Welcome to the Loving Support© WIC peer counseling training program for WIC managers, coordinators, and supervisors. This training has been developed through a cooperative agreement between the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and Every Mother, Inc. It is designed to help State and local WIC agencies implement and sustain successful peer counseling programs that help participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) receive the help they need to reach their breastfeeding goals.

This “Training Facilitator’s Guide” provides an overview of the curriculum, instructions on how to download and use the presentation “platform,” and tips for using the resources to conduct effective training programs for WIC staff.

Curriculum Overview

The training program for WIC peer counseling program managers, coordinators, and supervisors, provides program guidance based on the FNS Loving Support© Model, research on the evidence behind peer counseling, best practices adopted by State and local WIC agencies across the country, and solutions to address common challenges. State and local agency “showcases” are also included to highlight successful strategies.

The curriculum is divided into 10 major sections. Each section is important for training new managers and for staff in existing programs to assure continued best practices in program management.

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Training Resources

The FNS Loving Support© peer counselor training resources for WIC peer counselor program managers includes a wide variety of materials that can be helpful in assuring new program managers are equipped to manage a successful program. These materials include:

- PowerPoint™ Presentation Platform – is organized into flexible topic areas to make slides easily accessible.
- Background speaker notes – include a section overview, background information for each slide, thumbnail images of the corresponding slides, suggested handouts, and teaching tips. Background speaker notes are available in both WORD and PDF formats to meet agency needs.
- Handouts are available in both WORD and PDF formats to meet agency needs. They can also be displayed from the slides in several places: (1) by clicking on the “H” icon on the slide; (2) by visiting the “Handout” dashboard of the platform; or (3) by clicking on the corresponding button on the content dashboards. Each button hyperlinks to a PDF copy of the handout.
- Videos – can be played as desired. Videos are grouped together on the “Video” dashboard. Thumbnails that link to the videos are also provided on corresponding content dashboards.
- Training resources – include a training agenda, certificate of completion, evaluation, and post-test. Graphic files are also included with artwork for binder covers and divider tabs for creating a trainee curriculum binder.
- Promotional materials – include a PowerPoint™ presentation to promote the WIC breastfeeding peer counseling program with WIC staff or community partners. It is displayed on the “Resource” dashboard and on the dashboard for Section 3, “Program Logistics.” In addition to the promotional presentation, PDF copies of the FNS peer counseling promotional brochures are also included. These can be accessed from the “FNS Resources” dashboard.
- Self-study resources – include webcasts housed on the FNS website at https://lovingsupport.fns.usda.gov/content/instructional-tools-and-support-materials and a local agency manager user’s guide that can be downloaded at the FNS website.

The Interactive, Relational Approach

The Loving Support© peer counseling training curriculum for managers uses an innovative design approach that allows for flexible learning and strengthens the connection between the trainer and trainees to enhance learning and retention. The presentation “platform” contains over 150 short slide shows, videos, and resources that can be used in a flexible format to address the training needs of the State or local WIC agency. The content is structured in a topical manner to streamline the content and make it more intuitive for users to access and use.

The curriculum presentation platform is highly visual and provides flexible navigation options to allow presenters to quickly and easily move throughout the platform to respond to specific questions, share videos or picture stories, display handouts, or access other resources when needed to enhance the learning needs of trainees. This approach complements the participant-focused approach in WIC.
Rationale

With the advent of presentation software such as PowerPoint™, which is used by millions of people worldwide, a standard presentation paradigm quickly became the norm for presenters. This approach was based on rigid (linear) slides that moved sequentially from topic to topic and did not change after the presentation began. Slides typically contained multiple-bullet-point text and small photos—or no photos at all. This “top down,” inflexible approach put the trainer in charge of information as a lecturer, and yet it led to limited engagement and minimal learning/retention by trainees.¹

In contrast, the interactive, relational approach used with the FNS curriculum challenges that paradigm. At its core are two powerful evidence-based learning techniques:

1. Highly visual imagery using meaningful photos and graphics to engage learners.
2. Navigation that allows for more interactive and facilitated learning techniques.

