The Massachusetts Nutrition Division

The WIC Program and a whole lot more!

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State Nutritionist
Fall 2018
Today’s Agenda

• Overview of DPH
  • Growth and Nutrition Program

• Overview of the WIC Program
  • WIC Services & Foods
  • Breastfeeding Support
  • Nutrition Education
  • WIC Card and More
  • And a Whole Lot More!
MA Department of Public Health

Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition
- Pregnancy, Infancy and Early Childhood Division
- Early Intervention Division
- Division of Children & Youth with Special Health Needs
- Nutrition Division
Nutrition Division

• WIC Program
• Growth and Nutrition Program
• Breastfeeding Initiatives
• PKU Metabolic Food and Formula Program
Growth and Nutrition Program

Multidisciplinary program that serves children with failure-to-thrive.

• Core team includes Registered Dietician, Nurse Practitioner or MD, Social Worker
  • additional staff may include Gastroenterologist, Psychologist, Speech-Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist

• Provides clinical, nutrition & psychosocial assessments and treatment plans, case management

• Programs in Boston, Brockton, Great Barrington, Lawrence, Lowell, North Adams, Pittsfield, and Worcester
Initial Evaluation

The multidisciplinary team will:

• evaluate medical, nutrition and social history,
• assess health, nutrition status, and developmental skills, and
• develop a treatment plan

Families will receive written recommendations and primary care providers and referring agencies will receive updates.
Ongoing GNP Services

Services can be provided:

- in clinic,
- during a home visit,
- in day care settings, such as Head Start, and/or
- in collaboration with partners, such as EIP

Referrals may include:

- food resources, such as SNAP and WIC
- Early Intervention or SPED services
- additional services, such as speech therapy
Typical Client

- Enrolled at 26 months of age from referral by PCP
- Receives Medicaid, EIP and WIC services
- Complex factors – medical, nutritional, environmental, psych/social factors
- Referred to SNAP and Head Start
- Discharged at 35 months after maintaining positive growth
For more information, visit:
https://www.mass.gov/growth-and-nutrition-program
USDA
Food & Nutrition Programs

• SNAP
• Child Nutrition Programs
  • School Breakfast & Lunch
  • Summer Food Service
  • Child and Adult Care Food Programs
• WIC Program
• Emergency Food Assistance
• Commodity Food Program
What is WIC?

• Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children

• An intervention program to strengthen families

• Influences lifetime nutrition and health behaviors

• Is targeted to high-risk populations
History of WIC

1964: Food Stamp Program begins

1972: Congress authorizes WIC pilot

1974: First WIC Program in Kentucky

1974: WIC in 45 states including Massachusetts

1980: All states have WIC

1983: MA is the first state to provide supplemental funding

2009: WIC Food Package revisions

Bonus: Saving the Children: The History of WIC  (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ot7FGXdTrY4)
MA WIC Recent History

2014: Electronic food benefit issuance card begins and “WIC Smart”, on-line nutrition education is launched

2015: “Good Food Project” begins

2017: WIC app available to help shoppers track benefits, find WIC foods, try new recipes

2018: On-line WIC application available at www.mass.gov/forms/apply-for-wic-online
What does WIC offer families?

- Nutrition & health screening and assessment
- Nutrition education and counseling
- Referrals to related health and social services
- Monthly benefits to purchase specific foods ($50 - $80 per month per participant)
- Checks to spend at farmers’ markets
Who is eligible for WIC?

• Pregnant, breastfeeding, or postpartum, non-breastfeeding women; infants; children up to 5 years of age

• Resident of Massachusetts

• Income - less than 185% of federal poverty level

• Must be at nutritional risk

Fact: All foster children under age 5 are eligible for WIC services.
## Current Income Eligibility Guidelines (through June 30, 2019)

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For each additional family member add...  
+$7,992   +$666   +$308   +$154
WIC Serves...

• In Massachusetts, approximately 116,000 individuals received benefits last year.

