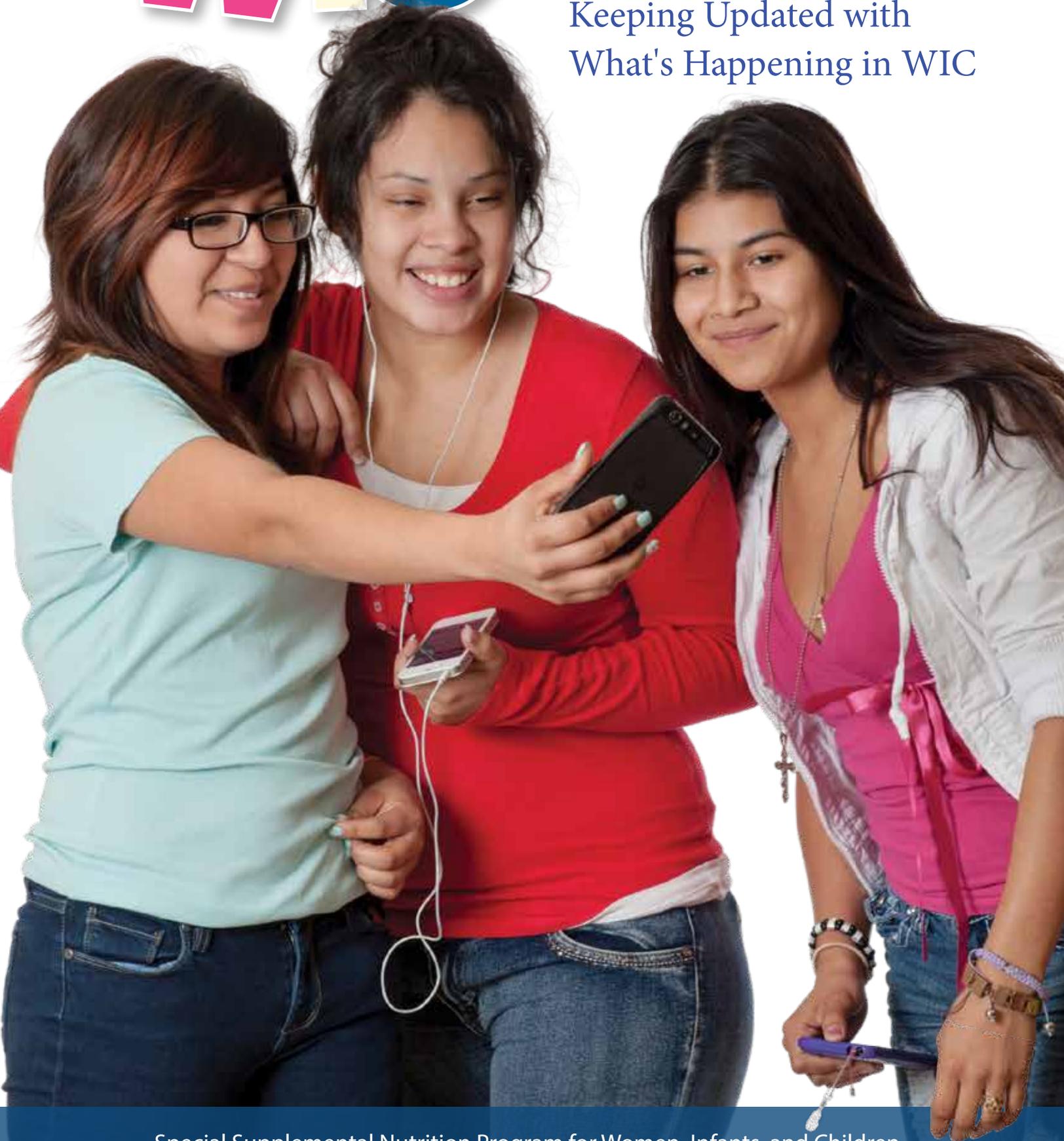


Keeping Updated with What's Happening in WIC



Keeping You Informed

As we approach the end of the year, I don't have to tell you how easy it is to get caught up in day-to-day life to find that the year has passed and suddenly the world has changed around us. That's why we have dedicated this issue to keeping you informed with what's going on in and around WIC, with information focused on the program, our clients, and staff.

One aspect that touches many of our lives, and seems to change daily, is technology. While many of us use it to perform our jobs, some of us also use it to stay connected with friends and family, get information, and even for entertainment. As technology evolves, however, so does its purpose — more and more people are starting to use it to improve their health. On page 4, read about how pervasive technology can create healthy behavior changes and how WIC plans to harness that power.

Another article you won't want to miss is the "2014 Texas WIC Nutrition Education Participant Survey Statewide Overview," on page 8. Every two years we survey our participants to get an idea of how we are doing and what our participants need. You'll see what our participants' opinions are on WIC benefits, staff friendliness, staff knowledge, and more. Additionally, you'll see what classes they want, what technology they use, and what kind of referrals they need. We hope this information will provide you with the knowledge you need to better serve your participants moving forward.

And last, but certainly not least, on page 16, we bid farewell to WIC's Manager of the

Nutrition Education and Clinic Services Unit, Linda Brumble. After 33 years of service with WIC, it is with bitter sweetness that we celebrate her retirement. Although Linda retired on July 31st, we take a moment now to look back at her time at WIC and what staff will remember most. We hope all of the years ahead bring her happiness and joy.

As you know, this year has been an exciting one full of transformation and change, but it's not over yet. We still have plenty of time to create more positive and lasting changes within our clinics, our participants, and ourselves. Keep up the great work, but don't be afraid to dream, and act big!



From the Texas WIC Director

- Lindsay Rodgers



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POWER ON:

Supporting Healthy Behaviors with Smart Technology

by Hildreth England, R.D., L.D.
WIC Engagement Specialist

Have you ever checked your phone to make sure you haven't missed a message, a call, or an app alert, even if you're in the middle of doing something important, like having dinner with friends? Has this become a habit?

If you said yes, you're not alone. According to the Pew Research Internet Project, 67% of us find ourselves checking our phone this way, even though we haven't heard a ring or felt a vibration. Most of us are surrounded by beeps, icons, pop-ups, and vibrations that nudge and notify us daily. This increased mobile access to emails, apps, text messages, and social media have changed the way we behave, and in some cases, not for the better. But there's evidence to suggest that technology may actually be the perfect tool to help people create healthy habits.

Using Technology to Make a Healthy Choice

Getting and staying healthy may be more difficult for some people because healthy choices aren't always the easy choice, especially in low-income or underserved communities. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, healthy choices need to be available and easily accessible for people to successfully change their habits.

