

MARWIC

T · I · M · E · S

MID-ATLANTIC REGION SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN

NEW JERSEY'S NORTH HUDSON WIC PROGRAM WELCOMES THE USDA

By Karen Lazarowitz, MS, RD, IBCLC

NJ's North Hudson Community Action Corporation WIC Program was honored to host a visit by Dr. Katie Wilson, USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, and Patricia Dombroski, USDA Mid-Atlantic Regional Office Program Administrator. They were joined by NJ Department of Health WIC Director Electra A. Moses, Breastfeeding Coordinator Florence Rotondo, Program Manager Food Delivery Services Melissa Briggs, Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Coordinator Mary Ann Ellsworth and New Jersey WIC Coordinators Jayalakshmi Velpuri, Robin M. McRoberts, Dorothy Monica, and Meg McCarthy-Klein. NHCAC President/CEO Joan M. Quigley and Director North Hudson CAP Rosemary J. Lavagnino welcomed the guests and elaborated on the WIC services and successes of the Program.

WIC Coordinator Karen Lazarowitz led the USDA, NJ DOH and WIC Coordinators on an office tour to observe the clinic layout and to learn of the services offered. We took a break on the tour to enjoy the ambiance of the Breastfeeding Lounge where pregnant and breastfeeding mothers have the opportunity to relax and converse with one another and offer reciprocal support. The successes of the breastfeeding services offered at the WIC sites and the local hospitals have resulted in a breastfeeding rate of 16% and an overall breastfeeding rate of 53%. One of the new initiatives in the department is the distribution of



VIP VISIT — USDA Deputy Under Secretary Dr. Katie Wilson and MARO Program Administrator Patricia Dombroski met with NJ Dept. of Health, NHCAC and WIC Coordinators.

nursing bras to the exclusively breastfeeding mothers which is well received by the women. Everyone enjoyed meeting the staff, including Nutritionist Liliana Flores, who demonstrated her children's nutrition reading classes to encourage parents and children to read together. Nutritionists Lilibeth Garcia and Erika Mendez introduced "Willow," the rabbit puppet who teaches children about fruits and vegetables. There was interest in learning about all the creative activities offered by the Program including

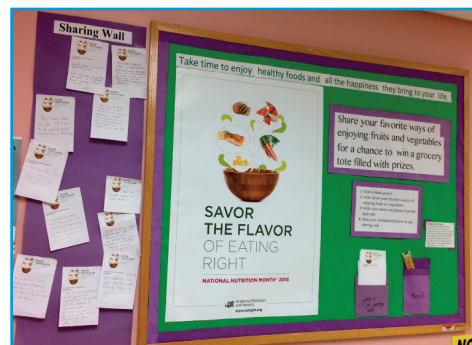
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MARYLAND'S FREDERICK COUNTY WIC SAVORS THE FLAVOR OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

By Danielle Opatz, Maryland WIC Program Dietetic Intern

As part of National Nutrition Month (NNM), Maryland's Frederick County WIC created an interactive bulletin board in their lobby. Half of the board was decorated with a NNM poster with this year's slogan, "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right." The other half asked participants to share how they savor the flavor of fruits or vegetables. Often it is challenging to consume the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables. Therefore, a place was created where participants and staff could share how they are able to enjoy fruits and veggies. The sharing wall provided participants fresh ideas for enjoying fruits and vegetables in order to motivate them to try something new.

During their in-service meeting, WIC staff had the opportunity to participate in the NNM interactive bulletin board activity. They were asked to share their favorite way(s) of enjoying fruits or vegetables. They jotted down their ideas on NNM sticky notes and took turns sharing what they wrote. Some staff examples included: "Our family grows sweet corn in the summer. We enjoy shucking it together, wrapping it in foil with seasonings and butter and cooking it on the grill." "We love to eat our veggies cooked in our wok! Onions and carrots are our favorite two veggies and we



GET THE MESSAGE — Check out this NNM-themed bulletin board.

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USDA MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL OFFICE CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH WITH COLLABORATION AND FLAVOR

By Jennifer Nagy, RD, MPH, USDA Program Specialist

Staff from the USDA Mid-Atlantic Regional Office (MARO) celebrated National Nutrition Month in March with a collaborative event organized by our Wellness and Know Your Farmer committees. The meeting started with an informative and interesting presentation on “Understanding the Nutrition Facts Label,” presented by Michelle Brill, Family and Community Health Sciences Educator from the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Mercer County, NJ. Michelle provided an overview of the Nutrition Facts Label which included explanations of the label, hands-on label reading practice



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT — MARO Staff practice label reading.



PESTO PLEASE — Urban Agriculture Guest Speaker served fresh herbs pesto.

among participants, information about proposed changes to the label and practical tips for choosing healthy foods from information obtained from the food label. Following Michelle was another engaging and interesting presentation from Jim Simon, Deputy Director of the Isles Urban Agriculture Program located in Trenton, NJ. Jim works with community members to transform underutilized urban land into gardens, bringing hunger relief, fresh food access, beautification, and secure open spaces. They also promote gardening and food education to help increase demand for fresh foods and improve health. Jim provided an overview of the Isles Urban Agriculture Program and shared a beautiful slide show of current and past garden projects.

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At the conclusion of the event, MARO staff members Dolores Chin and Nina Catena Wirth provided a cooking demonstration utilizing this year’s NNM, “Savor the Flavor.” Delores prepared a Malay vegetable curry which included an array of spices including ginger, turmeric, coriander, cumin and chili powder and Nina prepared healthy vegetable pasta with a cilantro lemon pesto made from fresh herbs and hemp seeds. Each food demonstrator explained how herbs and spices can be used to flavor food as a healthier alternative to high sodium seasonings. MARO staff was then able to sample and enjoy these healthy and tasty treats! ■



KEY INGREDIENTS — These ingredients were the key to the flavors in the vegetable curry and pesto squash dishes.

MARO WINS MyPLATE, MyWINS CHALLENGE

By Justin Wohlsifer, Senior Program Specialist

March was National Nutrition Month, and in the spirit of friendly competition, MARO staff pledged to take the MyPlate, MyWins Challenge, a fun and simple food and physical activity challenge available through the USDA SuperTracker application. Contestants undertook the challenge to eat two foods from each MyPlate food group and do two physical activities for two days. And in the true spirit of competition, MARO not only competed against one another but also competed against her sister regions.

During the two days of the challenge, contestants entered their foods and physical activities using the USDA SuperTracker group page. Points were assigned for eating foods from each food group and for engaging in physically activities. Contestants also received bonus points for completing nutrition-related quiz questions.

Taking first place for the national challenge was MARO’s own Jaime Van Lieu, WIC Branch Chief.