• Approximately half (53%) of all babies born in the US participate in WIC during the first year of life; about 40% of babies in Massachusetts enroll in WIC.
WIC Works for Families

• Pregnant women in WIC seek earlier prenatal care and consume a healthier diet\(^1\)
• Less preterm births\(^1\)
• Fewer very low birth weight babies\(^1\)
• Fewer fetal and infant deaths\(^1\)

WIC Works for Children

- Children who participate in WIC or whose mothers are on WIC have a greater utilization of health care services.\(^1\)

- Positive effect on children’s iron levels, decreased incidence of anemia.\(^2\)

- Potential contributing factor in the 43% decrease in obesity rates among children ages 2 to 5 between 2008 and 2011.\(^3\)

- Children in WIC have higher vaccination coverage than WIC-eligible children who were not in WIC.\(^4\)

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WIC Works for Breastfeeding

• Those who enroll in the 1\textsuperscript{st} trimester are more likely to have ever breastfed than women who enroll in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} trimester.\textsuperscript{5}

• WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program caused breastfeeding initiation to increase by about 27% and the mean duration of breastfeeding to increase by more than 3 weeks.\textsuperscript{5}

WIC Saves Money

• Every $1 spent on WIC saves between $1.77 and $3.13 in health care costs within the first 60 days after birth.⁶

WIC Staff

- Program Director and Senior Nutritionist
- Breastfeeding Coordinator
- Nutritionists
- Nutrition Assistants
- Program Assistants
- Community Coordinator
- Family Support Coordinator (in Community Action Programs only)

Fun Facts: There are 31 local WIC programs that operate 106 sites in Massachusetts.
Overview of WIC Appointment

• Weight and Height Evaluation
• Blood Test for Iron (Hgb/Hct)
• Immunization Screening
• Health Screening
• Nutrition/Breastfeeding Assessment and Counseling
• Explanation and Issuance of Benefits
• Referrals
WIC & Act Early Collaboration

- Partnering for regional and statewide trainings
- Enhanced knowledge of staff
  - Launched an on-line training module *Early Intervention and Special Education Services* for nutrition staff
  - In development, on-line module *Learn the Signs. Act Early. The Importance of Developmental Screening*
- Printed CDC/ Act Early materials:
  - Conversation Starter – placemat-sized “Your Child’s Early Development is a Journey” (English and Spanish versions)
  - Concerned About Your Child’s Development & How to Talk With Your Doctor (English and Spanish versions)
Vroom

Simple tools to connect parenting and brain development to meal time, snack time, and play time.

• Fits neatly into every family’s busy life
• Conversation cards for a range of age groups (English & Spanish)

Visit www.vroom.org for free resources and tools
WIC Foods
Foods to Appeal to Diverse Populations

- Tortillas
- Brown rice, other whole grains
- Soy beverages
- Tofu and yogurt
- Wide choice of fruits and vegetables for ethnic variety
Fruits and Vegetables

- Participants may choose from a wide variety of fruits and vegetables
- Fresh, frozen and canned allowed
- No added sugar or artificial sweeteners allowed
Fish for Fully Breastfeeding Women

• Chunk **light tuna** packed in water

• Canned fish identified as lower in mercury
  • **Pink salmon**
  • **Sardines**
Food Packages for Infants

- If used, formula amounts tied to feeding practice and age of infant
- No juice
- Complementary foods (infant cereal and baby food fruits and veggies) at 6 months
- Option for fresh produce at 9 months
- Baby food meat for fully breastfed babies
WIC Foods

- Milk, cheese, soy milk, and yogurt
  - Skim or low-fat milk for women and children > 2 yrs
- Eggs
- Whole grains – brown rice, pasta, bread, tortillas, oatmeal
- Tofu
- Dried beans/peas or canned beans
- Peanut butter
- Canned fish
- Fruits and vegetables
- Cereals
- Juices
- Infant formula, cereals, fruit & vegetables, and meats
Breastfeeding Support and Education
WIC Breastfeeding Promotion Policy

- A minimum amount of funds set aside for breastfeeding education and support; federal food funds can be used to purchase **breast pumps**

- All prenatal women must receive an **unequivocal endorsement of breastfeeding** as the ideal method of infant feeding, unless medically contraindicated

- **Peer Counselor services** are provided to all prenatal and breastfeeding women

- Each local WIC program must have a designated **Breastfeeding Coordinator**

**Fun Facts:** There are almost 125 highly trained BF experts (Certified Lactation Counselors & International Board Certified Lactation Consultants) employed throughout MA WIC and 67 Peer Counselors.
Provide Breastfeeding Incentives & Support

• Fully breastfeeding mothers receive the most variety and largest quantity of food

• No routine issuance of formula in birth month to help mother build and maintain milk supply

