

Loving Support Through Peer Counseling: A Journey Together

Creative Training Ideas and Recommendations from State WIC Agencies

Program Updates

- Use the management curriculum and resources as a basis for updating your State peer counseling program policies and procedures. Assure that job descriptions are updated, cell phone/texting policies are current and meet needs of peer counselors, and new forms helpful for program management are incorporated. Assure that your program policies and procedures align with the FNS *Loving Support Model*. (ND, MA)
- Use the speaker prompts included in the trainings to develop consistent messaging throughout your program materials. (CT)
- Develop a customized presentation personalized for your State with photos, breastfeeding data, and program forms and policies. Use the webinar conducted by Aspire Communications to learn how to link your personalized presentation to the platform. The training was recorded and is archived at the WIC Works Resource System on the peer counseling page.
- Create State specific picture stories to feature experiences of peer counselors and WIC participants in your State or local agency. (NY, CA)
- Go through the peer counseling curriculum to select activities, videos, and other resources ahead of time. Remember that the curricula include many more resources and activities than can be realistically used in a training event; each State should select the components that will work best for their situation.

Ways to Use the Platform

Use various aspects of the training platform as a refresher/update for existing WIC staff to help refresh and rejuvenate them. For example, Module #6 on Exclusive Breastfeeding has updated information on how the breast makes milk. Module #7 provides updated information on laid-back breastfeeding and the importance of skin-to-skin contact. Module #10 provides information on how babies communicate. (DC, GA, Choctaw Nation)

- Use resources within the training platform to generate discussion at monthly peer counselor staff meetings. (MN, CT, LA) These can include:
 - Podcasts
 - Videos
 - 3-Step practice scenarios
 - Picture stories

- Encourage CPAs and breastfeeding counselors to download appropriate videos to their desktop to share with WIC participants. (Pueblo)

- Use components of the platform in other breastfeeding training programs. (MI, CA)

- Use components of the platform to provide in-service education for other staff. (FL)

- Use portions of the platform for refresher training of existing staff before expanding to provide the full training for new peer counselors. (GA)

Note: This could help trainers become more confident and experienced using the platform before offering more extensive training.

- When training just one or two peer counselors, use the platform at your desktop, if necessary, and use picture stories and resources to generate one-on-one discussion.

- Use the optional Module 13 to equip peer counselors who are or will be providing peer counseling services in the local hospital. (American Samoa)

Technology Solutions

- Use peer counseling program funds to purchase one or two laptop computers to serve purely as training laptops. Ask State IT staff to ensure that current operating system and software are loaded, and the current version of the platform is downloaded. State IT staff can also assure that the links and videos work properly and keep the computers maintained. State can issue the training laptop to local agencies as needed. (NJ, MA)

- Create a training “kit” that includes the training laptop, as well as relevant peer counseling platform training materials needed to conduct the training. The kits can be housed in different areas of the State, if needed, to make them more convenient to local agencies. (MA)

- Develop a one-page technology checklist as a “cheat sheet” for trainers. (NJ, VA)
Note: The New Jersey WIC checklist is included as an example.
- Be sure that training computers are up-to-date with the appropriate operating system (Windows 7 or Windows Vista, though Windows XP may work depending on your computer) and software (Microsoft Office Suite™ 2007 or 2010). Training computers also need the ability to play WMV or “flash” videos.
- Be patient with local agency staff who need time to become comfortable with using PowerPoint™ and the platform technology. Recognize that not all agencies are equipped with IT support. (FL)

Training Options

- Avoid sending out materials to local agencies without training them in how to use them.
- Hold a “train the trainer” event for breastfeeding coordinators, peer counseling coordinators, and others who will be providing training at the local or regional level. (VA, WI)

Ideas to consider:

- Conduct the training similar to the train-the-trainer events held in the USDA/FNS regions in 2011 by providing laptop computers for trainees to use. If necessary, provide at least one laptop per “pair” of trainees, or one per table for trainees to share. Encourage staff to share the computer throughout the training .
- Provide a tech assistant (one per 10 trainees) for the first part of the training when you will be teaching how to download and use the platform. (VA)
- Allow plenty of time to troubleshoot technical concerns, and to allow each participant to grow comfortable. Remember not all trainees will be at the same place in the confidence using the technology. Those who are faster can use the extra time to practice scrolling through the platform to “discover” resources. (VA, NY)
- If travel funds are limited, offer the training via a series of web meetings. (FL)
- Reinforce training or go through individual modules at monthly phone or web meetings with coordinators. (WA)

- Refer managers to the management training webcasts archived at the WIC Works Resource System. These 30-45 minute webcasts can be viewed during downtime at the clinic or office, and focus on the key highlights from the curriculum. (WI)
Note: Managers should also download the speaker notes, also available at WIC Works, to read the detailed talking points for each section of the curriculum.
- Develop a peer counseling training team to provide periodic trainings throughout the state. State office staff, lactation consultants, and other experts can be used to make up the team. (WI)
- Provide a State trainer to team up with local agency trainers. (NH)
Note: this could be especially helpful for local trainers who did not attend a formal “train the trainer” event or who lack confidence using the platform at first.
- “Tag team” the training with peer counselors. (LA)
- Train all peer counselors in a single statewide peer counseling training event. Invite all staff (peer counselors and breastfeeding coordinators/managers) to the first 2 or 3 days, and ask coordinators/managers to remain on the last day for additional training in managing a peer counseling program. (WI)
- Train central office and regional managers in the management training, and then go out to train local managers and coordinators in each region. Once the management training is completed, repeat the process with the peer counselor training. (NY)
- Include others in your training program. Ex: home visiting nurses (RI), local hospital and pediatric staff (MI), and doulas (NJ).
- Encourage trainers to spend time preparing, including reviewing the speaker notes and practicing using the platform. (NJ, AL)

Technology Checklist “Cheat Sheet” for Trainers (developed by New Jersey WIC)

Using the WIC PC Training Platform – Version 1.15

Devoting several hours to practicing with the platform before conducting your first training is highly recommended.

The password for the State laptop is xxxx.

To open the training platform:

- From the desktop, double click on the folder, “**WIC PC Curriculum.**”
- From the list of menu choices, double click on the folder, “**WIC PC Platform.**”
- **Scroll to the bottom and double click on “START.pptm.” This is the only file you need to open and the correct way to start the Platform.**
- On the left side of the slide, if you see a Security Warning, click “**Options**” and then click “Enable this content” and click OK. (See figure below)
- To start the show, in the lower right corner, click on the slide show symbol (looks like a projector and says slide show when you hover over it [see figure below]) and this will open the **title slide**. Then click the Start button.
- This will take you to the **dashboard**, a blue slide with all the modules listed. From here you can access all content. Whenever the cursor changes to a pointing hand, you have reached an active hyperlink.
- You can navigate within modules. Scroll with the arrow keys or mouse, or click on the buttons for where you want to go. Sometimes you need to use the arrow key and sometimes a click. **Practice** will help you to know how to get to different slides.
- Within the platform, you can move in a linear order or click at the bottom of a slide to move ahead or back.
- Return to the dashboard at any time by clicking the blue button that has a picture of the dashboard in the lower right corner of the screen.
- To end the show, go to the dashboard, click the small button with a picture of the dashboard (under Module 2) and this will take you to the title slide. Click the “End” button.
- Buttons with an * and brown text lead to subcategories (bullet points of main idea)
- Buttons with yellow underline under the title means there are buttons for external links, i.e., content outside main show. Clicking on one will lead to additional slides that open on top of the main show; each slide is a bullet point. Here, click on the buttons on the slide.
- Slides contain reminders in the lower right corner for handouts, activities, or videos related to that slide.

The State will eventually add pertinent state and local information to the Platform. Topic suggestions and photos are welcome. For more information, contact Florence.