Visual Learning

Research shows that trainees subjected to standard bullet-point-filled slides face an uncomfortable dilemma. Their brain tries to simultaneously process both the written text shown on slides and the speaker’s verbal words. Unfortunately, doing so is virtually impossible. The brain can handle only one source of verbal information at any moment, meaning in this case that written words and spoken words end up competing with each other for attention. The outcome, called cognitive conflict, forces listeners to alternate back and forth from one source to the other, or otherwise ignore one of the sources, resulting in frustration. That frustration, in turn, produces disengagement that decreases long-term information storage and diminishes later recall and likelihood of follow-up actions.

Visuals on the other hand (such as photos, graphics, videos, animations, and other sight-based media) find their way to visual processing channels of the brain—which, according to Paivio’s “dual coding theory,” are mostly separate from verbal channels. Those separate channels eliminate cognitive conflict and allow simultaneous verbal and visual coding, which helps learners better absorb and remember presented information.²

Research shows that meaningful photos can greatly enhance the learning experience. Large photos, in particular, capture attention and lead to better information storage, especially when coupled with explanatory verbal/text details. One study tracked the eye movements of individuals who were shown a series of news articles. The study found that our eyes are first drawn to the photo imagery, starting with the largest image. A reader typically scans about three quarters or more of the pictures present before ever turning attention to the text.³ In a related study, readers of news magazine articles were more likely to select and read articles that had photos.⁴,⁵ Presenters who provide meaningful, full-screen

imagery while verbally discussing content enhance their ability to engage participants in the experience and create a more positive learning outcome.

**Navigation That Allows for Interactive Learning**

Interaction is a critical part of most human communication and relationship building. Whether immersed in a spontaneous childhood story, participating in a planning session with co-workers, or engaging a friend in café conversations, humans inherently feel a desire to connect with, and react to, other people. This helps us take in knowledge and make sense of our world. This need does not go away simply because people are in a classroom or learning situation. Numerous studies show that interactive learning opportunities provided through face-to-face learning, computer-based learning, and website design all contribute to enhanced learning and retention, as well as improved relationship building.

The Loving Support peer counselor training curricula incorporate both of the innovative relational presentation components: powerful visual communication and interactive learning approaches. The curricula allow trainers to adapt messages and teaching style to the needs, desires, and understandings of audiences.

**Key Elements of the Curriculum Platform**

The Loving Support peer counseling training curriculum for WIC managers functions similarly to a typical website organized with topical content areas. When surfing a website, the user searches for content based on menu tabs and then clicks to access that content. After finishing a page, clicking a “back” button returns the user to the previous page, or the user moves on to another website section. In addition to text and pictures, video clips and PDF documents might be available along the way. Presentation materials can incorporate identical strategies. Indeed, the PowerPoint™-based presentation platforms at the heart of these curricula closely mimic website design, providing users with the same kind of flexible, organized, fast, access to information.

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7 Lane, 2007.

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Content Dashboards

The 10 sections are organized on individual content “dashboards” or categories within the platform. The navigation buttons at the bottom of the presentation platform link directly to these curriculum sections or dashboards. It is possible to scroll through the dashboards by rolling the mouse wheel down or pressing the “down” arrow button on your computer. You also can click any dashboard button to instantly display a desired choice in any order.

Each dashboard displays all the materials needed to address a particular content section, including PPT shows, handouts, videos, and other resources—all arranged within topical sections. For example, the “Loving Support© Model” dashboard has four main sections: “Loving Support© Model,” “Formative Research,” “Training,” and the relevant “Handouts.”

Individual topics appear under each section head. For example, the “Training” section features two topics: “Training Managers” and “Training Peer Counselors.” These topic buttons link directly to relevant PowerPoint™ shows. Most such topic shows are very short—from 1 to 8 slides in length.

The presenter has complete flexibility to display the content sections in a linear way (“in order”) if desired, or reveal smaller subsets “out of order” when appropriate. For example, a presenter may wish to utilize only certain parts of the curriculum as part of a staff meeting and thereby access only needed portions.

Slide Shows

Open an individual topic (slide show) by clicking a topic button on a dashboard. After the show opens, find additional navigation buttons displayed at the bottom. These buttons link to the show’s individual slides and provide random access. A presenter has the option of scrolling through all available slides in a standard linear way, or clicking bottom links to access preferred slides.
Resource Dashboards

In addition to the section content dashboards, additional dashboards provide organized collections of all needed resources waiting for fast display. These resource dashboards include:

- **Showcase Dashboard.** The curriculum features State and local WIC agency “showcases” that highlight best practices—all grouped together in one place on a “Showcases” dashboard. A map of the United States provides a backdrop for locating showcase options. The small round buttons on top of states hyperlink to PPT shows describing programs. For more information about a show that will open, hover the mouse over a button to reveal a screen tip offering details.