National Results

Regions	MARO	MPR	WRO	NO	NERO	SERO
Number of Participants	22	3	7	13	1	3
Total Points Earned	11,880	1,300	2,910	8,470	660	1,470

By Kelly Mannherz, MS, IBCLC, USDA Regional Nutritionist

On May 2-3, the USDA WIC and SNAP-Ed Regional Nutritionists were invited to speak at the annual conference of the Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network (PA NEN). PA NEN aims to improve nutrition education and support in Pennsylvania communities by ensuring that effective nutrition resources, primarily for low-income populations, are available across the state.

USDA WIC Nutritionist Kelly Mannherz and USDA SNAP-Ed Nutritionist Doris Chin spearheaded a session titled “What’s new at the USDA Food and Nutrition Service?” Topics of

discussion included the USDA’s Strategic Priorities, which details the goals of the agency for each of its 15 nutrition assistance programs. Focus areas for WIC include increasing national breastfeeding rates from 30.5% in FY2015 to 31% in FY2016, improving the retention of children on the WIC Program, and implementing Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) for all WIC Programs by 2020. Best practices and resources from the Mid-Atlantic Region and across the country were shared. Another USDA priority includes the establishment of a State Nutrition Action Council (SNAC) in every

state. This initiative aims to bring representatives from the Food and Nutrition Service’s programs in each state together to decrease obesity rates.

Participants at the conference included mostly WIC and SNAP-Ed employees, and they were encouraged to collaborate with each other and share resources to avoid working in silos. Lastly, the importance of publicly sharing success stories in our programs was highlighted, as there is tremendous help being provided to the participants of our programs every day that should be recognized! ■

DELAWARE WIC IS NOW ON FACEBOOK

By Maria Shroyer, MS, RD, LDN

Delaware WIC reached their goal of being able to connect with participants through social media. Through partnering with the University of Delaware and the Get Up And Do Something campaign, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts were established for Delaware WIC.

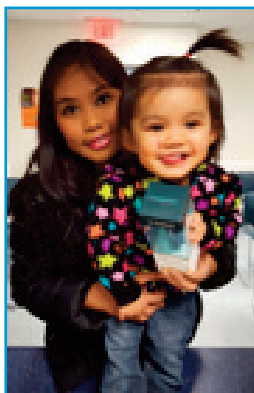
The campaign, which ran from January through April, focused primarily on Facebook participation. In clinic, participants received a flyer and a magnet with the logo in order to find Delaware WIC on Facebook. If they liked the page while in clinic, they were given a Farmers’ Market reusable shopping bag. Each client who liked Delaware WIC on Facebook was automatically entered to win a FitBit from a weekly drawing. One Fit Bit was given out each week for 12 weeks.

Two students from the University of Delaware lead most of the weekly content. Content features recipes, cooking videos, information shared from other agencies within the state, general health information on a variety of public health topics, and weekly local happenings (couponing classes, breastfeeding classes, tax help).

To date, 665 people have liked Delaware WIC on Facebook! Facebook has offered the Delaware WIC Program the opportunity to keep participants informed on events that may interest them, offer parenting tips, and promote breastfeeding. Social media provides a current, fun spin on the way the agency connects with the participants. ■



LIKE IT — Find the Delaware WIC Program on Facebook to see the content being shared!



WINNER WINNER — A WIC Participant happily receives the FitBit she won in the weekly drawing.

VIRGINIA’S CHESTERFIELD WIC CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

March was a busy month for Virginia’s Chesterfield Health District as celebrations for National Nutrition Month were in full swing! Throughout the month, the WIC nutrition staff provided “Ask the Nutritionist” sessions at three local libraries — La Prade, Meadowdale, and Ettrick — in which their vast knowledge of nutrition was shared with library patrons. The Health District was also able to team together to raise over 500 cans to be donated to the Chesterfield Food Bank and be distributed to families throughout the community in need of a nutritious meal.

To top the month off, some of the staff at the Health Department participated in the fourth annual WIC Walk! The staff members gathered outside of the Health Department and set out on a 1.5-mile walk on April 1, all in the name of health and wellness.

Every year the staff at the Chesterfield Health Department is very receptive when it comes to participating in National Nutrition Month activities and strives to exude a healthy attitude year-round. ■



WALK FOR WIC — Chesterfield WIC staff completing the 1.5 mile walk.

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will have them tomorrow for dinner.” “My kids love to pick blueberries and raspberries right from our yard and rinse them with the hose and eat them!”

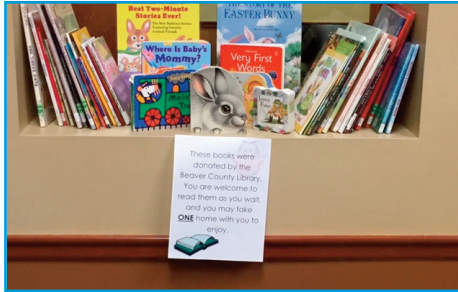
Sticky notes highlighting how Frederick County WIC staff enjoys fruits and veggies were displayed on the sharing wall near the NNM bulletin board. Displaying the staff’s ideas provided a great set of examples for WIC participants to read and use as inspiration for new ways to savor the flavor of fruits and veggies. At the end of March there was a drawing for all WIC staff who participated in the NNM activity. The winner took home a National Nutrition Month grocery tote, jigsaw puzzle, microfiber cloth, pen and notepad. Kristin Hagy won the staff drawing for the National Nutrition Month grocery tote. ■

PENNSYLVANIA WIC'S ADAGIO HEALTH AND LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP

By Barbara Jinar, CLE, IBCLC, Ancillary Services Coordinator
Adagio Health WIC Program

Pennsylvania's Adagio Health recently partnered with the Beaver County Library System. The library has generously donated 150 children's books for the Beaver County WIC families. These books are displayed at the Beaver Falls WIC office. WIC families have the option to read to their children while they are waiting to be seen for their appointment or they may take books home with them. The WIC families can either return the books or keep them. The library was eager and willing to cooperate in this outreach project. The library has agreed to replenish additional books at any time.

Adagio Health provides services to Pennsylvania WIC families in Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Indiana, and Lawrence counties. ■



BOOKS FOR WIC FAMILIES

DISTRICT COLUMBIA WIC SAVORS THE FLAVOR

By Paulette Thompson, MS, RDN, CLS

The District of Columbia WIC Program celebrated National Nutrition Month, "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right," with a variety of classes, food demonstrations and contests.

Children's National Health System WIC nutritionists got down on the floor and colored MyPlate activity pages with children and inspired them to take the USDA MyPlate pledge to include fruits and vegetables every day. A bulletin board displayed healthy alternatives to salty seasoning for flavoring foods such as sodium-free herbs and spices. And to add to the fun, the highlight of the month for staff and participants alike were smoothie demonstrations using a bike powered blender! It was physical activity and healthy eating combined!

Mary's Center and Unity Healthcare also inspired families to prepare healthy meals and snacks with food demonstrations using plain yogurt and whole wheat pasta, two new foods added to the DC WIC food list in January. More MyPlate pledges adorned the bulletin boards and windows at these WIC sites.