That's where "persuasive technology" comes in. According to Stanford University researcher B.J. Fogg, digital technology is so persuasive that it is one of the best tools to change our behavior for the better. When technology triggers a simple health behavior (like a text to take medicine) at the right time, over and over, we create tiny habits. Over time, with help from technology, small, healthy choices get easier. The key to using persuasive technology to improve health is to make the behavior so simple that it feels silly not doing it, so we stay motivated for the harder choices that come along.

Is Technology the Right Tool for WIC Clients?

Recent reports from the Pew Research Internet and American Life Project show that the gap in technology usage between Americans based on race, ethnicity, and income has narrowed considerably in the last five years. Data suggests that low-income Americans' access to the internet continues to climb, and minority groups have seen a greater rise in cell phone ownership than whites.

Texas WIC Clients & Technology

The 2014 Nutrition Education Participant Survey and website analytics data show Texas WIC clients have and use persuasive technology, as well. Sixty eight percent of Texas WIC clients surveyed own a smartphone, and 86% of clients access the internet with



a mobile device (including tablets). Further, about 27% of surveyed clients said they used email and/or a mobile app every day. Sixty four percent of total visits to TexasWIC.org in the last 30 days were by mobile devices (phone and tablet); of those mobile visits, there were more than twice as many visits from Android phones than from iPhone users.

Who Doesn't Use Persuasive Technology?

It's important to remember that not everyone is connected to a digital device at all times. According to Pew research, foreign-born and non-English speakers use smartphones slightly less than their native-born or English-speaking counterparts. According to the 2014 NE Survey, 7% of Spanish speakers reported not owning a cell phone, and 25% said they don't access the internet. Western Region data shows that technology use drops after age 25, and clients with less than a high school education weren't as likely to use social media. Check your local agency's 2014 NE Survey to make sure you're using the right tools to connect with and help your clients build small, healthy habits.

What's Next for Texas WIC and Technology

We have recent data to tell us that not only do WIC clients use their persuasive technology, but they would like us to use it with them. How is Texas WIC using all this data to help our clients in 2014 and beyond?

In addition to websites — TexasWIC.org and TexasWICStaff — the state agency is also moving forward with mobile strategies to improve health outcomes through better digital connections with our WIC clients, potential clients, and partners. The Health Care Provider's Guide to Breastfeeding mobile app was updated and released for Android phones in Spring 2014. Both the iPhone and Android version have improved content, making it easier for our hospital and

Some interesting statistics:

Among adults, Latinos are just as likely as whites or blacks to own a smartphone.

72% of all African Americans — and 98% of those between the ages of 18 and 29 — have either a broadband connection or a smartphone.

Latino internet users are more likely than white internet users to say they go online using a mobile device — 76% versus 60%.

Pew Research Internet and American Life Project

birthing center partners to counsel new mothers using the latest breastfeeding research. The mobile app is free, easily accessible, and available for download in both the Google Play and iTunes App stores.

The state agency has also begun the long process of developing a mobile WIC shopping app. A prototype app, or demonstration, is currently being tested with clients to make sure the app has everything a client needs and wants to make smart, healthy shopping choices. Once testing is complete, full-scale production of a fully-functioning mobile app will begin.

This past summer, Texas State University helped the program determine which technology tools work best to improve nutrition and breastfeeding behaviors. Results will be shared in the coming months.

For Texas WIC, using new technology may feel like the only way to go. It's everywhere! But it's important to remember not to get overwhelmed, start small, and use the right tools for the job. The "why" WIC reaches out hasn't changed; we're just modernizing the ways in which we do so. As you look for new ways to make digital connections with your clients, know that it's all working towards improving Texas families' environments so they can make smart, healthy choices — with a little nudge from technology — every day.

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Baffled by the Vitamin and



by Tonia Swartz, R.D., L.D.
Clinical Nutrition Specialist

One of the top trending nutrition news stories in 2013 was on multivitamin and mineral supplements. In December 2013, the *Annals of Internal Medicine* published an editorial titled, “Enough is Enough: Stop Wasting Money on Vitamin and Mineral Supplements.” Editorial authors stated that using vitamin and mineral supplements for the prevention or progression of cognitive decline, chronic diseases or cancer is a waste of money — based on trial evidences — concluded the “case is closed” on the subject matter.

The Studies

The editorial opinion was based on findings from three articles.

The first study examined multivitamin and mineral benefits in the prevention of a secondary cardiac event in men and women with a recent history of a heart attack. Study conclusions found daily multivitamin and mineral use did not “statistically” have any preventative benefits for reducing future cardiac events. Limitations of this study were treatment non-compliance and early study withdrawal.

The second study looked at daily multivitamin use and cognitive health (e.g. dementia, Alzheimer’s) later in life. Study conclusions found no benefit in the prevention of age associated

cognitive decline or improvement of cognitive function. Limitations cited indicate that:

- Study participants started their supplementation too late in life.
- The duration of supplementation was short.
- Participants were well-nourished, well educated (some studies have shown that individuals with high levels of education are less likely to develop dementia).
- Only men (all physicians) participated.

The third article was an analysis review of (27) trial studies on the effects of vitamin and mineral supplementation in preventing cardiovascular disease (CVD) and cancer. The review found limited supporting evidence that vitamin or mineral supplementation reduced the risks for CVD or death, but did find a “borderline-significant benefit” (in men only) in cancer prevention. Some limitations include:

- Study participants that did not have any pre-existing nutrient deficiencies.
- Older age of study participants.
- Limited multivitamin studies.
- No long term (>10 years) studies reviewed.

It is important to note the editorial addresses chronic disease prevention but did not address individuals that may require supplementation for deficiency (e.g. B12, anemia), malabsorption issues (e.g. Chron’s disease, gastric bypass), or pregnancy (folate to prevent neural tube defects). Editorial co-author Dr. Edgar Miller later stated certain groups may require supplementation.

The Debate

So does this really mean the case is closed for the beneficial use of multivitamins or mineral supplements? Critics of the editorial argue against such a blanket statement citing the limitations of the studies and the editorial authors’ analysis of the research. One critic quoted from the Huffington Post noted, “The failure to demonstrate that an effect is statistically significant is not the same as demonstrat-

Mineral Supplement Debate



ing the absence of an effect.” John M. Gaziano, M.D., researcher at Brigham & Women’s Hospital and one of the co-authors of the cognitive trial study stated, “It drives me crazy that they say ‘enough is enough,’ when there’s only been one large study of (standard) multivitamins and it’s ours.”

