
HOW WIC SUPPORTS PREGNANCY & LACTATION

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NATIONAL WIC ASSOCIATION



National WIC Association
Your child has you. And you have WIC.

WHAT IS WIC?



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WHAT IS WIC?

- USDA program funded since 1974
- 89 state agencies (including all 50 states, US territories, and Indian Tribal Organizations)
- 10,000 clinics, approximately 6.9 million clients per month
- Serves:
 - Women: pregnant and postpartum
 - Infants
 - Children: up to age 5
- Domestic discretionary program
- Income requirement: 185% of FPL or adjunctive eligibility

WIC CLINIC LOCATIONS

- WIC services are provided at:
 - County health departments
 - Hospitals
 - Faith-based or nonprofit facilities
 - Mobile clinics (vans) Community centers
 - Schools
 - Public housing sites
 - Migrant health centers and camps
 - Indian Health Service facilities



WHO IS THE NATIONAL WIC ASSOCIATION?

- NWA is the go-to voice for WIC:
 - Member-driven advocacy
 - Educates, guides, and supports WIC staff
 - Drives research and innovation to improve and strengthen WIC
- NWA's vision is a nation of healthier women, children, and their families.

WIC PROGRAM UPDATES

SINCE 1990...



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1990: BREASTFEEDING FOOD PACKAGE

- Food package VII is created to encourage breastfeeding.



1992: FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

- Eligible WIC participants are issued FMNP coupons in addition to their regular WIC benefits.
- These coupons can be used to buy eligible foods from farmers, farmers' markets or roadside stands that have been approved by the state agency to accept FMNP coupons.

1997: USDA BREASTFEEDING CAMPAIGNS

- *Loving Support Makes Breastfeeding Work* campaign (1997)
- WIC Breastfeeding Support - Learn Together. Grow Together (2018)

2004: BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELING PROGRAM

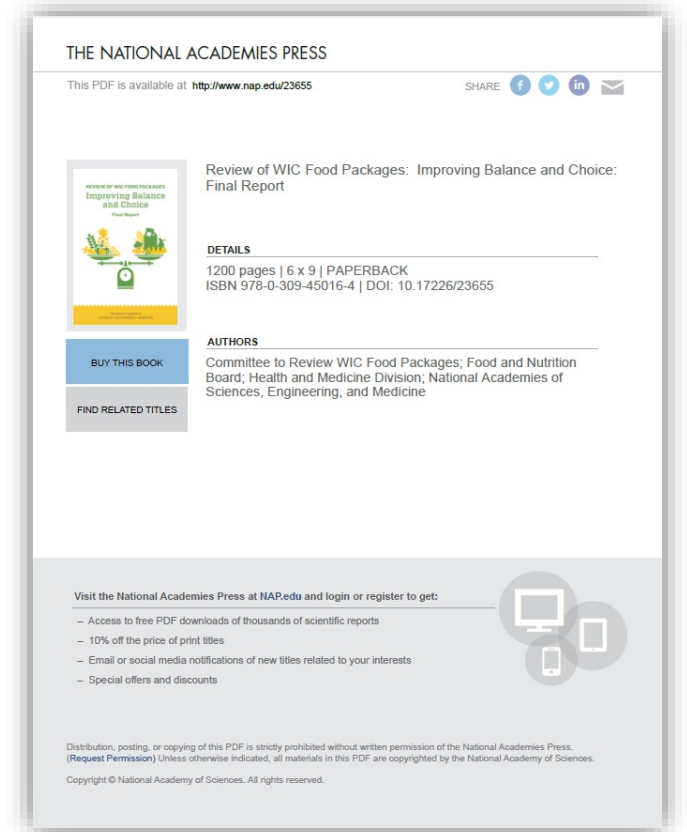
- In 2004, FNS launched a national peer counseling initiative developed specifically for WIC: Using Loving Support to Implement Best Practices in Peer Counseling.
- In 2019, NWA was successful in securing full funding for the BFPC program for a total of \$90 million, an increase of \$30 million from previous years.

2007: WIC FOOD PACKAGE UPDATES

- After more than a decade of advocating for changes to the WIC Food Packages, the work of NWA pays off with the publication of the USDA Interim Final Rule to change the WIC Food Packages in December.
- The revised food packages laid out in the Interim Rule, which were implemented in 2009, resulted in dramatic changes to the nutrient density of the food packages.

2017: WIC FOOD PACKAGE UPDATES

- In January, 2017 NASEM completed it's most recent review of the WIC food package and published their recommendations
- USDA still reviewing recommendations



2020 – 2025 DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

- The 2020 – 2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
 - Will provide recommendations for pregnancy and birth through 24 months of age.
- NWA is fully committed to advocating to ensure the scientific integrity of the DGA process. NWA's legislative agenda is nutrition, breastfeeding, and health equity focused.
- Moving forward, NWA will continue to be fully engaged in DGA review process.

GRANT FUNDED PROJECTS

- Community Partnerships for Healthy Mothers and Children (CDC)
- Raising Your WIC Voice Project (David and Lucile Packard Foundation)
- Catalyzing Retention Efforts in WIC (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)
- Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (ACOG & HRSA)
- AHEAD in WIC (Walmart Foundation)

HEALTH EQUITY IN WIC



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HEALTH EQUITY

■ Definition

The National WIC Association defines health equity as the ability of all individuals and families to achieve optimal health, irrespective of their identity, race, ability or class.

■ Statement

For the National WIC Association, health equity is the ability of all individuals and families to achieve optimal health, irrespective of their identity, race, ability or class. This requires equitable access to nutritious foods, breastfeeding support, chronic disease prevention and management services, safe living environments, and good jobs with fair pay. It necessitates removing obstacles to families' short- and long-term health and wellbeing including poverty, discrimination, and institutional racism and other forms of bias expressed through housing, healthcare, education, labor, and other public policies.

HEALTH EQUITY IN WIC

- WIC addresses health equity through:
 1. The USDA Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program
 2. Nutrition support through:
 1. Nutrition education
 2. Supplemental foods
 3. Breastfeeding promotion and support
 4. Referrals that are relevant and appropriate for the life stage

NWA'S LEGISLATIVE & ADVOCACY PRIORITIES



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INNOVATIONS IN WIC: LEGISLATIVE & ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

- WIC Act
 - Extension of child eligibility, postpartum eligibility, and infant certification periods
- CARE for Families Act
 - \$15 million funding line for community health partnerships led by WIC local agencies.
- Supporting Healthy Outcomes for Mothers and Infants Act
 - Creating federal nutrition education materials for opioid use and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome



PUBLIC CHARGE

- In August 2019, the Department of Homeland Security came out with a final public charge rule
- **WIC is explicitly excluded from the final DHS public charge rule**
- On Monday, the US Supreme Court allowed for the final public charge rule to move forward in 49 states (Illinois has a separate court order blocking the rule)
- DHS is contemplating next steps, with more clarity in the coming days

NWA'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE POPULATION HEALTH IN WIC



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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Support increased funding for WIC's Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program and other breastfeeding legislation.
- Maintain strong, science-based nutrition standards for the WIC food package
 - Support and follow the process for the 2020 – 2025 DGAs.
- Support NWA's legislative efforts, including passage of the WIC Act, the CARE for Families Act, and the Supporting Healthy Outcomes for Mothers and Infants Act.

QUESTIONS?



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