The education did not stop with the families of WIC; the WIC State Agency partnered with SNAP-Ed staff to hold "lunch and learns" at the Department of Health. The first lunch and learn educated sister bureaus and programs about the newly released 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) and the Child Nutrition & WIC Reauthorization Act and how both impact public health and food assistance programs. Participants also viewed a demo of food and fitness tracking programs including the MyPlate Super Tracker in order to put the DGA into practice. In the second lunch and learn DOH staff was treated to a cooking demonstration by students of United Planning Organization's Culinary Arts Training Program, a non-profit organization that teaches cooking techniques and foodservice skills to low-income residents. As part of this collaboration, DC WIC refers participants to apply for this opportunity. ■



SALT FREE — Bulletin Board at Children's National Health Systems provides tips on reducing salt and sodium.



POWERED UP — Children's National Health System nutritionist, Kimberly Thompson, MS, RD, with the Wellness bike.

TSN WIC PROGRAM IN McDOWELL COUNTY, WV REACHES OUT TO LOCAL FOOD BANK

On March 3, employees of the TSN WIC Program in West Virginia's McDowell County had the pleasure of visiting the local food bank, Five Loaves and Two Fishes. The director of the facility, Linda McKinney, and her husband Bob were gracious hosts in highlighting the programs Five Loaves and Two Fishes offer in the county which suffers from 34.9% of persons living in poverty.

During a facility tour, Linda explained the process of food distribution and service delivery to families, which are implemented solely through volunteer staffing. Food package distribution occurs every third Saturday of each month. During February, Five Loaves and Two Fishes served 750 families in need.

The largest grocer in McDowell County, Walmart SuperCenter located in Kimball, closed in January 2016. Although this has been a devastating loss for the community, Walmart donated all their seeds to Five Loaves and Two Fishes for a healthy growing program.

Five Loaves and Two Fishes has a grow room which allows starting seeds, then moving them to the grow pods until harvest. With the food produced from the grow room, the food bank partners with Kimball Elementary School implementing programs for the children such as making salads and smoothies; there is even a grow pod at the school. Five Loaves and Two Fishes motto for the school partnership is "Teaching to Grow Healthy" by using all organic materials and no chemicals. The grow room is used for off season months while a green house is in operation for summertime growing. Even though the food bank only has one greenhouse, with funding to build another this year, the goal is to secure support for 15 greenhouses.

In addition to the successful school partnership, Five Loaves and Two Fishes offers various activities for the community every month during the summertime. This includes food packages for home-bound students and school break bags – funded solely through private donations. They have classes such as Junior Master Gardeners, Zumba, eating healthy, and making natural baby food.

Linda stressed Five Loaves and Two Fishes is not just a food bank. The facility also has clothing for displaced children, school supplies, and a partnership with the local prison for men by assisting with meeting the needs of inmates upon discharge.

The TSN WIC Program has the goal of strengthening their partnership with Five Loaves and Two Fishes. Dameta Carter and Kim Rose, TSN WIC Program McDowell County staff, provided WIC outreach print materials including income guidelines which will be included with all food packages distributed to families as well as nutrition education handouts for use during classes. In discussing future opportunities for networking, WIC staff shared the message of National Nutrition Month which resulted in agreement to partner in offering the natural baby foods class at the WIC clinic. ■



COLLABORATIVE VISIT — TSN WIC Program staff, Kim Rose and Dameta Carter, visit Five Loaves and Two Fishes food bank to strengthen collaboration for outreach and nutrition messages. Linda McKinney, Director of Five Loaves and Two Fishes, highlights the grow pods used for the "Teaching to Grow Healthy" program.

WEST VIRGINIA'S MONONGALIA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT WIC LEVERAGES PARTNERSHIPS TO HOST AN INTERACTIVE NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH EVENT

By Lauren Gerchufsky, Nutritionist and Outreach Coordinator

West Virginia's Monongalia County Health Department WIC families celebrated National Nutrition Month with a night full of laughter, learning, and healthy snacks. The event was a community effort held in partnership with Early Head Start, West Virginia University Extension, and Spark! Imagination and Science Center. More than 25 families came out to enjoy the two-hour long festival.

In addition to exploring the science center, families were able to complete healthy activity stations to earn a special prize. Activity stations included a MyPlate game, building kites for outside play, a fruit and veggie photo booth, and an oral health education station. The prize for completing all healthy activity stations included a goodie bag filled with their very own MyPlate, books, and much more!

To add fuel to the fun, WVU Extension performed cooking demonstrations for the families to enjoy. Families learned how to make a whole grain veggie pizza and black bean brownies for a new and improved sweet treat. WIC families that completed the healthy activity stations and watched the food demonstration earned nutrition education class credit to put toward their next nutrition education appointment.

Collaboration between WIC and Spark! goes beyond this one-night event. The center has generously offered free admission to all WIC clients year round. WIC clients simply show their eWIC card to enjoy a free day of play. Spark! Imagination and Science Center hopes to inspire families to explore, discover, and grow together through interactive play.

Family Festival Night was a huge success for all community partners. Monongalia County Health Department WIC hopes to make this an annual event for families in the community to learn about National Nutrition Month and explore the science center together. ■



WV WIC FUN FOR NNM — More than 25 families celebrated National Nutrition Month at a collaborative event hosted by the Monongalia County Health Department WIC Program in Morgantown, WV.

PENNSYLVANIA'S COMMUNITY PROGRESS COUNCIL YORK WIC PARTICIPATES IN KIDS' DAY CELEBRATION

By Lissette Lizardi-Cortés

Bureau of WIC Regional Manager

Every year since 2007, the Hispanic American Center Hanover (HACH) has celebrated Kids' Day. On this special day, children, families, cultural groups, community resources and businesses in and around Pennsylvania's York and Adams counties come together to unite communities of diverse cultures, promote global understanding and celebrate multiculturalism through play, the arts and literacy.

This year's event took place on Saturday, April 30 at Wirt Park in Hanover, PA. The event featured music, Zumba lessons, food, games, inflatable bouncy castles, displays, piñatas, performances and other activities.

In addition, community agencies were invited to provide information about their programs. Community Progress Council Inc. (CPC) York County WIC Program participated in the festival. CPC provided nutrition and breastfeeding education, brochures and pamphlets, and fun giveaways. Carly Hess, CPC's WIC Retail Store and Outreach Coordinator, and Lissette Lizardi-Cortés, WIC Regional Manager, took part in the festivities. The WIC booth was very popular, with more than 100 people stopping by. The fruit and veggie monster bean bag toss game was a big hit! ■



FUN AND GAMES — Participants took a turn at WIC's Fruit and Veggie Monster Bean Bag Toss.