Steve Mister, CEO of the Council for Responsible Nutrition (trade association representing the dietary supplement industry), stated, “The editorial demonstrates a close-minded, one-sided approach that attempts to dismiss even the proven benefits of vitamins and minerals... We would not suggest that vitamin supplements are a panacea for preventing chronic disease, but we hope the authors would agree that there is an appropriate place for supplements.”

However, editorial authors are standing by their opinion that “Most supplements do not prevent chronic disease or death, their use is not justified, and they should be avoided.” They do acknowledge that some individual vitamins and supplements, such as Vitamin D and omega-3 fatty acids, are still being studied for their potential health benefits.

Education

At WIC we may be faced with clients who want to know about supplement use throughout the life cycle. Multivitamin and mineral supplements are often recommended to supplement diets that do not get enough of the daily nutrient requirements; however, multivitamins are not a substitute for a diet low in nutrients. When it comes to disease prevention, regular physical activity along with a healthy, balanced diet is the best option.

WIC does not prescribe or recommend specific vitamin or mineral supplements. The decision as to whether someone should take a multivitamin or supplement should be between the patient and their health-care provider (HCP).

However, WIC can:

- Advise participants on ways to improve their meal planning to ensure they are including a variety of nutrient rich foods to meet their family’s needs.
- Encourage pregnant women to continue to take their prenatal vitamins as prescribed by their health-care provider and to include folate rich foods in their diet.
- Encourage women of childbearing age to include folate rich foods in their diet.
- Encourage participants to discuss any questions or concerns with their HCP, and to check with their HCP if they are on prescribed medications before starting any supplements.

The National Institutes of Health has a consumer information page, including how to identify quality products, “Dietary Supplements: What You Need to Know” found at http://ods.od.nih.gov/HealthInformation/DS_WhatYouNeedToKnow.aspx. This page is a good resource for consumers to investigate dietary questions.

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2014 Texas WIC Nutrition Education Participant Survey Statewide Overview

by Debbie Lehman, Ph.D., R.D., L.D.
Nutrition Education Consultant

Purpose

The Nutrition Education (NE) Participant Survey, which is administered every two years, provides local agencies with information about their clients to help agencies plan their nutrition classes and assesses client satisfaction with the WIC program. This report summarizes the aggregate data collected from local agencies across Texas.

Methods

Participants responded to 27 questions examining their opinions about WIC, preferences for nutrition education, internet and technology usage, self-confidence to take steps towards healthy lifestyles, and demographics. A total of 3,601 surveys were sent to 67 local agencies, and 3,405 valid completed surveys were received (95% response rate).

Results

The majority of WIC participants were mothers (93%), aged 20-24 (24%), participated in WIC three or more years (40%), and were of Hispanic ethnicity (76%). The most frequently reported level of education completed was high school graduate or GED (28%); however, 45 percent had lower levels of education. Slightly more participants reported speaking Spanish (52%) than English (46%) as the main language in the home.

Seventy three percent of participants were the parent/caretaker of a child over 1 year old, 52 percent were the parent/caretaker of a baby under 12 months, 15 percent were pregnant, and 16 percent were breastfeeding. Most participants had three or more children (36%). In addition, 38 percent reported food insecurity.

If it were up to you, what kind of WIC classes would you like to take? (% 'would like a lot')

English Speakers

- Web lessons (53%)
- Cooking class (53%)
- Lesson I take home (48%)
- Nutrition / health fair (48%)
- Group class (27%)**
- Self-paced / bulletin board (25%)
- Grocery store tour (20%)

Spanish Speakers

- Cooking class (72%)
- Nutrition / health fair (71%)
- Group class (61%)**
- Lessons I take home (55%)
- Grocery store tour (38%)
- Web lessons (31%)**
- Self-paced / bulletin board (28%)

Opinions about WIC classes

- Offered at a good time of day (57% strongly agree)
- Worth my time and effort to come (53% strongly agree)
- Cover topics I am interested in (52% strongly agree)



- I like learning in a group (40% strongly agree)
- Too long (77% disagree)
- I have a hard time finding transportation (78% disagree)

Opinions about WIC (% strongly agree)

- Benefits of WIC are worth the time and effort (74%)
- Staff are friendly (69%)
- Staff respect me (67%)
- When I have a question about nutrition, WIC staff can answer it (67%)
- When I have a question about breastfeeding, WIC staff can answer it (65%)
- Staff talk about what I want to talk about (62%)
- WIC ‘gets’ me (55%)

How do you like to get new information?

- Via printed handout, flyer, or brochure (92%)
- Prefer to download (51%)
- Prefer talking to someone without reading on their own (50%)

Farmers’ Market Interest

- 31 percent have shopped for fruits/veggies at a Farmers’ Market
- 88 percent say, “yes,” they would use WIC card to buy fruits/veggies at a Farmers’ Market

Referrals: Need help with finding

	Yes
Information about early child development	27%
Affordable housing	26%
Childcare	22%
Clothing assistance	18%
Assistance with family planning (birth control)	18%
Food assistance	16%
A dentist	15%
Support for dealing with family problems	13%
A doctor	11%
Shots for your children	11%
Treatment for alcohol, tobacco, drug, or substance use/abuse	4%

Internet access by WIC clients

	English	Spanish
Use the Internet	90%	67%
Access Internet at home	70%	50%
Use WiFi in public places	30%	28%
Have a Smartphone	82%	55%
Use cell/smartphone for Internet	77%	59%
Use desk/laptop for Internet	56%	29%
Use tablet for Internet	25%	16%



	English		Spanish	
	Every day	Sometimes	Every day	Sometimes
Technology usage by WIC clients				
Text messaging	81%	15%	45%	40%
Facebook	52%	24%	25%	33%
E-mail	43%	33%	12%	29%
Smartphone apps	45%	27%	10%	22%
You Tube or online videos	17%	46%	9%	43%
Take WIC classes online	6%	29%	3%	18%

	English	Spanish
Would you be interested in: (% yes)		
Appointment reminders or nutrition tips via text messages	88%	83%
Texting questions to WIC staff	67%	66%
Appointment reminders or nutrition tips via email	66%	47%
Using a phone app to shop for WIC foods	65%	40%
Connecting with WIC on Facebook	53%	52%
Scheduling your WIC appointments online	58%	37%
Emailing questions to WIC staff	56%	34%

Open-ended responses (22% of clients wrote in a response here)

76% of comments were positive

- All is fine/good (11%)
- Thank you/grateful/WIC is helpful (78%)
- Mentioned WIC taught them something specifically or went above and beyond (11%)

24% of comments indicated suggestions for improvement or desire for more information