- **Handout Dashboard.** All handouts used in the curriculum have a link on the “Handout” dashboard, with links grouped according to sections such as “Assessment and Planning,” “Job Descriptions,” “Policies,” “Report Forms,” etc. A brown bar (visual cue) exists on each button to indicate it links to a PDF document.

- **FNS Resources dashboard.** Access various resources used in the curriculum via the dashboard shown here. Options include FNS resources such as peer counseling program promotional brochures in English and Spanish, and other promotional documents. Find training resources here as well, such as the peer counseling “Passport to Success,” a compact PowerPoint™ presentation useful for community promotion, and the FNS Nutrition Service Standards. Many of these resources also appear on other dashboards where relevant.

- **Video dashboard.** This dashboard houses all of the recommended videos for this training curriculum. Many of the videos are also housed on dashboards relevant to certain sections. Displaying them also in one place makes it easier to find it more quickly, as well.
Visual Cues

Slides used in the curriculum provide a variety of visual cues that simplify the instructional process:

- **Back Button.** A simple button located in the bottom right corner of every slide functions like a website back button. Just look for the small International Breastfeeding Symbol. Clicking this button while the presentation is in “slide show mode” closes the currently open content show and returns the presenter to the previously viewed dashboard.

  *Tip: This back button exists in all content shows and on dashboard slides. If you click the button while in a content show, that action returns you to the last-viewed dashboard. However, if you click the button while on a dashboard slide, the click simply ends the dashboard slide show—which means you will need to restart the slide show to resume displaying content.*

- **Slide “Glow.”** When scrolling through slides in a particular PowerPoint™ show, a “glow” appears on the navigation button associated with the currently active slide. This visual cue helps the presenter always stay oriented and know how many slides remain to be shown.

- **Brown Bar.** A brown bar on a navigation button indicates access to a PDF document. Think “file folder” to remember the color brown. Available documents include handouts, as well as other resources. Some slides have an image of a document with the words “Open Document” below it. Clicking this “Open Document” button physically opens the file in the default software your computer uses for displaying PDF documents—on top of the presentation platform. To close that software and return to the dashboard, simply click the “X” in that software’s window. Many other documents are pictured with small thumbnails on the relevant dashboard. Click on the thumbnail to access the document. To close, click the “X” in the software’s window and you will be returned to the dashboard.
- **Blue Bar.** Several PPT shows have slides with a blue bar in the navigation button. Think “sky” and the “cloud” to remember the color blue. This means the slide contains an active hyperlink to a website. To access the website, click the available “Open Website” button. When finished displaying the site, click the usual “X” button on the website browser to reveal the previous content slide or dashboard.

*Tip: When presenting at a training event, close all other programs, websites, and documents to make going back and forth to the website more seamless. Also, remember that these website links work properly only if the presentation computer is connected to the Internet.*

- **Purple Bar.** A purple bar indicates a slide contains some kind of animation. Think “Mardi Gras” beads to remember the color purple. Most animations run simply by rolling the mouse wheel down or by pressing the keyboard “down” arrow. In some cases, running the animation(s) requires clicking something on the slide. The speaker notes provide instructions under each slide thumbnail to understand running all such animations.

- **Magenta Bar.** Several dashboards contain small image thumbnails that represent active hyperlinks. If a magenta bar appears at the top of one of these thumbnails, it means the thumbnail plays a video. If no colored bar exists, the thumbnail opens a “Picture Story,” a series of photos that help illustrate a story. The speaker notes provide details on the stories.

- **H Icon.** Many slides feature a semitransparent button with the letter “H” on it located above the back button. This icon represents a direct link to a corresponding handout. Click the icon(s) to display the handout(s) for that slide. Click the “X” on the handout to close it and return to the slide.
Using the Presentation Platform

Equipment and Software Needed

- PC computer operating system—Windows 7 or up recommended.
- PC software: Microsoft Office Suite© 2007 or above which includes PowerPoint™. The sophisticated navigation links and videos in the platform do not work properly in earlier versions or in PowerPoint “Reader.” Note: using a Mac computer running a Mac version of PowerPoint (preferably version 2016) is possible but not recommended due to some amount of incompatibility.
- Windows Media Player installed as the default video playback software.
- LCD (liquid crystal display) projector to display PowerPoint™.
- Computer speakers or audio sound system for videos.
- “Air mouse” (preferred) with motion-sensing technology that allows a presenter to control the presentation in the air or on a solid surface.