VIRGIN ISLANDS WIC HOLDS NUTRITION EDUCATION ACTIVITIES TERRITORY WIDE FOR NUTRITION MONTH

By Lorna Concepcion, MS, RD

In keeping with the National Nutrition Month theme, "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right," various clinics throughout the Virgin Islands held different activities to provide nutrition messages to participants. The clinic at Roy Schneider (RLS) Medical Center, St. Thomas, focused on teaching children and parents ways to enjoy a healthful breakfast on the run. It was noted by nutritionist Carol Bareuther, RD that some children coming to WIC in the morning may be hungry because they are rushed out before eating and as a result may be found eating chips and candy in the clinic. Some of the ideas for the 'go-along brown bag breakfasts' were fresh mandarin oranges and gogurts, sandwiches (cheese/peanut butter) on whole grain bread and WIC cereal snack mixes. Participants were shown how to assemble these items and children got to assemble and take away their own breakfast brown bags.

The clinic at Charles Harwood Complex in St. Croix, focused on portion control, showing how much milk, juice and foods from the other groups is a standard serving. This was done through various lessons conducted throughout the month targeting the different categories of participants. For example, an activity targeted infants 6 months to 1 year, where the correct measurements needed for making infant cereal was demonstrated. In the group for moms fully breastfeeding, WIC collaborated with EFNEP of the Extension Service, where EFNEP worker Jo-Ann Josiah discussed healthy beverages made with fruits and vegetables along with portion control. Various beverage recipes such as a banana spinach smoothie were demonstrated to participants. Participants were able to 'drink their spinach,' an experience which was new to all of them, but many stated they would certainly try this recipe at home.

In all of these activities, WIC's message of using whole grain, fresh fruits and vegetables was delivered using the MyPlate concept. ■



FOOD ON THE RUN — Roy L. Schneider WIC staffer Tasha (left) and Jackie assist children in making their breakfasts on the go.

NEW JERSEY'S PASSAIC WIC PROGRAM HOLDS ITS FIRST "GIVE UP THE BOTTLE" PARTY

NJ's Passaic WIC Program held its first "Give Up the Bottle" Party on April 30, to encourage healthy teeth and a beautiful smile! WIC children, ages 2-5 years old who were certified in April and still using a bottle, were invited to attend. The children were encouraged to throw away their bottle in an Oscar the Grouch garbage can. Children were rewarded with a sippy cup and a prize for their efforts. In addition, the children were treated to games, face painting, snacks and raffle prizes. WIC staff member Ysen Ovalle headed up the decorating committee coming up with the idea for the Sesame Street theme party. She was assisted by WIC staff members Ariadna Macias, Nitze Rodriguez, Gloria Lobato, Solomija Bajon, Subha Murthy, Rosie Carbonell, Irene Ambrose and Tara Vega who added their creative skills.

William Paterson University Public Health Intern Katheryn Suarez organized the event with help from WIC Coordinator Dana Hordyszynski. Sponsorship for the party snacks, decorations and prizes was provided by Amerigroup and we were honored with a visit from one of their employees, Diana Rivera.

A great time was had by all and we are already planning the next "Give Up the Bottle" party. ■



FACEPAINTING — Nutritionist Gloria Lobato lends her face painting skills to the event.



HAVING A PARTY — Pictured (left to right) are Ariadna Macias, WIC Social Service Assistant; Solomija Bajon, WIC Nutritionist; Gloria Lobato, WIC Nutritionist; Kevin Osborne, Montclair State University Public Health Intern; Katheryn Suarez, William Paterson University Public Health Intern; Diana Rivera, Amerigroup representative; Dana Hordyszynski, WIC Coordinator; Ysen Ovalle, WIC Social Service Assistant.

PENNSYLVANIA WIC LAUNCHES BREASTFEEDING HOTLINE

By Barbara Jinar, CLE, IBCLC, Ancillary Services Coordinator, Adagio Health WIC Program

Adagio Health's Nutrition Services Department/WIC Program has launched a statewide breastfeeding hotline.

This hotline provides support and advice to Pennsylvania WIC prenatal and breastfeeding mothers. Expectant and new mothers have a lot of unanswered questions and some mothers just need someone to talk to when they have a concern. A lot of women have no family or friends to support their feeding decision so

they call the hotline with their questions. Calls are answered by Certified Lactation Counselors and Breastfeeding Peer Counselors.

Extended hours have been made available for enrolled Pennsylvania WIC participants to call with their questions and concerns. Services are available Monday thru Friday, 8 am - 8 pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 9 am - 1 pm. The calls to the hotline have varied and cover many different topics. Calls have includ-

ed pumping questions, medication questions, return to work/school, smoking, engorgement, and sore nipples.

Adagio Health hopes that these extended hours will provide young mothers with the support they need so that their breastfeeding initiation and breastfeeding duration rates will increase while decreasing formula supplementation. ■

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the annual nutrition and breastfeeding fairs, National Nutrition Month and National Food Day celebrations, sippy cup events, cultural diversity events and food demonstrations. Last summer's Farmers' Market initiative of collaborating with the farmer to hold a farm stand outside the office and offer produce bags in the office in exchange for the vouchers brought the redemption rate to 87%. Dr. Katie Wilson and Patricia Dombroski were excited to learn of the happenings and initiatives taken at all the WIC agencies. They joined in a round table discussion with the NJ DOH and WIC Coordinators to discuss methods to enhance the program, child retention and collaborations with other federal assistance programs, health agencies and social services.

The day's activities finished off with a "WIC Top Chef" contest. WIC participants were thrilled to participate in this special event led by Nutritionists Lillian Rivera and Daisy Pagani. Two WIC participants participated in a cook-off coached by the nutritionists. They were offered a spread of all types of WIC foods, including some new selections such as tofu, kale, and whole wheat pasta. All eyes were on the contestants as they prepared their recipes in anticipation of the taste testing. Both contestants chose a variety of ingredients which were grilled to perfection. The winning recipe was announced by Dr. Katie Wilson as being the whole wheat pasta vegetable salad; although she also enjoyed the creative tuna tortilla wrap. The room was filled with a lot of laughter as everyone discussed the competition and watched the staff dressed up in costumes of vegetables and fruit, including corn, green pepper and a peach. Astrid Bernard, our NJ Peach, entertained the crowd by dancing around and making everyone laugh. We would love to finish every day this way! ■



Top Chef cooking — Nutritionists Lillian Rivera and Daisy Pagani leading the contestants in the "WIC Top Chef" competition.



TASTES GREAT — USDA Deputy Under Secretary Dr. Katie Wilson taste tested the recipes with Nutritionist Astrid Bernard.

