

MARWIC

T · I · M · E · S

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

NATIONAL INFANT IMMUNIZATION WEEK CELEBRATED IN WEST VIRGINIA

In April, the WIC Immunization Coordination Effort (WIC ICE Program) hosted a celebration in West Virginia's Monongalia County. National Infant Immunization Week is an annual observance to celebrate the achievements of immunization programs throughout the United States.

The WIC ICE Program is a linked endeavor which originated to provide education and immunization services to WIC participants, birth to age 5. The Program is "Vaccine for Children Provider" and is the only project of its kind in West Virginia.

The celebration took place during the afternoon breastfeeding class for pregnant women. Healthy snacks were served before class in an informal setting where current educational materials were available. The WIC ICE Nurse addressed questions regarding vaccine myths and misconceptions as well as questions about reports of recent measles outbreaks.

Participants were amazed to learn that 50 years ago the measles vaccine was introduced in the United States resulting, in 2000, a declaration that measles was eliminated in our country. However, because unvaccinated people get infected while overseas, and then return home, the US has reported an increase in cases of measles. This evidence stressed that age-appropriate vaccination is critical to protect infants who are too young to be immunized.

Class participants were reminded that human milk provides babies first immunizations because of maternal antibodies which guard against illness. Class discussion included the benefits of breastfeeding and the importance of vaccination as recommended by the current immunization schedule.

The event served as a great opportunity to provide valuable information to parents and was enjoyed by all in attendance. ■



IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION — During a nutrition education class for pregnant women, WIC participants learn that human milk is a baby's first immunization.

THE CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY'S MERCER WIC PROGRAM CELEBRATES ITS NEW LOCATION IN THE CITY OF TRENTON

By Kelly Mannherz, MS, CLC

On February 3, The Children's Home Society of New Jersey's Mercer WIC Program opened its doors at its new administrative site in the city of Trenton.

The vast majority of the Program's participants reside in Trenton, making the new location more accessible for many WIC families who face transportation barriers. The new office's close proximity to other healthcare providers is one of its major perks, with the HealthStart prenatal clinic being located directly across the street. The new site is colorful and aesthetically pleasing, and provides private offices for income screening, breastfeeding consultations, and nutrition education. Additionally, the site features a



A GRAND OPENING – Welcome to the new WIC office in Trenton!

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MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL OFFICE CELEBRATES: “TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS AND SONS TO WORK DAY”

By Christine Berberich, Program Specialist, SFP and Jaime Van Lieu, Team Leader, SFP

For the first time in many years, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office (MARO) invited not only daughters and sons, but grandchildren to participate in the national “Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day” event at the Regional Office in Robbinsville, NJ on April 24. Fifteen young visitors enthusiastically learned firsthand about the many nutrition programs that our office oversees. A MARO team coordinated planned activities for the children making the day interesting and interactive. The day began with introductions, a tour of the office, and a healthy breakfast of fruit, bagels, juice and water.



LET’S MOVE — MARO employees’ children and grandchildren take a break from the office with a walk around the pond!



WIC WORKS – Jamie Van Lieu’s son is hard at work!

The day began with introductions, a tour of the office, and a healthy breakfast of fruit, bagels, juice and water.

Roberta Hodsdon, MARO’s Branch Chief for WIC, presented a colorful slide presentation explaining the WIC Program in an age-appropriate context. Roberta covered who is eligible for WIC, how people apply, and what benefits are provided. She also presented the children with food options in a variety of categories and asked them to guess which of the foods are WIC-approved. Activity worksheets courtesy of WIC Works were completed by the children.

Other topics covered that day included an energetic and informative discussion on MyPlate and the Let’s Move! initiative, with a focus on the importance of exercise and healthy eating tips. The children enjoyed some active time outside in the spring weather by taking a jog/walk around MARO’s ponds. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Regional staff also shared information about SNAP, including how to apply, who is eligible, what can be purchased with SNAP benefits, and how many people receive SNAP in the Mid-Atlantic States.

Children were able to shadow their hosts for on-the-job training during the afternoon. Seeing the useful role their parents and grandparents serve in the workplace inspires our youth to value work and provides girls and boys a unique educational experience. The event was a huge success as children were able to share what they learned and apply their newly acquired knowledge. When asked by his aunt, Jaime Van Lieu, Team Leader in MARO WIC, what his daddy (also a MARO employee) does all day at work, 5-year-old Vince replied, “Daddy helps keeps kids healthy!” ■



POWER TO THE PEOPLE — Roberta Hodsdon presented an easy-to-follow presentation to the children.



LOVE MY APPLE – Jamie Van Lieu’s nephew receives a healthy snack.



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The Food and Nutrition Service was happy to announce that the WIC Final Food Rule was published in the Federal Register on March 4, 2014. The regulation went into effect on May 5, 2014 with some later implementing dates for certain provisions. The new WIC food packages were developed to improve the dietary intake and breastfeeding practices of WIC participants with the addition of new foods and changes to some of the previously allowed foods. The modifications to the food packages reflect current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and feeding practices of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Some of the exciting new changes include...