- Customer service could use improvement (15%)
- Suggested changes to WIC-approved foods (25%)
- Automated services or more use of technology (19%)
- More nutrition education or education on a specific nutrition topic (22%)
- More breastfeeding education (4%)
- Dissatisfaction with vendor operations (3%)
- Other, such as allow the program beyond 5 years of age (12%)

	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not at all confident
In the next 3 months, how confident are you that you can take steps to:			
Sit down to eat meals together with my family	87.8%	11.3%	0.9%
Eat at least one fruit every day	87.6%	11.3%	1.1%
Eat at least one vegetable every day	83.7%	14.9%	1.4%
Prepare healthy meals at home on most days	76.3%	22.8%	1.0%
Be physically active for 30 minutes on most days of the week	70.1%	26.5%	3.3%

Summary

The results of the survey indicate that participants have favorable opinions about the WIC program's ability to meet their needs, and the program achieves high levels of customer satisfaction. Nutrition education preferences and technology usage were different among English-speaking and Spanish-speaking participants. The WIC program should continue to pursue the use of technology and multiple methods of nutrition and breastfeeding education to better meet client needs. Finally, most participants report engaging in those positive health behaviors for themselves and their families that the WIC program strives to promote.

To view the full report, visit the DSHS WIC website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/nut/riskreport-nut.shtm>.

Step by Step Instructions for Evaluating Health Web Sites for Accuracy and Trustworthiness

CONTRIBUTED BY DEBBIE LEHMAN, WIC WELLNESS WORKS COORDINATOR

It's easy to access health information on the Internet, but it's much more difficult to know if the facts you find are accurate. An increasing number of Americans are turning to the web looking for answers to their health and wellness questions. However, a common Google or Bing search won't always pull up the most trustworthy sites. When it comes to health, you need the information to be correct. Use the tips below to evaluate web sites for credibility.

How do I evaluate a web site for accuracy and trustworthiness? In order to find reliable health and medical information on the Internet, look for web sites that demonstrate the following principles:

- ✓ **Authoritative:** Make sure the web site gives the qualifications of the author(s). Reliable medical or health advice is given by medically trained and qualified professionals, unless a clear statement is made that advice offered is from a non-medically qualified individual or organization.
- ✓ **Complementarity:** A statement that the information provided on the site is designed to support, not replace, the relationship that exists between a patient/site visitor and his/her physician.
- ✓ **Privacy:** The website respects the privacy and confidentiality of any personal data submitted to the web site by the visitor.
- ✓ **Attribution:** Cites the source(s) of published information, and includes a date the medical and health information was last updated.
- ✓ **Justifiability:** The site backs up claims relating to benefits and performance with appropriate, balanced evidence.
- ✓ **Transparency:** The web site is accessible and clearly presents information, plus provides an email for a contact if you have further questions.
- ✓ **Financial disclosure:** The site identifies sources of funding.
- ✓ **Advertising policy:** The site clearly distinguishes advertising from the material the web site is relaying.

What are some of the best websites for consumer health information? The Consumer and Patient Health Information Section (CAPHIS) Top 100 List includes a list prepared for the Medical Library Association of health web sites that consumers can trust. Go to www.caphis.mlanet.org/consumer/index.html and click on topics such as “women’s health” or “parenting and kids,” and you will be instantly taken to a list with links for credible health web sites. This is one web site you will want to bookmark!

What are some of the best health care provider web sites for searching for scientific information? MedlinePlus, PubMed, and

(continued on WWW — Insert D)



Feeling Blue? Fighting Depression and Anxiety with the Help of Foods

CONTRIBUTED BY: KATHRYN MACLEAN, TEXAS STATE DIETETIC INTERN, AND DEBBIE LEHMAN, PHD, RD, LD

Almost all of us battle stress, and prolonged stresses can lead to anxiety and/or depression. These conditions are treated in a number of ways; including increased physical activity like walking or yoga, meditation and relaxation, journaling, and various medications. However, many people forget that the foods we eat also affect our mood. There is increasing evidence that antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids found in certain foods may help improve depression and anxiety.

Antioxidants (i.e. beta carotene and other carotenoids, vitamin C, and vitamin E) work by eliminating damaging particles or 'free radicals' created in the body as a result of normal body processes as well as breathing polluted air or smoking cigarettes. These damaging particles put a large amount of stress on the body to get rid of them (including damage to our brain cells). That stress is thought to contribute to depression and anxiety and can also lead to skin and tissue damage and cancer development. Since antioxidants work to get rid of the damaging free radicals, they also help us fight disease.

Research shows people who consume a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, and therefore also rich in antioxidants, tend to have lower rates of depression and anxiety than those who don't. When we eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to get our vitamins, we provide a natural line of defense.

Vitamin A or beta-carotene:

Carrots
Sweet potatoes
Pumpkin
Peaches
Apricots
Mango
Greens
Broccoli

Vitamin C:

Peppers
Oranges, or other citrus fruits
Tomatoes
Blueberries
Strawberries
Raspberries
Kiwi

Vitamin E:

Nuts and seeds
Greens
Whole grains
Wheat germ
Vegetable oil
Broccoli
Tomatoes

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Make a fruit smoothie (try adding some greens in there)
- Munch on some almonds or other nuts/seeds
- Add berries and wheat germ to some yogurt for extra flavor and crunch
- Snack on a piece of fruit
- Have a sandwich using whole grain bread, lots of tomatoes and spinach, and some lean turkey
- Make a salad (try adding walnuts or pecans instead of croutons, or throw in some dried fruit!)
- Throw together a quick vegetable stir fry with brown rice for dinner

Along with antioxidant's, omega-3 fatty acids (a good type of fat) can help relieve stress by reducing inflammation and helping communication between nerve cells in the brain. Individuals who are deficient in omega-3 fatty acids, or who lack the proper balance of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, are more susceptible to mood instability. Eating foods rich in omega-3s, including alpha-linolenic

acid (ALA), eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), may improve symptoms of depression.

Foods rich in omega-3 include fish (particularly fatty or cold-water fish), such as mackerel, trout, herring, sardines, salmon, halibut, bluefish, and tuna; nuts and seeds, such as walnuts, flax seeds, and pecans; oils such as flaxseed oil, cod liver oil, and sardine oil; and leafy greens such as spinach, kale, and collard greens. Tofu and soybeans also contain omega-3 fatty acids.