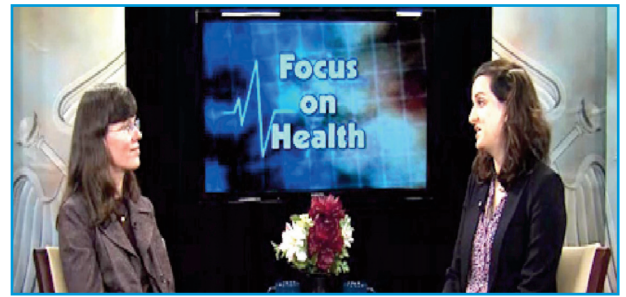
NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH ACTIVITY FOR MARYLAND'S FREDERICK COUNTY WIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT GOES LIVE

By Samantha Forster, Maryland WIC Program Dietetic Intern

In celebration of National Nutrition Month, Maryland's Frederick County Health Department's monthly cable access show, "Focus on Health," featured a segment highlighting what National Nutrition Month is all about and ways to celebrate. The county's Health Officer, Dr. Barbara Brookmyer, sat down with Samantha Forster, Maryland WIC Dietetic Intern, to learn about this year's theme, "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right," and the celebrations taking place at the Frederick County WIC office.

Local families were encouraged to explore new flavors, to teach their children to cook a traditional family recipe and to sit together as

a family for meals (with the television and phones turned off). The segment previewed the nutrition education lesson for March on how to figure out how many calories parents and children need in a day in order to decide how different fast food items may or may not fit into a healthy diet. For families looking to eat right while dining out, Samantha recommended checking out the "Kids Live Well" website and app. This resource lists healthy options at different chain restaurants. ■



ON THE AIR — The segment aired in March and is still available on the Frederick County Health Department's website and on YouTube.com by searching for "Focus on Health."

VIRGINIA WIC HOSTS RVA BREASTFEEDING SYMPOSIUM

On April 22, 125 care providers from over 25 organizations serving prenatal women attended the RVA Breastfeeding Symposium in Richmond, Virginia. The health and economic benefits of breastfeeding are tremendous and could help diminish the burden of disease on all communities, particularly African-American and Latino communities.

In a survey of African-American first-time mothers who were participants in Richmond City WIC and whose infants were born from 2010 to 2013, 55% initiated breastfeeding and only 14% breastfed at six months. This was compared to a statewide initiation rate of 80.5% and 53.7% at six months. Mothers encounter multiple obstacles when they attempt to reach the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for six months, which include lack of up-to-date and culturally relevant instruction and information from health care professionals; not enough opportunities to network with breastfeeding mothers; limited accommodation to breastfeed or express milk in public spaces or at the workplace; and inadequate paid maternity leave.

The symposium trained community advocates, nurses, lactation consultants and WIC nutritionists and breastfeeding peer counselors on how to utilize "Ready, Set, Baby" from Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute (CGBI). "Ready, Set, Baby" is an evidence-based educational program designed to counsel prenatal women about maternity care best practices and the benefits and management of breastfeeding. The program and training encouraged providers to use consistent messages about breastfeeding across multiple organizations.

"'Ready, Set, Baby' helps educators walk through the most important topics relating to infant feeding with pregnant mothers," says CGBI trainer Kathy Parry. "It is designed to engage mothers in conversation and encourages them to make choices based on the best information we have available."

The symposium also provided plentiful opportunities for organizations to work together to identify barriers and facilitators to breastfeeding and brainstorm solutions to overcome or support them. Organizations worked with their colleagues at the end of the symposium to generate a work plan for implementing "Ready, Set, Baby" and ideas for creating a breastfeeding friendly community. Each organization also received facilitator flipcharts and participant booklets to pilot their tool with their clients.

Richmond City WIC, which initiated bringing the event to Richmond, will use "Ready, Set, Baby" to counsel all pregnant moms, explore opportunities to celebrate breastfeeding moms through recognition in the clinic and community and continue to strengthen clinical partnerships to provide women with wrap-around support and services to help them reach their pregnancy and breastfeeding goals.

The RVA Breastfeeding Symposium is an initiative of the Richmond Health Action Alliance – Healthy Communities Action Team (HCAT) which seeks to reduce childhood obesity in the City of Richmond through policy, infrastructure and environmental changes that promote a breastfeeding-friendly and physically active community. The HCAT will continue many of the conversations started during the symposium and will use ideas to strengthen RVA Breastfeeds' World Breastfeeding Week activities.

The RVA Breastfeeding Symposium was funded by the Community Partnership for Healthy Mothers and Children, Richmond City Health District, Nurture, Richmond City Healthy Start, and the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth. ■

A LIFE'S JOURNEY LEADS BACK TO NEW JERSEY'S GLOUCESTER COUNTY WIC

By Kathleen Mahmoud, WIC Program Coordinator, Gloucester County

As a young mother, Raquel Duran enrolled in WIC to help supplement her family's food budget. After learning of its health benefits, she decided to exclusively breastfeed her daughter for over a year. A few years later, her daughter was diagnosed with Type 1 (insulin dependent) diabetes, and Raquel began educating herself about how to manage blood glucose levels by balancing activity, medication, and dietary intake. Raquel's interest in nutrition eventually resulted in her decision to study Dietetics at Kansas State University, an online program with the flexibility she needed while continuing to raise her four children.

In 2013, she took a nutrition class that required volunteering at a community nutrition program, and did so at our local WIC agency. Raquel was invited by Lactation Consultant Sarah Chaikin to participate at her upcoming Loving Support Peer Breastfeeding Counselor training a few weeks later, and Raquel decided to take advantage of the offer as an educational opportunity. After observing her great interpersonal skills, and learning her past history of being a WIC breastfeeding mom, our agency offered Raquel a PC position. For the next two years she managed a full course load; she worked at the agency, and led a very busy personal life. After receiving her Bachelor of Science degree last June, Raquel began her dietetic internship at the University of Delaware, promising to return and complete her Community Nutrition rotation here at Gloucester County WIC.

As I write this, Raquel is completing her final hours of her intern experience. She has finished her academic and experience requirements and is eligible to sit for the Dietetic Registration examination. All of us at Gloucester County WIC are confident she will pass the exam and meet that goal. We wish her success in whichever area of dietetics and nutrition she decides to continue her career, and hope her path winds our way again. ■

VIRGINIA BEACH WIC CELEBRATES NNM

The Virginia Beach Health Department celebrated National Nutrition Month with a fruit and vegetable luncheon. As a dietetic intern, Madeleine Siviter wanted to get the entire Health Department involved in eating healthy. In keeping with this year's theme of "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right," employees of the Health Department were invited to bring their favorite dish that incorporates a fruit or a vegetable. Madeleine brought two pitchers of water, one flavored with citrus fruits and the other flavored with cucumber and mint. Many people were surprised how flavorful the water was without any added sugar.



GOOD EATS — Dietetic Intern Madeleine Siviter with healthy luncheon items for Virginia Beach WIC staff.

During the luncheon Madeleine had everyone state their favorite dish and share what they learned during the day. Many employees shared that they were unaware there were some many ways to eat fruit and vegetables and still feel satisfied. One woman shared that she always thought she didn't enjoy kale but after trying it today she wants to start using it in dishes at home. This year's National Nutrition Month was a success and we can't wait to celebrate it next year! ■

WEST VIRGINIA MID-OHIO VALLEY WIC COORDINATES TO STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS

By Jennifer Habebe, Nutritionist II and Outreach Coordinator

To celebrate National Nutrition Month, Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department (MOV) WIC Program partnered with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and a local grocery store.