- Increasing the fruit and vegetable voucher for children to \$8 per month.
- States can now allow infants aged

9-11 months old to receive a CVV for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables in lieu of a portion of the commercial jarred infant food.

- It is now standard for women and children 24 months and older to be issued nonfat (skim) and low-fat (1%) milk.
- The amount of cheese received by most participants will be limited to one pound per month.

The role of the WIC competent professional authority (CPA) has been expanded. CPA's can now determine the participant's need for milk substitutes, such as soy-based beverages and tofu or to determine the need for reduced-fat milk for one-year-old children based on individual need. At a state's option, the CPA may also be able to determine which WIC-approved foods medically fragile participants will be

able to receive. All of these changes will allow the WIC CPAs to provide more efficient and effective services to their clients.

States can also now allow several new food substitutes to meet participants' needs and cultural preferences, such as whole wheat pasta, yogurt, and Jack Mackerel. All the changes will give WIC participants a greater variety of healthy foods while taking into consideration cultural food preferences and creating greater access to foods.

Additionally, the changes maintain the integrity of the Program by continuing to improve nutritional and educational services provided to all WIC participants.

The WIC Final Food Rule can be found at: http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/03-04-14_WIC-Food-Packages-Final-Rule.pdf ■

IS MY CHILD DEVELOPING NORMALLY? WEST VIRGINIA'S MID-OHIO VALLEY WC HAS THE ANSWERS

By Jennifer Habeb, Nutritionist II, Outreach Coordinator

Many mothers wonder if their children are meeting developmental milestones, and often ask WIC nutrition professionals for advice. WIC is best known for offering healthy foods and nutrition counseling, but a program benefit that gets overlooked at times is linkage to healthcare and social services.

During Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment, many WIC participants voice concerns and seek information - not about what their child should eat - but child development such as, "When should my child be crawling, walking, or sitting up? Should he have teeth, be eating finger foods, be using a cup, or be talking? Where can I get help finding foods to feed my family, and also get help for my child's needs such as speech, a crib and other supplies?"

At the Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department WIC Program, many referrals are made on a daily basis to help families get the care and help they need. WIC professionals use a referral database and handouts, so families can access resources such as physicians, early intervention services, dentists, the Department of Health and Human Resources, food pantries, plus multiple other service providers. Partner agencies have also provided clinics with educational materials detailing what children should be doing at what age.

Our goal for WIC participants is not only to eat healthy, but be healthy by obtaining the proper care and advice needed to prosper. Parents often ask for child development information along with the material in the WIC clinic on potty-training, getting a little one to sleep at night, weaning from the bottle, and thumb sucking.

In the Wood County office, developmental milestones were highlighted on a decorated bulletin board. The bulletin board specified development from birth to age one; what infants



ON THE RIGHT TRACK — Developmental milestones are a concern to many mothers. Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department WIC Program assists families by linking them to early intervention and healthcare services when needed.

should be doing at birth, and by age, 2, 5, 8, and 11 months. This display was in our waiting room which was seen by the 2000 WIC participants served each month in this county. This offered unobtrusive education for parents concerning their child's development, and prompted the opportunity for requesting additional information and resources during their WIC appointment.

With WIC celebrating 40 years of strengthening families, the Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department WIC Program wants to ensure that we connect families to healthcare when they are ready and need it. ■

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WIC PROVIDES BREASTFEEDING TRAINING TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS

By Paulette Thompson, MS, RD, LDN, CLS

Gwen West, IBCLC for the District of Columbia WIC Program, and Paulette Thompson, DC State Breastfeeding Coordinator, were excited to have the opportunity to provide breastfeeding training at two conferences in the District of Columbia this spring.

The DC team adapted the USDA “Using Loving Support to Grow and Glow” curriculum for an interactive, two-day training at the national “Healthy Start Leadership Training Institute” in March. Healthy Start is a valuable partner to WIC, reaching pregnant women in their homes and providing frequent contact with women and families. The audience at the training institute included Healthy Start Project Directors and other state agency staff as well as community workers. Our programs share the common goal to promote and support breastfeeding. Sharing resources and working together provides moms with consistent messaging and the support they need for a successful breastfeeding experience.

Childcare providers are another important partner in supporting breastfeeding. The Division of Early Learning in the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent for Education provides leadership and coordination to ensure that all District

of Columbia children, from birth to kindergarten entrance, have access to high quality early childhood development programs and are well prepared for school. They are responsible for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations in child development facilities and collaborating with the Office of Head Start. DC WIC presented a one-hour training each day of a city-wide three-day conference for all licensed childcare providers in the District. The trainings were well attended with approximately 50 attendees each day. DC WIC would like to thank both Texas and Wisconsin WIC offices for sharing their materials and guidance for childcare centers.