(continued on WWW — Insert D)



recipe

Apple Berry Oatmeal Bake

Adapted from Whole Foods Apple-Berry Baked Oatmeal

Serves: 8

Ingredients:

Canola oil cooking spray
 2 cups frozen mixed berries (strawberries and blueberries or cranberries)
 2 cups rolled oats
 1/2 cup almonds, chopped
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 apple (large), peeled and diced
 1 cup 1% (low-fat) or skim milk
 1/2 cup nonfat vanilla yogurt
 1/3 cup pancake syrup
 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
 1 egg plus 1 egg yolk

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 375°F.
 Spray a 9-inch pan with cooking spray and set aside.
 In a large bowl, stir together berries, oats, almonds, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, and apple.
 In a medium bowl, whisk together milk, yogurt, syrup, vanilla, egg, and yolk; stir into oat mixture.
 Transfer to prepared pan and bake until firm and golden brown on top, about 50 minutes.
 Cut into slices and serve.

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

240 calories, 8g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 50mg cholesterol, 220mg sodium, 35g carbohydrate (4g dietary fiber, 19g sugar), 7g protein

Mind Games



Anagrams

Rearrange the letters of each word below to make another word.

1. Listen
2. Angel
3. Admirer

(answer: silent, glean, married)

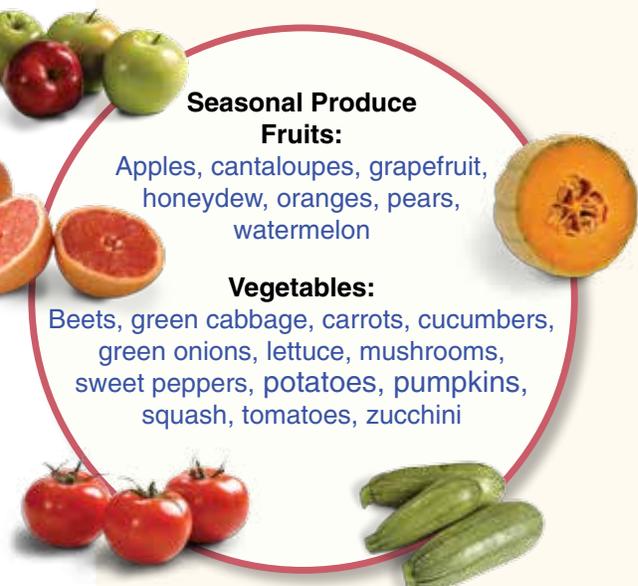
Seasonal Produce

Fruits:

Apples, cantaloupes, grapefruit, honeydew, oranges, pears, watermelon

Vegetables:

Beets, green cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, green onions, lettuce, mushrooms, sweet peppers, potatoes, pumpkins, squash, tomatoes, zucchini



Evaluating Health Web Sites

(continued from page WWW — Insert A)

EBSCOhost are online research databases powered by institutions such as the National Library of Medicine from the National Institute of Health. They can instantly pull up biomedical literature and information based on the terms you specify for the search.

MedlinePlus (www.medlineplus.gov) – reliable, up-to-date health information from the National Library of Medicine.

PubMed (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed) – includes over 23 million citations from scholarly publications on various medical topics.

EBSCOhost (www.ebscohost.com) – allows

you to search among several online research databases for a variety of disciplines, from medical to health and wellness, plus more.

Can't I just "Google it?" The short answer is, "yes," but remember to apply the above principles and evaluate the credibility of the web site before acting on any information you find. Never substitute Internet advice for the advice of a medical professional. It's also good to use the "advanced search" option in Google to limit your search results to a "site or domain" with .gov or .state.tx.us. This tells Google where to search — only within credible sites.

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Feeling Blue?

(continued from page WWW — Insert C)

It is also important to know that there are foods that help your mood, but just as important is making sure that you're not eating as many foods that contribute to negative mood states. A poor quality diet is associated with an increased risk for anxiety and depression in both adults and adolescents (Jacka, 2011). Examples of these types of foods include fried foods, high glycemic foods, unrefined sugars, and alcoholic beverages.

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Texas WIC Certification Specialist – Updates

by Tiffany Brown, R.D., L.D.
WIC Certification Specialist Program Coordinator

What is the Texas WIC Certification Specialist (WCS) Certification Training Program?

The Texas WIC WCS Certification Training Program is a paraprofessional program that allows WIC staff to enhance their skills and knowledge in the clinic. Candidates for the WCS program are selected by WIC directors at local agencies and must receive state agency approval to complete the comprehensive training program. Upon successful completion, the Certified WCS receives a unique certificate of completion and is able to assist certifying authorities in the certification process.

The Certified WCS Training Program will soon be approaching its fourth anniversary. The program continues to be a great success and the state agency anticipates about 180-plus gradu-

ates by the end of 2014. Currently, 24 out of 67 Texas WIC agencies (35%) are participating in the Certified WCS Program.

Local agencies are encouraged to provide special recognition for those who complete the program. In March 2014, state agency staff, Rachel Edwards and Tiffany Brown, had the honor of personally recognizing Maria Nevarez for her accomplishment. Maria works at Local Agency 042 in Williamson County and was the 162nd person to successfully complete the Certified WCS Training Program.

What's Up and Coming?

The WCS Certification training manual currently consists of 12 modules covering various topics such as ethics and professionalism, effective communication, customer service skills, rapport building, nutrition and health assessment, individual counseling, and group education. The state agency is looking forward to adding a 13th module to the WCS training manual, WCS formula approval. This module is projected to be available sometime during fiscal year 2015. Upon successful completion of the module, a Certified WCS may add Level I formula approvals to their certification.

For specific details about the WIC Certification Specialist program, please refer to policy number CS: 16.0. Directors who are interested in participating in the Certified WCS training program should contact the state agency WCS program coordinator, Tiffany Brown, at Tiffany.Brown@dshs.state.tx.us to inquire about an application.



Above from left to right: Irma Gutierrez, Maria Nevarez, Tiffany Brown, Rachel Edwards, and Tina Horkey.



Taking Outreach Efforts to the Next Level

by Angela Gil, R.D., L.D.
Nutrition Education Consultant

Outreach ensures potentially eligible persons are aware of the WIC Program and know where to seek services. In other words, outreach helps increase participant caseload.



Above: Local Agency 07 — Back to school fair. Below: Local Agency 34 — Kid games.



But outreach can do so much more. Effective outreach helps others understand WIC's mission and role in the community. Outreach creates community awareness and addresses any misconceptions and barriers to participating in WIC. WIC is more than a food program, and it is our job as WIC staff to help others become aware of the valuable services WIC offers Texas families.

Outreach activities can include a one-time short-term, or ongoing event. One-time events include print and broadcast media like newspaper ads, radio public service announcements, television public service announcements, billboards, and bus ads.