Jennifer Habebe, Nutritionist and Outreach Coordinator for MOV WIC, combined efforts with Lisa Ludwig, Community Health Educator for the SNAP-Ed Program, to set up a nutrition education display at Wood County's Gihon Village Foodland, a local WIC authorized vendor.

Various recipes, grocery lists, and WIC information were available to the public. In addition, SNAP-Ed supplied a hydration station for customers to sample fruit-infused water. Most people sampling the water were surprised by the taste, and took recipes for flavored water. A grocery store tour was offered to the public to educate shoppers on how to compare prices, read food labels, and eat healthy on a budget.

Multiple contacts were made with interest in applying for the WIC Program. MOV WIC is grateful to have strong relationships with local partners and local vendors throughout our nine counties which are willing to help us achieve our mission of educating the public about healthy eating! ■



HEALTHY EATING 101 — Jennifer Habebe, Outreach Coordinator for MOV WIC and Lisa Ludwig, Community Health Educator for SNAP-Ed program team up to promote community Programs and healthy lifestyles.

TAKE YOUR CHILD TO WORK AT NEW JERSEY'S NORTH HUDSON WIC PROGRAM

By Karen Lazarowitz, MS, RD, IBCLC

This year North Hudson Community Action Corporation WIC Program planned an exciting day of events for the 20 children who spent the day learning about the WIC Program. All the children were welcomed with a healthy breakfast and given specially made IDs for the day, created by Peer Counselor Samantha Pinto. The day kicked off with an informative tour of the clinic, meeting all of the staff and learning about the different WIC departments and job positions.

Then the real fun started with an activity at each department to offer a hands-on approach to learn about the office functions. We began with a special WIC eligibility game led by Intake Representatives Kathy Diaz and Daisy Alvarado. Each child received a card with a photo of a person and their age. For instance, the card could be a pregnant woman or maybe a 70-year-old woman, and then determine if she would be eligible for the program. There was such excitement in the game that all children screamed out the answers correctly in unison! Enrollment education continued with Intake Representative Joanne Compres checking their heights and weights to see how much they have grown. Then they were off to learn about breastfeeding. Here Peer Counselor Tamara Murga set up photos of wild animals such as elephants, zebras, and lions and guesses were made on how long they normally breastfeed. The children were fascinated to learn about the animals that were breastfed just like all of them. Nutritionist Liliana Flores continued the education with reading a children's nutrition book followed by a MyPlate coloring activity. Everyone was starting to get hungry; luckily "Willow" the rabbit puppet was here to teach the children about healthy fruits and how to make fruit kebabs (with assistance by Nutritionist Erika Mendez and Intake Representative Joanne Compres).

The children were now fueled for the next activity, a nutrition Bingo game, led by Nutritionist Daisy Pagani. But they weren't done yet; there was still more to learn about WIC. What about the Farmer's Market? WIC Coordinator Karen Lazarowitz led a "Jersey Fresh" education where the children viewed photos of their favorite fruits and vegetables and guessed how they were grown, i.e. in ground, on vines, trees. With the help of Intake Representative Damabelis Acevedo, the kids were excited to plant vegetable and herb seeds in pots to bring home.

Everyone then gathered around the WIC portable kitchen to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables and learn to make healthy dips led by Nutritionist Daisy Pagani. We finished the day with certificates for all the attendees. The children were ready to keep going, but the parents were all exhausted 'til next year. ■



BINGO — Nutritionist Daisy Pagani playing Nutrition Bingo with the children.



FRUITS FOR ALL — The children enjoy their freshly prepared fruit kebabs.

WIC POP-UP STORE TOUR FOCUS ON SAVORING THE FLAVOR OF EATING RIGHT

By Melanie Rojas, Maryland WIC Program Dietetic Intern

In celebration of National Nutrition Month, participants of Maryland's Cecil County WIC Program participated in a Pop-Up Store Tour. The store tour was organized and led by Maryland Dietetic Intern Melanie Rojas, and was facilitated by University of Delaware Community Nutrition Interns.

The purpose of the Pop-Up Store Tour was to give participants tools to shop smart on a budget and learn to shop for nutritious foods for their families. Participants learned about National Nutrition Month's theme, "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right." Recipes and tips to better enjoy their meals were shared. Additionally, participants learned about healthy shopping on a budget, meal planning, whole grains and more. ■



POP-UP STORE TOUR — Pictured (left to right) are Melanie Rojas, Daniela Dubon, Christopher Leon, Justine Thompson, Lisa Wesp, Alyssa Johnson, Vallerie Jetter, Wyatt Jeter, Erica Zenker, Rachel Hayes, Aidan Darling and April Darling, Angela Comis, Brielle Evangelista, and Sarah Simonson.

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING AT PA'S MATERNAL AND FAMILY HEALTH SERVICES WIC PROGRAM!

By Jodi Phillips, Marketing Associate

WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Donates Breast Milk

Megan Curry, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor from the MFHS Kingston WIC Center, recently donated 300 ounces of breast milk to the Human Milk Banking Association of North America. After completing all the steps to participate, Megan ended up donating over 24 pounds of milk! Congratulations Megan and thank you for being so dedicated to breastfeeding and for sharing with those in need.

MFHS and Head Start Make a Winning Combination

MFHS set up a satellite WIC center at the Luzerne County Head Start facility in Wilkes-Barre. This WIC-on-the-Go service model helps Head Start families participate in WIC by offering greater access and convenience. Wyoming County Early Head Start also shares space with our WIC center in Tunkhannock. With the success of this co-location, we will be moving to a larger office in 2016. The WIC-On-The-Go model will allow MFHS to improve access to WIC by opening satellite WIC operations in locations where families are already served by other community programs.

MFHS on the Move

In an effort to maintain ease of access for our clients, MFHS was busy relocating (and co-locating!) several of our centers in 2015. Circle of Care Scranton and Pottstown WIC both moved, co-locating with The Wright Center and Community Cares, respectively. The Norristown WIC Center relocated into a human and social service hub in downtown Norristown. MFHS will continue exploring innovative service delivery models, including co-location opportunities with other health and social service providers to improve access for children and families. ■



MFHS HEAD START — Pictured at the new satellite WIC center are (left to right) Lynn Evans Biga, Executive Director, Luzerne County Head Start; Erica Bozentka, MFHS Regional Manager; Chris Sutton, Head Start; and Laura Pointek, MFHS WIC Nutritionist.



FROZEN — MFHS WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Megan Curry with her frozen breast milk donation.



NORRISTOWN OPEN HOUSE — MFHS Norristown WIC staff at an open house after moving to their new location.