• Fully breastfeeding infants > 6 months receive larger quantities of baby food fruits and vegetables; and baby food meat
Breastfeeding Resources for WIC Families

- Prenatal & Postpartum Counseling, Education and Assessment
- Peer Counselor Program
- Local Program Breastfeeding Coordinators
- Infant Feeding Groups/Breastfeeding Classes/Support Groups/Baby Cafés
- Breast Pump Loan Programs
- Print Materials in Multiple Languages
- Connections with community resources
- Baby-Friendly Hospitals
- Baby Cafes
BF Resources for Providers

FREE CMEs!
Check out the breastfeeding tutorials at www.hriainstitute.org/breastfeedingcme/ for clinicians. These modules provide 3 FREE CMEs (and continuing education credits for RNs and RDs).
Zip MILK

Find local, personalized resources with your zip code. 

**Neighborhood breastfeeding help is just a click away.**

[Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition](https://massbfc.org)
Baby Cafes

**Boston:**
- Brookside & Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center
- Codman Square, Boston Medical Center & South End
- Tufts Medical Center

**Surrounding communities:**
- Worcester at Family Health Center
- Lynn at Lynn Community Health Center
- Malden, Everett & Melrose (Melrose Wakefield Hospital)
- Fitchburg at Fitchburg Community Health Center
- New Bedford & Fall River (Southcoast Obstetrics and Gynecology)

Source: [www.babycafeusa.org](http://www.babycafeusa.org)
The WIC Card and More

- WIC Card
- WIC Shopper App
- On-line Nutrition Education (WICSmart)
- Social Media Presence
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Pinterest
WIC Shopping

Massachusetts WIC Program

GOOD FOOD and
A WHOLE LOT MORE!

0000 1234 5678 9010
WIC Shopper App

Available WIC Benefits
May 19, 2018 - Jun 18, 2018
Updated on 05/25/2018 10:28AM

- 1 PKG 16oz Pkg Cheese
- 1 DOZ Dozen Large Eggs
- 36 OZ Ounces Cereal
- 1 PKG 16oz PnutBtr/DryBean
- 1 PKG 16oz Bread/WholGrain

Breakfast Burritos
These breakfast burritos are a satisfying start to the day

Berry Topped French Toast
Choosing Fast Foods Wisely

A healthier way

How can you make a healthier fast food combo? Change it around!

- Ask for a regular, single-patty hamburger without any mayonnaise or cheese, but with extra lettuce and tomato
- Add a side salad with low-fat dressing
- Order a small side of fries
- Choose water instead of soda

That totals **550** calories and about **22** grams of fat. That's more like it!
March 2018 Statistics:
- 2,257 Followers
- 2,219 Likes

What we post:
- Relevant articles and research on breastfeeding and nutrition
- Recipes
- Recalls
- Local program news
March 2018 statistics:

* 2,761 Followers
* 5,755 tweet impressions

What we post:

* Relevant articles and research on breastfeeding and nutrition
* Recipes
* Recalls
* Local program news
March 2018 Statistics

* 810 followers
* 125 average daily impressions
* 1,850 pins

Worldwide Audience

- US
- Canada
- UK
- Brazil
- France
WIC DOES offer A WHOLE LOT MORE!

- Happiest Baby on the Block classes
- Safe Sleep Campaign
- The Secrets of Baby Behaviors
- The Good Food Project
- Immunization
- Motor Voter
- Referrals
Happiest Baby Classes

• Educators demonstrate and teach caregivers the skills to calm a fussy baby
• Classes offered at WIC clinic and in community settings
• WIC families receive swaddling blankets, DVD and CD of soothing sounds
Safe Sleep Campaign

- Mandatory training of all staff
- Educational tool for participants
Secrets of Baby Behaviors

• Developed by UC Davis researcher
• Interpreting infant crying, states and cues
• Prevent overfeeding
The Good Food Project

- USDA 2014 WIC Special Project Grant
- Goal is to improve children retention rate
- Currently, 18 programs have implemented this project
Outreach/Education Opportunities

Your staff and families may benefit from:

• Growth and Nutrition Clinics can train on failure-to-thrive
• WIC’s Community Coordinator can conduct outreach to your families and help to develop a system for cross-referrals
• Certified Happiest Baby Educators can conduct classes for your staff and families
• WIC Nutritionists can train staff and families on various nutrition topics.
Questions?

Good Food and a whole lot more!

Thank you!

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