Gwen and I appreciated the opportunity to collaborate with Healthy Start and the Division of Early Learning and thoroughly enjoyed providing these teaching events. We learned about each of these programs, the services they provide and the unique challenges they face in supporting breastfeeding moms. WIC has been a leader in breastfeeding education and support and as we continue to spread the word on breastfeeding and collaborate with all of the stakeholders working with and supporting new moms, we will improve the health of moms and babies nationwide. ■

PENNSYLVANIA’S ALLEGHENY WIC CELEBRATES THEIR 40TH ANNIVERSARY!

By Patricia Waag, Allegheny County Health Department WIC Director

Pennsylvania’s Allegheny County Health Department WIC Program celebrated the 40th anniversary of WIC on May 14, 2014 at the Hosanna House Event Center in Wilkensburg, PA. The Allegheny County Health Department WIC Program was the second pilot project for WIC in the country and the first WIC Program in Pennsylvania. Headed by former WIC Director, the late Dorothy Kolodner, the first WIC check was written in Pennsylvania on May 28, 1974.

The celebration program contained a WIC history quiz designed by current WIC Director, Patricia Waag; WIC Proclamations from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the City of Pittsburgh and the County of Allegheny, and a US Postal Service Cancelled Stamp. The staff were honored for their years of service with WIC and watched a video on customer service called “Give Them a Pickle.”

Testimonials were read from WIC participants as well as a former WIC participant who is now a grocery store owner, Debbie Hickman. Pictures were taken by county photographer, Margaret Stanley.

After lunch and cake, the afternoon continued with the

history of WIC, which included speakers from the past to the present. The speakers included: Leon Haynes, Executive Director of Hosanna House; Joe Scorpion, retired Health Department Deputy Director; Judy Dodd, former WIC Administrator; Joyce Dodge, former WIC Director; Roderick Harris, current Health Department Deputy Director; and Dr. Karen Hacker, current Health Department Director. There were also visits and congratulations from business partners, and Michelle Davies and Jill Johnson, who represented the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Health. Happy 40th Anniversary WIC! ■



THE GANG'S ALL HERE — The Allegheny County Health Department WIC staff.

WEST VIRGINIA'S SHENANDOAH WIC COMES TO THE FORT ASHBY LIBRARY

Thursday afternoons host the Fort Ashby reading hour for young toddlers and children. The Shenandoah Community Health WIC Program offered activities in March that had children "wearing green," and to come ready to jump. And jump, they did! After reading the book, "We like to Move, Exercise is Fun" by Elyse April, children were entertained by "Reggie & the Veggies" Family Fun and Fitness DVD.

The DVD was made possible through the Oklahoma State Department of Health WIC Services. Reggie and the Veggies are characterized by people dressed in full costume as a Tomato, who shows the Tomato Twirl, a Pea Pod, who shows the Peapod Wiggle, and a Carrot, that does the Carrot Twist. The leader of them all, is Reggie, a non-vegetable leader. The kids loved doing the exercises with the upbeat music. Even some of the hesitant children became active when Reggie told them to do the "Dead Bug" — lie on the floor and move your arms and legs like a bug on its back.

The librarian, April, also read "Muncha, Muncha, Muncha" by Candace Fleming, while the children colored "green pea pods." Snacks of frozen lime yogurt dippin' dots ended the day before everyone received a goody bag filled with recipes for mom, stickers, a book, a pack of peas to plant, a bottle of water, and a bright green jump rope! ■



STRETCH AND READ — The "Dead Bug" was a favorite exercise practiced during the March Fort Ashby Library story hour hosted by the Shenandoah Community Health WIC Program.

DELAWARE WIC HELPS PARTICIPANTS MAKE SMART CHOICES

By Amanda Good, MS, RD, Food Bank of Delaware, WIC Food Demonstration Specialist

Delaware's WIC Program, in partnership with the Food Bank of Delaware, was awarded an Operational Adjustment Grant from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office to implement an exciting new project called Smart Choices. Smart Choices, created by the Food Bank of Delaware's Nutrition Education staff, is a pilot program that presents food demonstrations in the waiting rooms of all 11 clinics in the state. Every month, foods from the



CHILI, NORTHERN STYLE — Amanda Good prepares Minnesota Northwoods White Chili at West End Neighborhood House. Great northern beans create a healthy and hearty meal.



YUM — Ma'ourri Dollard enjoying a black bean and egg burrito prepared by Amanda Good at Northeast State Service Center. The recipe used tortillas, black beans, eggs, cheese, and green onions from the produce voucher.



EASY AS TOAST — Amanda Good demonstrates Peanut Butter Banana French Toast at the Milford State Service Center. This recipe used eggs, peanut butter, bread and bananas from the produce voucher.

WIC package are featured in tasty, low-cost recipes that are easy to prepare at home by WIC recipients. In addition to the WIC foods, the recipes contain other foods that are good sources of Iron, Calcium, Vitamin C, and Folic Acid. These all-important nutrients are identified as necessary for a healthy pregnancy.

After viewing the food demonstration, participants are asked to complete a brief survey about their food habits and basic nutrition knowledge and an abbreviated food frequency questionnaire. The data collected will be compiled to evaluate current behaviors and knowledge regarding healthy eating habits.