BURLINGTON COUNTY (NEW JERSEY) WIC PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

By Dr. Deepti Das, PhD, Coordinator and Leshette Williams, MS RD, Assistant Coordinator

The Burlington County WIC Program continuously practices outreach by using various resources. The local agency conducted two major outreach campaigns between 2012 and 2015. The first campaign used NJ Transit buses, trains, and bus and railroad stations to reach the population. The second campaign used Comcast spotlights ten weeks on six network channels.

The local agency participates in health and community fairs throughout the area every year. The agency also actively participates in the annual baby showers by registering WIC moms for the showers, donating the raffle prizes, and sending staff members to help set up and staff a WIC information table.

This year, Clinic Attendant Cheryl Wallace, who is rendering her exceptional services to the Burlington County WIC Program for more than 20 years in various positions, expressed her creativity and imagination by creating "diaper cakes." They were donated as raffle items for the annual Baby Shower on the McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst Military Joint Base on June 9. The cakes are designed with a pack of rolled diapers covered with girl and boy outfits to resemble a cake.

In other news, South Jersey Medical Center (SJMC) continues to attend the WIC office to provide information on services provided to the WIC participants. Services include women's health care such as free pregnancy testing, free STD/HIV testing, breast exams, cervical cancer screenings and gynecological care. SJMC also provides health services for the whole family. Burlington County pregnant WIC participants and parents of babies born this past April or May were invited to attend the annual Community Baby Shower on May 27. Raffles, presentations, food and games were enjoyed by all. Burlington WIC participants are also referred to SJMC to attend a monthly "Diaper Derby," an event sponsored by SJMC where participants attend a brief health educational session and then receive a supply of diapers for the month. This has been a huge success among the WIC participants. ■



LET THEM EAT CAKE – These "Diaper Cakes" are a treat for moms and babies alike.

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH CELEBRATIONS AT WEST VIRGINIA'S VALLEY HEALTH WIC

By Chalida Ng, Nutritionist II and Heather King, Outreach Coordinator

Valley Health Systems WIC Program sites in Charleston and Huntington, WV celebrated National Nutrition Month by hosting open houses along with visits from Head Start classes. With a focus on this year's theme of "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right," and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' goal of making informed food choices as well as developing sound eating and physical activity habits, Valley WIC nutritionists encouraged participants to enjoy traditional and regional foods – fresh and flavor filled – along with enjoying daily physical activity. A variety of flavorful finger foods were available. Activity centers for the children included:

- "Savor The Flavor of Eating Right" Name the Food Game: Children identified common healthy foods (food models) to choose a Healthy Plate. They received a token for each food item they correctly identified which was exchanged for a prize. Tokens were made with the NNM stickers attached to foam board.
 - I Can Do It!: Children mimic the physical activity displayed by Sesame Street characters on an 18-inch dice (jump, dance, wiggle, skip, stretch, run). This idea was a huge success from www.sesamestreet.org/healthyhabits.
 - Butterfly Baggies: Children participated in making a healthy snack combined with an art activity.
 - Reading Corner: A Read Aloud activity utilizing "The Hungry Caterpillar" and hand puppets entertained the children while they ate a healthy snack.
- Participants coming to the clinics enjoyed the open house as well. Children left the event with a WIC reusable shopping bag filled with Highlights Magazine, coloring book and crayons, WIC water bottle, MyPlate and MyBowl models, and WIC outreach materials.

These two events were a success in sharing the message fun physical activity and eating right can be a fundamental part of our children's lives. ■



OPEN HOUSE IN THE VALLEY — Children from local Head Start Centers were invited to participate in Valley Health Systems WIC Open House events during National Nutrition Month. They enjoyed a variety of activities such as making butterfly snack baggies.

MARYLAND'S LANGLEY/TAKOMA PARK WIC PROGRAM CELEBRATES NNM

By Alesha Rogers, Maryland WIC Program Dietetic Intern

This year's National Nutrition Month at Maryland's Langley/Takoma Park WIC Program was all about encouraging participants to savor the flavor of eating right. Participants had the opportunity to choose from an array of nutritional goals with a focus on healthy lifestyle, trying easy, tasty, and healthy snacks, and eating right with less salt. A "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right" tip sheet was created and posted at the front entrance bulletin board for all participants to see. The tip sheet included easy-to-make healthy snack recipes such as a yogurt parfait, mini pizza, fruit kabob, and inside-out sandwich. Many of the participants liked the idea of the fruit kabob. Additional tips included an emphasis on fresh foods, exploring different cultural foods and flavors, and allowing the taste buds time to adjust to foods with less salt.

A variety of nutrition goal tabs were attached to the tip sheet for participants to choose from and take. One participant chose the nutritional goal tab stating, "Make your own salt-free seasonings by combining herbs and spices," while another participant opted for the goal of "Trying a smoothie with juice, fruit, and yogurt for a light lunch or snack." This was a great way to get participants in the mind set of goal setting to eat right! Our staff enjoyed the opportunity to share this information with participants. ■



SAVOR THE FLAVOR WITH THESE HEALTHY TIPS — MD WIC Dietetic Intern Alesha Rogers and MD WIC Nutrition Assistant Elisa Linares welcome participants as they enter the clinic to try these healthy fun tips to savor the flavor of eating right by choosing a healthy goal tab.

VIRGINIA'S PRINCE WILLIAM WIC CELEBRATES NNM

During 2016's National Nutrition Month, Sarah Greenslade and Emily Root, dietetic interns from Virginia's Prince William Health District, helped to encourage participants and staff to "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right." A bulletin board calendar to give clients nutrition tips on how to savor the flavor every day was created. The bulletin board also featured recipe cards that clients were encouraged to take home, which provided kid-friendly WIC recipes in both English and Spanish. The client (and nutritionist) favorite appeared to be the mango dip!

A colorful poster was hung in the waiting room providing information and tips on adding flavor to mealtimes. It encouraged families to get creative and experiment with flavors from around the world. MyPlate coloring pages and crayons were also seen on both the floor and on chairs, while eager kids got to work coloring their healthy plates. National Nutrition Month was a good reminder that foods can be both delicious and healthy! ■



GET THE MESSAGE — Check out the Prince William (Manassas) National Nutrition Month bulletin board.

MARWIC TIMES Calendar

- International Conference on Nutrition in Medicine, Washington, DC, July 29-30
- NWA Biennial Nutrition Education and Breastfeeding Conference. Denver, CO, September 8-10
- Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo, Boston, MA, October 15-18
- NJ WIC Annual State Meeting. October 21
- The deadline for the Fall issue of MARWIC TIMES is August 12, 2016. Submit articles, photos and calendar events to your State editor. No Polaroid pictures. 5" x 7" digital photos (saved as JPGs) preferred. All photographs must include a detailed caption.

NEW JERSEY'S TRINITAS WIC "SAVOR THE FLAVOR OF EATING" HEALTH FAIR

By Anita Otokiti, WIC Director

Trinitas WIC celebrated National Nutrition Month, "Savor the Flavor of Eating," by hosting a health fair. Each nutritionist prepared a bulletin board covering various nutrition topics. Fresh green vegetables served as center pieces on the display tables. The festive hot pink hats made it easy to identify the nutrition team.