Downloading the Platform

The platform and accompanying curriculum resources can be downloaded at the FNS Loving Support© website. Follow the directions on the website for downloading the resources. The overall file size for this platform is approximately 300+ megabytes. It might require between 5 to 30 minutes or longer to download, depending upon your Internet speed and agency system parameters.

Talk with state or local agency IT personnel to determine if the system will allow you to download a file of this size. Some IT departments have policies against downloading large files, or have security measures that do not allow staff to download certain files. If directly downloading the file is problematic, discuss the issue with your IT staff to find a solution. Try the following strategies:

- Ask the IT department to download the curriculum and load it onto your computer for you.
- Download the curriculum on your computer at home and save the file to a memory stick. Upload the file to your presentation computer after checking with IT staff about potential security restrictions.

After downloading the platform, it is recommended that you place it on your desktop for easy access when needed. The downloaded file will appear as a “zipped” folder.

IMPORTANT: You must unzip this file, what is known as “extracting” the compressed files it contains. Although you might be able to open and view the presentation materials without formally completing the unzipping process, critical links between slide shows will not work properly until the file is unzipped. To complete unzipping steps, right click the downloaded file and choose the option “Extract” or “Extract Here” from the menu options. If necessary, specify the destination for the extracted folder (your Desktop). Click OK. A progress bar should appear.
When the unzipping process is complete, another (unzipped) folder should appear near the same area where the original zipped folder exists. It is recommended that you move the original zipped folder to another location on your computer so you do not accidentally open it during a live training situation.

**IMPORTANT: PPT Setting Changes**

For the platform to operate smoothly, you must make two very minor PowerPoint™ setting changes on your computer. You only have to make these changes once per computer, but be sure to make the same setting changes on all presentation computers. Uncheck two default settings in the software that will interfere with your navigation.

1. Open the PowerPoint™ software. Click the “File” button (PPT 2010 and higher) or the Windows icon (PPT 2007).

2. When the menu appears, click the “PowerPoint™ Options” or “Options” button near the bottom of the menu box.

3. Click the “Advanced” tab.

4. Uncheck the options *Show popup toolbar and End with black slide.*

5. Click “OK” to set the changes.
Running the Platform
The unzipped platform folder contains many slide shows. The only show you will ever open manually is the one with “0-MAIN ...” in its title. This is the Main Dashboard show that links to all of the other slide shows—the content shows—via hyperlink. Open that MAIN show. It should be the very top slide show.

Keep in mind that this presentation platform, with all its active hyperlinks, will only work while the slide show is running. You may start the show by clicking the “Slide Show” tab and choosing the “From Beginning” option. Or, click the display screen icon at the bottom of your PowerPoint window. With the show in slide show mode, you can begin the talk/training and click hyperlinks as needed.

Using an “Air Mouse”
An “air mouse” gives the presenter great flexibility and freedom to control the platform’s navigation links while walking around the room during a presentation. Using an air mouse takes practice. The following tips can help:

- Place the USB connector in the computer. Follow package directions for synchronizing the mouse with the computer. Fully charge the mouse the night before or use fresh batteries if it takes standard batteries.
- Keep your index finger pressed in on the “trigger” to move the cursor. Place your thumb over the mouse to left-click the navigation buttons.
- Practice keeping the mouse at your side and gently move your wrist instead of swinging your arms through the air, which can be very distracting to an audience. Subtle wrist movements are all that is needed to control the computer’s cursor and are far less distracting.
- If using a mouse that has a cradle, rest it in the cradle when not in use (ex: during breaks) so the battery can recharge. Also, note that depending upon the model, sometimes the mouse does not make good connection with the charge strips when placed in the cradle. Be sure it actually is charging.
- Become comfortable using the mouse in either hand so you can switch hands depending upon where you are in relation to the presentation screen. If the screen is on your right while speaking, use the mouse in your right hand (and vice versa).