As an added incentive to completing the survey and questionnaire and viewing the food demonstration, each participant receives an apron, cookbook, and oven mitt. The intent of these incentives is to encourage participants to utilize the recipes at home.

Since the inaugural class on January 8, 2014, 47 classes have been presented in the 11 WIC clinics in Delaware to a total of 331 participants.

Client feedback has been very positive with many WIC clients commenting how easy the recipes are to prepare and that they look forward to trying them at home. This free tasting has provided a healthy snack for the clients and their children as they wait for their appointments. Overall, the program has been a success! ■

MARO CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH 2014

VIRGINIA'S FAIRFAX COUNTY WIC CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH DELICIOUSLY

By Samantha Ronk

Throughout March, Virginia's Fairfax County WIC Program created and participated in many special nutrition education activities that taught and inspired participants to embody the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' National Nutrition Month (NNM) motto of "Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right."

Some district offices within the county made NNM bulletin boards for the waiting rooms. One site made a board with recipes from all the countries where the staff was from, i.e. Afghanistan, Ireland and El Salvador. Still other sites made NNM recipe handouts to offer participants, which had favorite healthy recipes from the WIC office staff. Several sites held NNM food demos for groups of participants, where they made healthy items such as fruit smoothies and chipotle-like burrito bowls. All of the recipes in the food demos consisted of items that participants could purchase using their WIC Food Benefits. All in all, it was a county-wide effort to promote National Nutrition Month in the wake of switching to the new VA Crossroads e-WIC system, but nonetheless, the clients and staff thoroughly enjoyed themselves. ■



SMOOTHIES WITH A SMILE — WIC staff member Justina Alvarez poses with WIC moms who enjoyed the healthy strawberry banana smoothies she made during a food demo to promote National Nutrition Month at the INOVA WIC Office.



BOWL OF GOODNESS — Silvyva Nava and Brittany Bates, WIC staff members at the Mount Vernon District office, enjoy healthy burrito bowls after a food demo during National Nutrition Month.

VIRGIN ISLANDS WIC CLINICS CELEBRATE NUTRITION MONTH

By Lorna Concepcion, MS, RD

WIC clinics in the Virgin Islands celebrated Nutrition Month with similar activities across the territory. The nutritionist made a master plan to educate participants on simple snacks using fruits and vegetables and for them to try fresh produce in different ways. Each week had a different theme. The first week focused on increasing vegetables in the diet and participants got to taste guacamole and fresh tomato salsa with tortilla chips made from tortillas. These recipes used foods as snacks in a way that is not usually done in the VI culture.

The second week focused on fruit, while the third and fourth weeks focused on simple non-cook snacks. Recipes for the food demonstrations were also given out. Participants completed a questionnaire and there was also a raffle to encourage participation. ■



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER — Nurse CPA Tasha Sobratti (left) explains the handout to WIC participant Tasheda Isidore and baby at the Roy L Schneider WIC clinic.



AND THE WINNER IS — Tasha Sobratti (left) presents the prize to WIC participant Kishma Rezarie (center), and nutritionist and Carol Bareuther looks on.

VIRGINIA'S ALEXANDRIA HEALTH DEPARTMENT CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

This year the Alexandria Health Department (AHD) enjoyed a great month in March celebrating National Nutrition Month (NNM): "Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right."

The WIC dietetic intern planned a series of activities and displays for clients and staff and hosted an event with the outreach committee. A "nutrition question of the day" contest was sent by e-mail to all AHD employees. One winner received a prize per day. On the morning of March 7, nearly 50 AHD staff participated in a healthy session event, enjoyed healthy breakfast food, fresh fruit juices, and had an opportunity to discuss recipes and healthy nutrition ideas with the intern. NNM prizes were given to staff members for participating. It was a fun day for the staff to share experiences and learn how to make fresh fruit juices by combining their favorite fruits.

A colorful bulletin board with healthy recipes and NNM handouts to take was displayed at the health department for WIC participants and visitors. In addition, the AHD website provided information about NNM with tips to explore the taste of new foods at the grocery store, cooking at home, and how to get the most nutrition from calories.

The March activities provided staff and clients with ideas on how to enjoy the taste of new foods and eating right during National Nutrition Month and beyond! ■



MAKING HEALTHY EATING FUN — Alexandria WIC staff (left to right) Nancy Kargbo, Paula Rosca, Elisa Maharaj, Melinda Gray, Susanne Deleon, Marbella Moreno-McCarthy (WIC Intern), Diana Shupack, Nichelle Stockton, Sophia Tep, Casey Jarvis take a break from National Nutrition Month activities.

NEW JERSEY NORTH HUDSON COMMUNITY ACTION CELEBRATES NNM WITH TASTY ACTIVITIES

By Shabnam Gill, Assistant Coordinator

On March 18, NJ's North Hudson Community Action Corporation WIC Program celebrated Nutrition Month by having "Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right" Kick-Off Day.

WIC nutritionists Wendy Sanchez and Lillian Rivera involved the WIC mothers in a day full of food demonstrations and fun activities. The entire WIC office was decorated with banners and orange and green balloons displaying the "Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right" theme.