While these activities reach a larger audience, they can be expensive.

In June 2014 state WIC launched a large statewide media breastfeeding campaign called Every Ounce Counts. This campaign included all the elements mentioned above plus Mother-Friendly Worksite print ads and the National WIC Association's "40th Anniversary" videos shown in some theaters.

Short-Term Outreach

Local Agency 34, in Abilene, took advantage of surplus funding and purchased a city bus wrap. Annette Lerma said, "We originally paid for one year of advertising and since we are a non-profit organization, the company said they will leave it up until it starts looking bad or they need the bus for another paying customer! We've definitely gotten our money's worth on this one and you never know unless you ask!"

Short-term outreach events are effective because they are relatively inexpensive and can provide face-to-face contact with potential participants. Events like participating in health fairs and monthly events such as National Nutrition Month, National Breastfeeding Month, and school events are all great ways to get the word out. WIC agencies can set up a booth and

provide printed materials and other incentives. Some agencies will even take quick intake forms to gather client information and make appointments. Health fairs provide the perfect opportunity to answer questions and clear up any misconceptions the general public has about WIC.

Local Agency 35, in Denton, has a special way of getting participants to their outreach booth; they play games. Flavia Galarraga says, “We use fun or educational games such as MyPlate trivia, nutrition Q&A wheel, dice game for exercise ideas, and tic tac toe toss game to attract individuals to our booth at outreach events.”

Local Agency 56, in San Angelo, has found a great way to get staff involved in outreach by holding an applicant referral contest among staff. Gloria Hale, former director, says “The staff told the applicant what to bring in and to make sure they indicated who sent them in to apply for WIC. This contest was highly charged and competitive. Final results were neck and neck. Everyone was positive after the morale building competition.”

LA 56 also found a way to display WIC information in high traffic areas like laundry mats, apartment complexes, WIC grocery stores, church halls, and convenience stores. They created a colorful flyer with tear off tabs along the bottom that have the WIC contact information. Hale says, “Several weeks later, many flyers are still up, minus the bottom tear off tabs. People noticed and responded to available contact information on tabbed flyers. Some applicants, when asked who referred them to WIC, dug deeply into their pocket books to fish out a well-worn contact information tab.”

Ongoing

Ongoing outreach includes establishing partnerships with other health-care providers and community-based organizations who serve the same population as WIC. Many agencies find a way to create a mutual referral system. Forming these collaborations provides an inexpensive long-term impact and may help an agency maintain their caseload while creating community awareness about WIC. **Local Agency 48**, in Houston, understands the importance of these collaborations. They have created a mu-

tual referral and information exchange system with Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services, Houston Food Bank, Mental Health America, March of Dimes, United Way, Harris County Department of Education, Headstart, Chip/Medicaid, LIFE Houston, and ECI, to name a few.

Local Agency 07, in Dallas, found a way to be creative and think outside the box. Staff marched in the January 2014 Martin Luther King, Jr parade dressed as fruits and vegetables. They proudly held a WIC banner while they enjoyed themselves. Cindy Wachtler says, “LA 07 is having a great time, making use of every opportunity to inform Dallas County residents of the many easily accessible benefits of the WIC Program.” They also participate in other community events such as The Feast of Sharing and the Mayor’s Back to School Fair. These activities not only benefit the public but are exciting for staff as well.

Another agency that never turns down an opportunity to conduct outreach is **Local Agency 34**. Taking advantage of every opportunity is paying off for them. Annette Lerma said, “We are passionate about outreach because we are passionate about WIC and the services we provide for our community. We rarely turn down an opportunity to set up a WIC booth for health fairs and conferences.”

This year, the state agency created new outreach brochures and posters that you can use for your next outreach activity. The brochure highlights all the great WIC benefits available to families, and lets potential participants know WIC does more than just give out food. The brochure aims to inspire families to join WIC. What will your local agency do to take outreach to the next level?



Local Agency 07 — Parade.



How Can YOU Answer the Call?



Star Achiever hospital and WIC representatives work together to bring about change during learning sessions and community partner meetings.

by Veronica Hendrix, L.V.N., I.B.C.L.C., R.L.C.
Texas Ten Step Program Coordinator
& Alma Carver, M.S.
Project Manager, NICHQ

Many Texas WIC staff have begun to reflect on this year's 2014 WIC Nutrition and Breastfeeding Conference (NBF) theme: *Texas WIC: Answering the Call to Action*. Local agency staff work tirelessly to educate WIC clients about healthy living and breastfeeding, while developing wellness activities for their community. Yet for some, it is difficult to see how their daily work is linked to improving health outcomes for WIC clients. A rewarding way some WIC staff have begun to answer the call to action is through collaborating with other organizations in the community. One such opportunity is through the Texas Ten Step Star Achiever Breastfeeding Learning Collaborative (Star Achiever).

In 2012, the Department of State Health Services and state WIC office partnered with the National Institute for Children's Health Quality (NICHQ) and launched the Star Achiever Collaborative, a statewide breastfeeding quality improvement initiative. The goal of this collaborative is to improve exclusive breastfeeding rates for Texas infants by day two of life, or while in the hospital setting. To reach this goal, two important entities must work together: birthing hospitals and WIC agencies. This collaboration has proven vital for developing stronger relationships, which in turn improves information sharing to ensure new and expectant mothers are receiving the best possible care and support.

From the beginning of the Star Achiever Collaborative, the spirit of sharing has been supported and encouraged. To ensure that hospitals were addressing each of the UNICEF/World Health Organization's Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding (which serve as a framework for ensuring exclusive breastfeeding is best being supported and promoted), it was clear each hospital involved would need to engage with local community support groups that offer prenatal education (Step 3) to expectant mothers and post-discharge breastfeeding support (Step 10) to new mothers.

WIC representatives from various local agen-



cies joined Star Achiever improvement teams sharing valuable information with the hospital teams. Building these relationships through Star Achiever has allowed for a deeper understanding of the needs of the mothers being served, and has offered a more seamless transitional experience for new mothers and their infants. Layne Walker, nutritionist from LA 54, shared, “I wanted to get involved with the labor and delivery doctors and nurses, with whom I had otherwise not been connected. At first, I was unsure how to be part of the improvement team, but I committed to being at the monthly hospital team meetings and to learn as much as I [could] from others. As a result, I have gained a better understanding of the birthing experience and how it sets the stage for successful breastfeeding, so I am better able to support the breastfeeding efforts of WIC moms.”