Tips for Using the Presentation Platform
Download the presentation and set up your presentation computer well in advance! Don’t wait until the morning of a presentation to download the platform. Always download it or install it on your presentation computer a few days beforehand so it will be on your hard drive and you will have time to practice. Work with your state or local agency IT personnel to set up the presentation, following agency requirements. When selecting a computer to use for the training, be sure it properly displays WMV videos and is loaded with Microsoft Office™ 2007 or higher (NOT PowerPoint “Reader”). Avoid presenting from the agency server. This can create problems if the full platform is not able to be accessed or you experience connection issues during the training program.
**Prepare the computer.** Make appropriate setting changes on your presentation computer to eliminate the “end with black slide” and “show pop-up toolbar” default settings (see page 11). These interfere with the platform’s navigation components and must be corrected beforehand.

**Take time to practice navigating through the platform!** Learning a new presentation style takes a little time and effort. Remember that these innovative teaching techniques may be different from your usual style and require a little practice. That practice builds confidence. Many speakers quickly realize this way of approaching audiences opens up a newfound freedom for expressing ideas conversationally and naturally, with more focus on the relationship between trainer and trainees. Plus, the experience is more fun and meaningful for everyone.

**Practice using the air mouse.** The more you practice with the mouse, the more confident you will feel navigating seamlessly through your platform.

**Learn the content!** Review your background speaker notes so you can confidently present without having to read notes. Even if you are familiar with the content, taking a few minutes the day before to read through the content again gives you the confidence to present naturally.

**Set up the training room in advance.** Arrive early enough at the training event to rearrange tables if necessary, to encourage discussion and interaction. Set up the computer early enough to get IT assistance if needed, such as encountering a problem with your computer and the projector not connecting properly. Set up your presenter “space” in a way that is comfortable, with a place for a clock and your speaker notes as needed.

**Remain calm.** It is normal for presenters to feel a little nervous when presenting new content or using a new technology for the first time. If you become flustered, it is okay to let your audience know you are learning, too. Most people are very forgiving. If you find yourself making missteps, avoid calling attention to it. (Ex: “Oh dear, I clicked on the wrong thing” or “This is taking a little while to open”). Such comments can be very distracting to the audience. Instead, learn the art of “talking through the pause,” and continue teaching through any delays or missteps. Others may not even notice them! With practice, you will gain confidence.

**Make sure your mouse is activated.** Occasionally, you may find that when you click on a button nothing happens. Note that for the active hyperlink to work, the cursor’s “hand” symbol must be visible when you click. If it is not visible, and only the “arrow” is visible, simply jiggle your mouse slightly to make the pointer hand once again visible and available.

**Personalizing the platform.** The presentation platform uses a sophisticated web of hyperlinks to create navigation between sections of content. It is not recommended that users change the current platform or important hyperlinks can be lost. The dashboard button labeled “Local” enables your program to add local content via its own separate dashboard. Every Mother, Inc. and Aspire Communications will provide web-based training for State and local WIC agencies on how to set up this functionality in 2018.
Flexible Training Options

The FNS Loving Support© peer counseling curriculum for WIC managers, coordinators, and supervisors can be used in a variety of ways to train new staff or to reinforce best practices with existing staff and programs. This includes both in-person group training, as well as self-study training. Consider:

- **State or regional in-person group training events.** Providing in-person training can be helpful for staff, giving them an opportunity to learn from one another, and allowing more experienced program coordinators to share best practices and successful strategies. Some states provide training annually at the beginning of each new fiscal year.

- **Live web-based training events for new hires.** When an in-person training is not possible due to travel restrictions or other limitations, consider a live web-based training event. These can be scheduled more frequently (e.g., quarterly) to bring new staff up to speed. Hosting the event live can also help facilitate discussion and allow the presenter to answer questions.

- **FNS recorded webcasts.** The FNS Loving Support© website provides a series of recorded webcasts that cover the main sections of the curriculum. New hires can view these webcasts to get the content. Follow-up with a phone, Web, or in-person meeting to review the content and discuss key points.

- **Self-study.** The curriculum includes a program manager user’s guide for self-study learning. New hires can be asked to read this content on their own. Follow-up with a phone, Web, or in-person meeting to review the content and discuss key points.

- **Combined efforts.** Another option is to use a combination of resources. For example, new managers could review the user guide, or participate in a recorded webcast, and a follow-up web meeting could be held with new program managers to review key points and answer questions.

For more information about using the FNS Loving Support© peer counseling training materials, contact Every Mother, Inc. at: cathy@everymother.org.