each new experience, the secret ingredient is you. It’s normal to have questions about infant feeding. WIC can help find the answers.