One of the activities was "Top Chef" in which the mothers were given WIC food items and they had a certain amount of time to create a meal. This activity was a great success and WIC moms along with their children created recipes such as quesadillas, vegetable and tuna wraps, omelets, fruit and tuna salads and milk shakes.

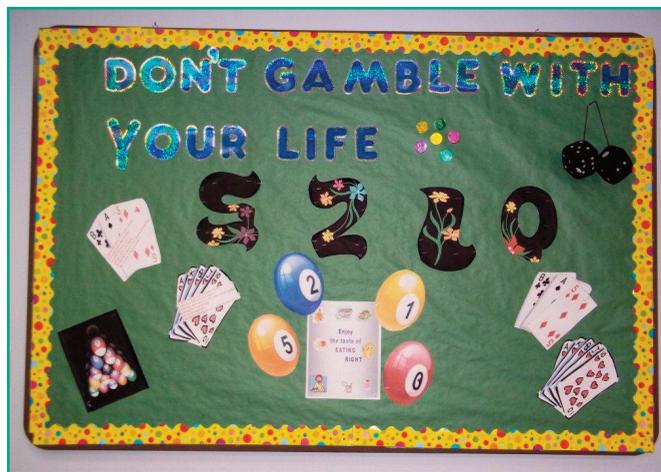
After the activities, participants went home with beautiful tote bags filled with educational handouts, pencils, pens, National Nutrition Month bracelets, and other goodies. In addition, children received durable lunch totes with the "Enjoy the taste of Eating Right" logo.

WIC moms stated that they loved the hands on experience and really had a great deal of fun participating in the activity. ■

MULTI-TASKING CELEBRATION IN WEST VIRGINIA, TSN/WIC STYLE

On March 13, the TSN/WIC Program in Logan County, WV, recognized National Nutrition Month, as well as the WIC Program's 40th Anniversary, with a casino-themed celebration. "Don't Gamble on Your Life" activities offered a variety of games which gave children an opportunity to play and learn. Prizes were given for landing on a healthy food depicted on a roulette wheel. Card games, lottery tickets and dice were used to educate children and families on the 5-2-1-0 program which promotes healthy lifestyles. Little ones were not excluded as they played "Pick up Ducks" for their prizes.

The Logan TSN/WIC Program also promotes healthy eating by partnering with PRIDE Community Services (Head Start) and Healthy Logan County. Flyers were distributed in the WIC office to encourage participation in a free and fun Healthy Foods Cooking class which was offered later in March and April. ■



GET THE MESSAGE — This colorful display depicts the "Don't Gamble on Your Life" theme for Logan County, WV National Nutrition Month celebration.

MARO CELEBRATES NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH 2014

MARYLAND'S HARFORD COUNTY WIC PARTICIPANTS GET THE TASTE OF NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

By Kelli Zentkovich, MD/VA WIC Dietetic Intern, Harford County WIC Nutrition Program Trainee

In celebration of National Nutrition Month (NNM), nutrition events were held at the local agency WIC clinics in Maryland's Harford County and nutrition education classes were taught at different community locations throughout the month. In addition to the events and classes, nutrition facts of the week were sent out to all Harford County Health Department staff to help with their awareness of and involvement in the month as well. These nutrition facts included information on the history of National Nutrition Month and the role of registered dietitians, the new nutrition facts label proposed by the FDA, food safety at home, facts on different leafy greens, facts on the different cooking oils, and the best nutrition phone applications to download.

The first NNM event was held at our Aberdeen WIC Clinic on March 18, and the second event took place at our Edgewood WIC Clinic on March 27. Both events revolved around the theme of the month, "Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right." The health fair-like events featured stations for the children to practice building a healthy plate and to take place in NNM coloring activities, word searches, and making a pledge to eat healthier. In addition to the activities for kids, adults had the opportunities to "rate their plates" to evaluate their current eating habits and to get information on the taste sensations, cooking with herbs, new recipes, and the health benefits of kale. The main feature of these events was a Kale Pineapple Smoothie taste testing which was a huge hit and excited many participants and staff to try out new recipes including the nutritional powerhouse, kale!

Two nutrition education classes took place during the month of March as well. The first class was held at the Bel Air branch of the Boys and Girls Club on March 20, with the assistance of their director, Tiffany Smith. Two groups of about 20 children (ranging in age from elementary to middle school students) were taught. The students learned about the four main taste sensations of bitter, sour, sweet, and salty and the science behind their taste buds and nose working together to help them experience taste. The students enjoyed a taste testing where they tried out the taste sensations for themselves. At the end of the class students wrote NNM pledges to keep trying new foods and named one new food they were going to try in the month of March! These pledges are now decorating the walls of the club. The class on March 21, at the afterschool program held at the Mountain Christian EpiCenter in Edgewood, featured the same lesson plan and more pledges by the students to eat healthier! ■



SMOOTH — Kelli pours a sample of the pineapple kale smoothie in our Edgewood clinic.



BUILDING A BETTER PLATE — Dietetic Intern Kelli Zentkovich teaches a WIC participant to build a healthy plate using a MyPlate place setting.