Andrea Martinez focused on the Spanish-speaking population with the display of "My Plate and Healthy Portions." The "My Plate" material was incorporated on the board to further emphasize and offer a visualization of healthy choices. The plate posted on the board created a three-dimensional effect. During group sessions, participants discussed what type of WIC foods fit into each food group and how they could incorporate them into meals.

The history of sodium revealed that this element is important to our economy. The word "salary" comes from salt, explained Ephoeta Jerome. The dietary guidelines and tips on how to reduce salt were included — focus on fresh foods that are naturally low in sodium; use herbs and spices rather than salt to flavor food. Consumption of too much salt can increase the risk of developing high blood pressure. Limit the amount of salt used in cooking, do not add salt to food at the table, choose foods labeled "no added salt," and avoid processed foods, salt-rich sauces and packet soups which are often high in salt.

Jennifer DeLeon's display on "FAT" allowed the opportunity to share the dietary guidelines and give tangible ideas that can easily be put into practice. Common foods that are inherently high in saturated fat were compared to healthy options such as 1% or fat-free milk as opposed to whole milk, and low-fat cheese as an alternative to regular fat cheese. The recommended intake of saturated fat is 10% of total daily calorie intake which for most people is a relatively abstract number.

An emphasis on limiting sugar intake was presented in the bilingual poster created by Smitha Paulose.

Consumption of naturally sweet foods is a healthy alternative compared to popular processed foods, such as frozen grapes instead of popsicles. Guests gathered around the table to enjoy samples of water that were infused with lime, kiwi and cucumbers.

"What's in Your Food" by Daisy Gallegos exhibited the vitamins and minerals present in food. During the nutrition education classes, clients discussed the health benefits of the various vitamins and minerals found in WIC foods.

During the "Savor the Flavor" event, clients had the opportunity to focus on the senses — smell, sight, taste and touch. Rosa Tamayo, RD, with "Puppet Cheffy" stirred up some delicious avocado-yogurt dip. Hummus was prepared from garbanzo beans and served on whole wheat toast points. "Creative Cooking with WIC Foods," developed by the Ocean County Health Department WIC, was provided to the 200 guests in attendance. The displays remained in the waiting areas and several participants have taken pictures of them. One participant said, "I want to show my husband what I do at WIC." ■



ON DISPLAY — Pictured (left to right) are Nutritionists Ephoeta Jerome, Jennifer Deleon, Smitha Paulose, Andrea Martinez, Daisy Gallegos, and Assistant Director Rosa Tamayo.

COOKING WITH THE KIDS AT PENNSYLVANIA'S ERIE WIC

By Barbara Warner, Outreach Coordinator, Erie County WIC Program

Recently, some of Pennsylvania's Erie County WIC staff cooked for their co-workers at our monthly staff meeting. They wanted to demonstrate the ease in preparing some of the recipes found in the "My Little Helper" cooking skills booklet written by Cheryl Yarrington, RDN, MS, CD, CLE and published by Nutrition Matters.

The staff was treated to a tasty breakfast buffet including banana bites, sunshine egg bake, ham, cheese and spinach muffins, along with tasty cinnamon crackers. The booklet shows children helping to prepare simple recipes using the healthy foods WIC provides and gives many useful hints on ways to get the children involved. It is just one of the colorful, insightful materials this company offers to encourage families to live a healthier lifestyle.

By experiencing how easy the food is to prepare and getting to sample the delicious cuisine, staff can now talk to our clients about doing this in their own homes. Studies have shown that if children are able to help prepare the food, they are more likely to eat it. In our office, we do offer a variety of vibrant, supportive handouts to assist our families in meeting their goals. It's great to have a reference to go to when you need healthy meal or snack ideas and our clients really seem to appreciate the information WIC provides. ■



WIC COOKS WITH KIDS — Pictured (left to right) are Ashley Lauria, RD, Breastfeeding Coordinator; Donna Rodland, Clinic Manager; and Lisa Scully, RD, CLC, Nutrition Education Coordinator.

WEST VIRGINIA'S SHENANDOAH COMMUNITY HEALTH SYSTEMS WIC PROGRAM PROMOTES PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DURING PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

By Lauren Korzep, Nutritionist and Local Agency Outreach Coordinator

On Saturday, April 9, Shenandoah Community Health Systems WIC Program partnered with the Shenandoah Community Health Center (SCHC) to promote National Nutrition Month while also targeting WIC outreach efforts to potentially eligible children.

Children's Day at the Mall is hosted by the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA VIII) in Martinsburg, WV. The event is intended to serve as the child find mandate — a requirement of all school districts to identify, locate and evaluate all children to determine the need for preschool and special education services — as well as an annual preschool and kindergarten screening event.

Approximately, 1000 kids eager to sign up for preschool spent the day enjoying activities hosted by community organizations intermixed with educational screening tasks centered around a "Be a Sport" theme. Shenandoah WIC and SCHC hosted a station to decorate miniature frisbees the children could take home as well as healthy, portable snacks of mandarin oranges. ■



SPORTING STYLE — Children's Day at the Mall participant, Dylan, decorates his personal mini-frisbee provided by the Shenandoah Community Health Center at the "Be a Sport" WIC station.

NEW JERSEY'S ST. JOSEPH'S WIC PROGRAM CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

By Nicole Muzones and Josephine Valenzuela, WIC Nutritionists

In celebration of National Nutrition Month, on March 29, NJ's St. Joseph's WIC Program hosted a health fair filled with healthy snack demos, prizes and raffles, and games and activities that enhanced our participants' knowledge of nutrition as well as encouraged them to stay active and live healthy lifestyles.

This year, aligning with the theme "Savor the Flavor of Eating Right," our WIC office was transformed into a "WIC Farmville," embracing the roots from which healthy foods are made. The office was decorated in a barnyard theme and staff dressed up as farm animals and WIC-approved foods, such as a cow, a duck, an apple, and a carrot.

WIC Nutritionists Nicole Muzones and Josephine Valenzuela, and WIC Representative Tina Perea challenged children to match food with their source in the "where does it come from" game, where they would match milk to a cow or apples to a tree. WIC Nutritionist Patty Santelli prepared healthy snacks for families to sample, and then raffled a basket with a recipe book and ingredients to make a recipe at home. Children jumped through hopscotch, and hula-hooped and danced with WIC Representative Nydia Rosario in her physical activity game, "Let's Moo-ve." The event was a complete success, with families laughing and learning while playing all day. Our participants and staff look forward to more fun-filled events in the future. ■



WELCOME TO WIC FARMVILLE — St. Joseph's WIC transformed its offices to a barnyard theme.



WHERE DOES IT COME FROM — WIC Nutritionists Josephine Valenzuela and Nicole Muzones, and WIC Representative, Tina Perea assist a child in playing the "where does it come from" game.



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