Shannon Wingo, breastfeeding coordinator for LA 54 added, “We had a WIC IBCLC or a WIC breastfeeding peer counselor as a team member [at each of the 12 participating birthing hospitals in Fort Worth]. WIC staff were able to participate in all hospital team meetings and going forward, our relationship with our local hospitals [will be] vital to the success of the women, infants, and children we serve.”

Since WIC offices and the hospitals already provide valuable services, programs, and resources to mothers and infants, part of the challenge is making sure the WIC model of care is shared with hospital staff members who may not understand the role that WIC plays in their communities and vice versa. In order to help mothers reach their personal breastfeeding goals, it is essential to build a system of coordinated care to offer evidence based, reliable, and digestible information. Layne Walker shared, “As part of the [improvement] team, I am a bridge to WIC and to the community; our teamwork will help moms to breastfeed longer. The [Star Achiever] project has helped Texas by setting the stage for correcting the disconnect that previously existed between a mom’s birthing experience and postpartum breastfeeding support.” Walker went on to say, “[Star Achiever Improvement] team members are all learning from each other, which ultimately strengthens the support of breastfeeding. It has generated

an optimism and a united front to improve breastfeeding rates.”

Other WIC staff have gained a better understanding of how hospitals provide care to mothers. Mary Bryant, LA 35, states that, “being in a group of mostly hospital personnel, I was able to learn some things that are done (in the hospital) as well as become more aware of the struggles that breastfeeding promoters face in the hospital.”

Shannon Wingo adds, “We learned so much, including the challenges the hospital staff and lactation consultants face each day. In the last year, we have made some significant changes in hospital practices in our area.”

Through engagement in the Star Achiever Collaborative, together WIC and hospitals have not only been able to develop a better understanding of the role the other plays in the perinatal period, but also how to ensure consistent messaging is being provided to mothers. Adria Bell, LA 71, states, “I’ve been attending Baylor McKinney’s monthly meetings and it’s great to hear the progress they are making at each meeting. In this collaborative, I have been available to answer questions that hospital staff have about WIC and let them know [about] resources that we have available here.”

WIC representatives were encouraged to provide hospital staff with an overview of their local agency resources and services as well as general information on the pump program, client based nutrition and breastfeeding education, and food packages. Layne Walker went on to share, “I have educated the hospital team about all things WIC — providing printed materials, community referral information for breastfeeding support, and [discussed the] possible establishment of a Baby Café, in-services, and trainings on the path to becoming Baby-Friendly.”

The Star Achiever Collaborative is currently working with a second cohort of hospitals, moving into the third and final region of Texas in mid-2015. Opportunities to serve as a WIC representative in this project will be coming your way, so get ready to ANSWER THE CALL!

Thanks Linda

For all You Did for WIC and for Us

by Clare Wolf
Editor/Designer Texas WIC News

Author's Note: *With 30 plus years working in both the private and public sectors, I can honestly say that Linda Brumble was the best manager I've ever had the privilege to work with. She is kind, approachable, flexible, a good listener, a great story teller, and most of all humorous.*



“Have you got a second?”

When asked this question by an employee, Linda Brumble's standard answer was always, “Yes!” Manager of the Nutrition Education and Clinic

Services Unit, Brumble believed, “People, my staff, and those I work with, are the focus of my management style.”

“Linda always had an open door and was willing to stop whatever she was doing to listen to you. She was quick to respond to email and any of your needs,” said Paula Kanter, clinic nutrition specialist.

Kathryn Reeves, administrative assistant, agreed, “Linda is the best listener... She analyzed situations so quickly and accurately and took careful and appropriate action with much respect for all staff.”

July 31, 2014, Linda Brumble retired with over 40 years with the Department of State Health Services (DSHS). For the past 10 years Linda managed the Nutritional Education/Clinic Services Unit. She began working at DSHS in 1968 as a clerk and moved up to accountant. She started at WIC on January 1, 1978 as a monitor of the clinics. During her 33 years at WIC, Linda accomplished many things, including the establishment of the WIC vendor monitoring section (along with Ray Krzesniak, her boss) in the 1980's.

Krzesniak, manager of Food Issuance and Redemption Services, recalls a time when, “... she had to turn in a written report for each local agency review she completed. These reports were typically long and sometimes a little boring. I think Linda just wanted to see if anyone

was truly reading them so in one of her reports, buried deep in the heart of the narrative, she made an observation that the WIC local director looked a lot like Eddie Rabbitt (a country music recording star at that time). The answer she got was, yes someone reads those reports. Her supervisor at the time told her she would have to delete that reference and avoid making similar comments in future reports.”

Another accomplishment was the creation of the Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) studio. “My vision was to create some kind of distance learning process where we could train all staff from one central location here in Austin,” explained Linda.

During her tenure at WIC, Linda did a lot of traveling. “She knows all the Dairy Queen (DQ) stops in Texas, knows a lot about small towns, and she likes to shop!” said Clinic Services Manager Rachel Edwards. “I traveled to Del Rio with Linda and we chatted the entire way to Del Rio and back. She is so outgoing and personable which made clinic staff comfortable and eager to learn from her.”

One trip Linda recalled was “...The Vendor Conference in Kansas City in the 1980's. I don't think I slept all week because of all the activities and [meeting] WIC staff from other states. There was a costume party we hadn't come prepared for, so Mary Alice (Winfree) and I dressed up in trash bags on which we wrote the slogan ‘Don't Mess with Texas.’”

As manager of NECS, Linda was not only dedicated and a great listener, but she was humorous. “I know that somewhere in my management style and in my life, humor plays a huge part. Life is too short to be taken seriously all the time, especially life at work. Humor is a tension

reliever and I have used it often to start serious conversations about the 'elephant in the room,'" said Linda.

"She could always relate a story in her life that may or may not be relevant to your discussion but was always entertaining." Lorise Grimball, PPMS team lead, says.

Hildreth England, WIC engagement specialist, added, "You could hear Linda's infectious laugh from anywhere in the building, and her hilarious stories were one of the best parts of having her as a manager. Meetings were always more fun when Linda was there - I miss her sense of humor around the WIC State office!"

Kaylene Thompson, nutrition education consultant, agrees, "Linda always knew how to make you laugh!"

Her dedication to WIC and the people of Texas was evident in the overwhelmingly positive comments made by her staff.

Nutrition Education Manager Shirley Ellis said, "Linda Brumble is a cornerstone of the Texas WIC program. She will be missed not only at the state level but at the local level as well. Local staff have gotten to know her through her visits to the clinics on her "tours across Texas" and her presentations on Lunch with Linda. I am excited for her in this time of retirement but I know she is not the type to sit still for long. I expect that one day when calling the electric company, water company or some other service type business I will hear her familiar voice answering, 'this is Linda, how can I help you?'"