ALL SET — Kelli is ready to present at the Aberdeen WIC clinic.

VIRGINIA'S CHESTERFIELD HEALTH DISTRICT'S "CAN-DO" ATTITUDE HELPS STOCK LOCAL FOOD BANK

In recognition of National Nutrition Month, Virginia's Chesterfield Health District WIC team collected canned goods for a local food bank and ministry. Nutritionist Senior Katherine Field led the effort with support from Program Supervisor Kerry Williams, Nutritionist Senior Mary Garrison and other health department staff.

Staff members were permitted to dress "down" two Fridays per month in exchange for bringing in four cans of food. More than 450 canned goods were collected and donated to the food bank. Health department staff, WIC clients and members of the local ministry concluded National Nutrition Month with a final celebration and a 1.5-mile walk around the Chesterfield government complex. ■



FINALE — The staff of the Chesterfield Health District shares a moment at the conclusion of their walk during National Nutrition Month festivities.

DC WIC ENJOYS CINCO DE MAYO FAMILY FUN DAY

By Sara Beckwith, MS, RD, LD, CLS

WIC staff from Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC celebrated Cinco De Mayo with food, fun, and lots of festivity. Children's WIC had the opportunity to take part in the Cinco De Mayo MedStar Family Choice, Family Fun Day. MedStar Family Choice is a Managed Care Organization serving Medicaid programs in the District of Columbia and Maryland.

Event exhibitors included hospitals, health centers, the fire department, food banks, and other community organizations. The free event featured fun activities for the entire family. Event goers enjoyed free food, grocery give-aways, food demonstrations, and a DJ playing festive music. Children were definitely excited to receive free prizes including glow necklaces, sombreros, and children's books. The event featured health screenings, including diabetes, blood pressure, and body mass index. WIC staff talked with parents and care-givers about WIC Program services, healthy eating, and breastfeeding support. The WIC table featured outreach handouts, nutrition education brochures, physical activity and breastfeeding promotion materials, and give-aways such as tooth brushes for children. The event was an excellent opportunity to spread the word about WIC and join with the community to help families make healthy eating and physical activity part of their daily lives. ■



FUN FOR ALL — Children's National Medical Center WIC nutritionists Sara Beckwith and Kimberly Shubert, and WIC technician Lucia Castillo, celebrated Cinco De Mayo at Family Fun Day.

MARWIC TIMES 2014 Calendar

- The deadline for the Fall issue of MARWIC TIMES is August 22, 2014. 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.

eWIC CUSTOMER SERVICE 24 HOURS A DAY 7 DAYS A WEEK WITH WEST VIRGINIA'S WHEELING-OHIO COUNTY WIC

The Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department WIC Program was the last agency in West Virginia to implement Electronic Benefit Transfer, better known as eWIC. eWIC was introduced to participants in the six-county area served by the agency on October 21, 2013. Clients and staff have transitioned happily from the paper vouchers to the eWIC cards.

The change to the electronic benefit issuance has been a positive experience. However, occasionally participants have struggled with the process at the grocery store. Staff highlights the shopping experience with the participants by reviewing how to use the eWIC card and the WV WIC Approved Food List. Recently, a participant at the Ohio County WIC office called and stated her confusion in using the eWIC card. Beth Dowler, Local Agency Director, took the call and offered to meet the participant at a local grocery store and shop with her. The two went through the store, with the aid of the WV WIC Approved Food List and the participant's benefit balance sheet, and gathered the items for purchase. Beth used the time to explain not only how to use the card, but also what foods are WIC approved and why they are WIC approved. The checkout experience was the last step. It went smoothly with both the participant and grocery clerk happily stating they learned from the experience. ■

WEST VIRGINIA'S RANDOLPH-ELKINS WIC PROGRAM WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR

Early 2014, West Virginia's Randolph-Elkins WIC Program welcomed a new director, Alison B. Shehl. "Ali," as she prefers to be called, accepted the job with enthusiasm and charisma. She states, "I feel very blessed to be given the opportunity to once again work for WIC. My passion for this program runs deep, and I look forward to working with this wonderful staff as we grow with WIC."



Ali Shehl

Ali is originally from Richwood, WV. She attended West Virginia University (WVU) and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Nutrition and Foods, followed by a Masters of Arts focusing in Nutrition from the Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences also at WVU. While in college, Ali worked as a dietetic aid at WVU Hospital and also at HealthWorks Rehabilitation and Fitness as a Group Fitness Instructor. As Ali pursued her master's degree, she started working at WIC in Monongalia County, WV part-time as a nutritionist. She helped to develop the protocol and modules for the WV Nutrition Assistant Program and trained all staff in this area. After completing her master's degree, she started working at WIC full-time and became their outreach coordinator, while continuing to train nutrition assistants.

