



WHY WIC NEEDS TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA

WIC's mission is to provide client-centered nutrition education and other services in clinics. Why shouldn't that care extend beyond the clinic doors?

The majority of adults in the US are active on social media. Among people between 18 and 49, virtually everyone uses at least one social network.¹

In 2015, NWA conducted a national survey and found that twice as many moms go to social media than a lactation consultant when looking for breastfeeding or infant nutrition information.²

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR WIC?

There is a huge opportunity to share WIC expertise and information with moms online. Moms are looking for this information, and WIC has it. Social media is one way to meet moms where they are and to make sure they're getting the best information possible.

But adding social media to your workload isn't always simple. From departmental policies to staff training, there are a lot of obstacles keeping WIC from fully engaging online.

SETTING THE STAGE

Look at what your agency or clinic is currently doing to reach new families and keep current WIC families engaged. Are you doing digital outreach?

Ask a few questions:

1. Could we do more to engage moms online?

2. Why aren't we already doing that?
3. Has it been tried before?
4. Who can change that?
5. What can I do to help push things along?

One great first step is to gather data supporting the need for a digital presence so you can build a strong case.

RESOURCES

The digital world changes very rapidly. What was true a few years or months ago may not be true today. This presents an interesting challenge. Luckily, there are some resources to help you. For up-to-date trends and information about online engagement, take a look at some of these sources:

1. The Beliefs, Attitudes and Behaviors report NWA created using data from the 2015 survey mentioned above. Keep in mind that this survey is now a few years old and the actual data is probably not accurate today. But what we know is that the picture that was painted a few years ago was that moms were looking for information and that social media usage trends are continuing upward. Note: You'll need to contact a member of the NWA staff to get access to this report.
2. The Pew Research Center does an annual survey of social media use. Visit pewinternet.org to see current data.
3. Meredith, the country's largest producer of mass media products for parents, frequently shares information with NWA about what moms are engaging with. Check out one of their previous blog posts at <https://www.nwica.org/blog/millennial-moms-confident-cool-connected-#.W2L-LLgna72>, and check with NWA about what new information they may have.

¹ Pew Research Center Social Media Use in 2018. Accessed online: www.pewinternet.org/2018/03/01/social-media-use-in-2018/

² Beliefs, Attitudes, and Behaviors: A Report of a National Survey of U.S. Mothers, Prospective Mothers, and Physicians about Their Perspectives on Nutrition and Breastfeeding Services. Not published but available upon request.