Kelley Reed, nutrition education consultant, added, "Linda took into consideration the personality differences in any group dynamic and she offered encouragement and words of wisdom for how to deal with the ever-changing world of WIC. Her dedication to the WIC program will

leave a lasting impression in my mind for years to come."

Veronica Hendrix, Texas Ten Step Program coordinator, agrees, "Linda had a great passion and energy for WIC. It's rare to find that commitment in someone who has spent an entire career in public health; she will be greatly missed!"

"She's a provider - whether it's information or a laugh, she was always there for you." Mandy Seay, nutrition education consultant, said.

"After Patti Fitch's retirement, Linda Brumble was very resourceful in guiding us through all the unexpected formula changes that occurred in January and February," added Pat Koym.

"...Linda has a great love for Texas and all of its people. She is also so entertaining and friendly." Linda Zeccola, breastfeeding trainer, added.

"Linda was a great manager... she gets us - she has a heart of understanding." Katie Coyne, nutrition education consultant, said.

A few years ago, Linda adopted the Publishing, Promotion, and Media Services branch, a group of graphic designers and writers. She was immediately accepted as their new manager:

"Linda always had a ton of great stories to share. It was especially great learning about things that happened before I joined WIC..." said Joseph De Leon, information specialist.

Betty Castle, information specialist, agreed, "...She watched out for her employees because she really knew her employees. Not just our names, but who we are."

Renee Mims, information specialist, shared a personal story, "Linda

and I chatted about Texas Tech since it's her alma mater and my son's a student there. One of my fondest memories was discussing Tech's new head coach Kliff Kingsbury (who looks like Ryan Gosling). My son told me about a new Tech t-shirt that read, "Our coach is hotter than your coach." Next time she was in Lubbock she bought one, and my son bought one for me."

Linda believed strongly in the value of training. Rich Tharp, videographer, agrees, "Linda understood that great training not only informs and educates the employees of an organization, but it also helps create an esprit de corps; a team atmosphere where everyone realizes their role and pitches in. She always made sure that training had a purpose, was engaging and even fun."

For Jeremy Boehm, graphic designer and the newest member of the PPMS group, it was as simple as, "...She was a great manager because she believed in me and granted me an opportunity to work for WIC. Truly she was the best boss I ever had due to her fairness in any situation and presenting herself as approachable. Never once did I feel, 'I'm your boss...you're my employee mentality.'"

PPMS Manager Yolanda BazDresch agrees, "She's been a mentor in every sense of the word. But most of all, she brought out the best in me by believing in me and teaching me how to understand people."

Former WIC employee, Juanita Romo, sums it up best. ... "In the words of Tom Peters, author of several business management best-sellers, 'Leaders don't create followers; they create more leaders.' Linda was and is the epitome of this philosophy. She treated her staff with respect as responsible and independent professionals, and by doing so has built a team who individually are prepared to go forward as future leaders."

Did You Know October is National Breast



by Erica Harris, M.S., R.D., L.D.
Nutrition Education Consultant

Breast cancer affects us all. One in eight American women will face it during their lifetime, and although we may not have personally fought the disease, we likely know a friend, co-worker, or family member who has. October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness and support for research on the prevention and treatment of the disease. This article will highlight breast cancer basics and online support tools, as well as show how WIC sets the stage for lifelong healthy habits to combat diseases like cancer.

Breast Cancer Basics

Breast cancer is a type of cancer that forms in the tissues of the breast. Cancer happens when cells multiply uncontrollably, resulting in tumors that damage healthy tissues. Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among women, behind skin cancer. According to the National Cancer Institute, in 2014 there will be an estimated 232,670 new cases of breast cancer among women and 2,360 new cases among men in the United States.



Risk Factors

Some factors that increase the risk of getting the disease are out of our control, including getting older, having a family history of breast cancer, late menopause, or having changes in the breast cancer-related genes BRCA1 or BRCA2. However, many other risk factors are controllable, including:

- Being overweight
- Not breastfeeding
- Not getting regular exercise
- Drinking alcohol (more than one drink per day)

Signs, Symptoms, and Treatment

When caught early, breast cancer is very treatable. Signs and symptoms of breast cancer include new lumps in the breast or underarm, change in the shape or size of the breast, pain in any area of the breast, redness or flaky skin on the breast or nipple, and nipple discharge other than breastmilk.



Cancer Awareness Month?

Breast cancer is diagnosed in stages. The size of the tumor and whether or not it has spread beyond the breast to lymph nodes or other tissues determine its stage. For example, cancer in Stage I is early-stage whereas Stage IV is advanced and has spread to other parts of the body. Treatment may include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, or other strategies.

Prevention

While breast cancer is not preventable, there are several ways to lower the risk. Breast cancer screening — including mammograms, breast self-exams, and clinical breast exams — are important for detecting the disease when it is in its earliest stages and most treatable. It is important for women to talk with their doctors about what types of screening are appropriate for them. Other ways to reduce the risk include:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Breastfeeding
- Exercising regularly
- Limiting alcohol

All of the above are behaviors that the WIC program addresses. WIC touches women and children at the earliest stages of life to provide guidance and support to set the stage for a lifetime of healthy habits. WIC's breastfeeding promotion efforts are, in addition to supporting many other health benefits for mom and baby, helping women reduce their lifelong breast cancer risk. WIC's promotion of a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and lean protein helps clients to maintain a healthy weight, which is a key preventive factor. Habits start early, and the work that WIC does can go a long way to protect the health of Americans now and for years to come.

Tools & Resources

During the month of October, various charities will host events such as fundraising walks to raise money for breast cancer research. The National Breast Cancer Foundation has also created a free online resource guide called *Beyond the Shock* for women who have been diagnosed, their families, and their doctors. It

includes short interactive modules on all aspects of the disease, inspirational videos from breast cancer survivors, and an interactive forum. Check it out at <http://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/nbcf-programs/beyond-the-shock>.



Other good places to find out more about breast cancer

include:

- National Cancer Institute (of NIH) - <http://www.cancer.gov>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer>
- American Cancer Society - <http://www.cancer.org/>

WIC's Role in Promoting Health across the Lifespan

While WIC only serves pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, along with infants, and children, the program promotes healthy behaviors that over a lifetime can help lower the risk for chronic diseases like cancer. Next time you counsel a mother to breastfeed her new baby or support a family in establishing healthy mealtime routines and encouraging regular exercise, remember that the work that you do matters more than you think. During the month of October, spread the word about breast cancer and reach out to support those working to fight it in your community.

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