In August 2010, Ali moved to Huntington, WV and began working at Valley Health Systems WIC program as a nutritionist and soon became a nutrition supervisor as well as assistant outreach coordinator. A few years later, Ali moved to Buckhannon, WV, and married her husband in June 2013. Professionally, Ali started working as a health behavior counselor for the PEIA Weight Management Program for WVU, where she was a faculty member within the College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences. Eight months later, she accepted the position for WIC Nutrition Director for the Randolph Elkins Health Department.

Ali enjoys cooking, running, playing with her puppy Ruby and watching WV Wesleyan Football. She has competed in area races/triathlons on weekends and completed her first half-marathon at Marshall University last November – coming in second place!

The Randolph-Elkins WIC Program is excited to welcome Ali as their new director! ■

NEW JERSEY'S NORTH HUDSON WIC PROGRAM CELEBRATES NATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK

By Shabnam Gill, Assistant Coordinator

On May 12, New Jersey's North Hudson Community Action Corporation WIC Program in conjunction with the Health Center celebrated National Women's Health Week at the WIC Office. The goal for this year's National Women's Health Week was to empower women to make their health a priority. WIC nutritionists, peer counselors, and a medical assistant were available to provide information. Attendees were offered free blood pressure and hearing screenings along with healthy snacks.

WIC Nutritionists Josephine Valenzuela and Liliana Flores led healthy food demonstrations throughout the day by preparing mango, pineapple, and strawberry fruit smoothies and nutritious bean salads for the parents and children. Attendees took home NHCAC WIC Cookbook and a children's recipe book filled with fun and easy snack recipes developed by Josephine Valenzuela.

WIC participants were very appreciative to discover different ways to prepare smoothies and beans with a variety of simple and nutritious ingredients which can be obtained with their WIC checks. They especially loved the creative recipe books and stated that they could not wait to go home and try out the recipes for their children. ■



CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HEALTH — NHCAC Nutritionists Liliana Flores (left) and Josephine Valenzuela (right) take a break from their food demonstrations to share a photo.

PUERTO RICO WIC HOSTS 4TH CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND HEALTH FAIR

Puerto Rico WIC participated in the 4th Children's Services and Health Fair that was held at the "Coliseo Mario Quijote Morales" of the Municipality of Guaynabo, which is usually attended by about 1,000 children. This event involved different service providers.

Among the services offered were glucose testing, oral, visual, hearing screening and nutrition counseling, as well as additional information on the WIC Program. They also offered various educational activities that were conducted by health professionals. Simultaneously, there were artistic presentations by groups where children actively participated. This is the third time that WIC took part in this activity. ■



AT THE FAIR — Representing WIC were breastfeeding counselor Liner Quiñones and nutritionist Elián Sierra, both of the Guaynabo Clinic.

children's play area, nutrition classroom, and a breastfeeding lounge which provides a comfortable place for mothers to breastfeed.

Breastfeeding classes for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers are also held in the lounge while mothers are invited to sit in comfortable gliders and nurse their babies.

On April 2, the Mercer WIC Program hosted an Open House to showcase all that the new site has to offer. The theme for the Open House was "Celebrating 40 Years of WIC" and the WIC videos created by the National WIC Association were played during the event. Additionally, a bulletin board with photos of WIC families from the Trenton community was on display to showcase WIC's commitment to helping families for four decades. Community partners from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, the New Jersey WIC State Office, Capital Health, the Trenton Health Team, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed), and the Hamilton Health Department were in attendance, along with representatives from several of The Children's Home Society's other programs, including Early Head Start, the Kinship Program, and the Family Success Centers.

Donna Pressma, CEO and President of The Children's Home Society, spoke about the importance of the WIC Program and its critical role in improving maternal and child health, reducing infant mortality, eliminating hunger, and improving breastfeeding rates. Two WIC mothers also spoke about the impact that WIC has had on their lives. The first was a mother of nine children, who offered her sincere thanks for WIC's Breastfeeding Peer Counselors giving her the support she needed to exclusively breastfeed her last baby. The second mother stated her extreme gratitude for the food that WIC provides, which she and her family heavily rely upon when she's unable to find work. During her heartfelt speech she explained that her three-year-old son would cheer when she would come home with groceries after her WIC appointment.

As the event continued, the Mercer WIC staff sang a creative song about the benefits of the WIC Program. The song, which was written by WIC Nutritionist Freena Johnson, is sung to the tune of "YMCA" and focuses on WIC's key areas of support — healthy food, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and healthcare referrals. The song pays tribute to all the great services which WIC has been providing for the last 40 years and highlights the notion that the WIC staff is always here and always care. The event concluded with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tours of the new facility. ■

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NEW JERSEY'S BURLINGTON COUNTY WIC

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

OPEN HOUSE

NJ's Burlington County WIC Program hosted an Open House in September 2013 welcoming and celebrating the renovated office space. Two areas were created for children to play and learn about nutrition and all toys have an interactive nutrition-related theme so they can learn about nutrition and play while waiting to be seen. One area has mounted wall toys outside the nutritionist offices and the other is by the classroom so children can play while parents attend the classes. There has been a lot of positive feedback from parents and the children really enjoy the toys.

The breastfeeding staff has a new office within the clinic which enables a more efficient flow. Clients can relax while breastfeeding their babies in privacy with the recent addition of a glider chair and curtain within the breastfeeding office.

The renovation also included creating a conference room for in-services/trainings for continuous education such as VENA, GROW & GLOW to improve staff skills and to maintain/improve the quality of WIC services. Staff use the conference room to complete sessions of the Altarum trainings. The CPAs can view Webinars as part of continuing nutrition education. Renovations added space to place two KIOSKS in the local agency's main office which enables clients to complete their On-Line Nutrition Education Classes on KIOSKS on walk-in days.



THE TEAM — Agency staff At Open House.

MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

The Burlington County WIC nutritionist organized various displays in demonstrating the sodium content of everyday foods for National Nutrition Month. Poster boards displayed dry/fresh foods verses canned foods, reduced sodium items verses non-reduced sodium items and general WIC verses non-WIC foods that are known to have higher sodium levels. Clients were able to identify alternative food choices to reduce sodium intake. Clients were very engaged and interested to see sodium comparisons in everyday foods. The visual aides had a big impact and gave the clients a better perspective of sodium levels.

BEST PRACTICES

The local agency continues to host Smile NJ Dental program which has been a success since inception. The program comes monthly to the Health Department and provides dental screenings and preventive care for children 1-18 years old. Clients receive a "report card" of the dental visit and information on dental care.

Representatives from the Health Insurance Marketplace came several times a month since October 2013 to assist WIC participants and the community to apply for health insurance through the Affordable Care Act. The local agency also hosted Catholic Charities to provide assistance to WIC families to apply for Food Stamps. Nurse Family Partnership Nurses through the Southern New Jersey Perinatal Cooperative visits the local agency to enroll new mothers. It is a community health program that serves low-income pregnant women with their first child.

OUTREACH

The State WIC Agency honored the local agency with the Best Outreach Award. The local agency maintains their outreach consistently monthly by mailing outreach flyers to the local school district, vendors, hospitals, day care centers, and physicians. Agency also sends to the media the WIC availability in the local area for broadcast. Local agency staff represent WIC at the local health fairs. The local agency displays a monthly banner with a different nutrition/health message. The banner is at the entranceway of the clinic for all participants and visitors to see. ■

THE CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY'S MERCER WIC PROGRAM HOSTS 4TH ANNUAL BREASTFEEDING BRUNCH

By Victoria Fredrick, WIC Senior Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

This year the 4th Annual Breastfeeding event was a brunch hosted by the Children Home Society of New Jersey's Mercer County WIC Program. Historically the event has been held in advance of Women's History Month and in honor of Black History Month. This year it followed that model.

Continuing a tradition established in 2011, more than 30 guests and their families were welcomed by 23 volunteers from the International WeLoveU Foundation. The foundation gave both volunteer hours and donated all the food and drinks to celebrate our WIC participants that chose breastfeeding as their infant feeding goal. They also provided face painting and entertainment for the toddlers and older children in the waiting room. The event began at 9:30am with a full brunch highlighting WIC foods, and ended at 12:30pm with multiple community partner-sponsored raffles. During those hours, valued Mercer County community partners showcased their programs: the Children's Home Society of New Jersey modeled infant massage and offered sign-up for their ongoing classes; Twin City Pharmacy and Surgical displayed the electric breast pumps available to moms with insurance and raffled a \$100 gift card; Horizon NJ Health enrolled participants and performed free blood pressure screenings; Princeton Health Care System provided our participants with a Certified Affordable Care Act Counselor to sign them up for ACA insurance in advance of the March 31 deadline; Hunterdon/Mercer County Regional Chronic Disease Coalition presented information on reducing breast cancer rates by breastfeeding; and Capital Health Hospital educated moms on the childbirth classes available at their hospital while raffling off a boppy pillow. WIC-eligible families from all cultures celebrated, while we featured the theme "A Breastfeeding Community."

As moms and families walked through this baby-friendly event, our WIC peer counselors and nutritionists used games and small prizes to educate families on breastfeeding benefits



Mercer WIC Peer Counselors pose with International WeLoveU Foundation volunteers at the brunch.

and expectations. The health fair style set-up and open flow inspired many open 'question and answer' opportunities. Moms-to-be were able to compete with experienced breast-feeders in an informal game of Jeopardy and choose another WIC mom with breastfeeding experience to be their "phone-a-friend" in a subsequent breastfeeding game stylized after Millionaire. Over 30 glowing comments were left in both English and Spanish in a comment book as participants left the event.

This CHS WIC event was spearheaded by WIC Senior Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Victoria Fredrick and CHS WIC Program Administrator Kelly Mannherz. The special efforts of a brunch committee helped with the decorations and smooth operations that day. The committee also included Harriet Abekah, Peer Counselor; Kitty Gonzalez, Clerk; Mariela Rodriguez, Clerk; and Donna McDaid, Nutritionist. A very special thanks goes to Pamela Cipriano, CHS Director of Corporate Development and Volunteerism, for facilitating the volunteer efforts of the International WeLoveU Foundation. ■



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