

texas

July/August 2008

WIC

news

Volume 17, Number 4



August
World
Breastfeeding
Month

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

WIC Promotes Breastfeeding in Texas

More than 75 percent of mothers in Texas initiate breastfeeding. And with many of those mothers returning to work, businesses are realizing the value of accommodating their breastfeeding employees. Jet Blue uses the term “homesourcing” when referring to the hundreds of reservation agents who work from home — many of them mothers. The arrangement offers working moms flexible hours and saves them time and gas. The love of their job is reflected in the great customer service they deliver.

Dell, another example of a company that recognizes the value of supporting their breastfeeding employees, sent this memo to all their staff in 2007:

We know that having children is one of the biggest and most rewarding life commitments. To help with one of the areas of caring for your newborn, you and your medically-covered spouse/domestic partner now have unlimited free phone access to lactation counselors and discounts on breast pumps. And if you're a new mom, take advantage of the onsite mother's rooms to help in your transition back to Dell after your baby is born.

-Dell memo

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration recently introduced a new resource kit to encourage lactation support in the workplace. The Business Case for Breastfeeding is a five-section employer-based kit designed to increase the number of U.S. employers that use a worksite breastfeeding support program. The kit outlines manageable, flexible models for implementing or enhancing a worksite breastfeeding support program.

At the 2008 Nutrition and Breastfeeding Conference, local agency breastfeeding coordinators will complete the Business Case for Breastfeeding train-the-trainer course and

then return to their agencies to train local staff. The training includes instruction on how to use the PowerPoint presentation and reproducible materials in the kit as well as techniques to impress business managers – such as how to calculate their return on investment if they choose to adopt the program. I would like to encourage all of you who complete the training to follow up on your commitment to meet with at least two businesses to encourage them to support their breastfeeding employees.

As a result of the new Business Case for Breastfeeding initiative, the DSHS Mother-Friendly Worksite program has been revitalized in preparation for additional requests from businesses to become certified as Mother-Friendly Worksites. The MFW program has a new brochure and a new online application process. Businesses already certified as an MFW like the fact that they can advertise their program as an employee benefit. It is my hope that the combination of the Business Case for Breastfeeding resource kit and new MFW resources will make it easy for you to convince businesses to make accommodating breastfeeding moms a routine practice.

Thanks for the effort you put into the Business Case for Breastfeeding initiative and all the work you do to promote and support breastfeeding in Texas!



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Mike Montgomery
Texas WIC Director

Linda Brumble
Manager
Nutrition Education / Clinic Services Unit

Shari Perrotta
Manager
Publishing, Promotion and Media Services

Mary Van Eck
Manager
Nutrition Education Branch

Patti Fitch
Manager
Clinical Nutrition Branch

Sherry Clark
Publication Coordinator

Clare Wolf
Managing Editor/Designer

Betty Castle, Renee Mims
Contributing Editors

Chris Coxwell
Photographer

Betty Castle, Irma Choate,
Lorise Grimbball,
Sharon Hipp, Brent McMillon,
Kanokwalee Pusitanun
Contributing Designers

Health and Human Services
Printing Services
Printing

Leticia Silva
Subscriptions

WIC Warehouse
DSHS Automation Mailroom
Mailing



Department of State Health Services
Nutrition Services Section
P.O. Box 149347, Austin, TX 78714-9347
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/default.shtm>.

Comments may be sent to the managing editor at Publishing, Promotion, and Media Services, P.O. Box 149347, Austin, TX 78714-9347, or by e-mail to WICNewsEditor@dshs.state.tx.us.

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Surround Yourself with Loving Support

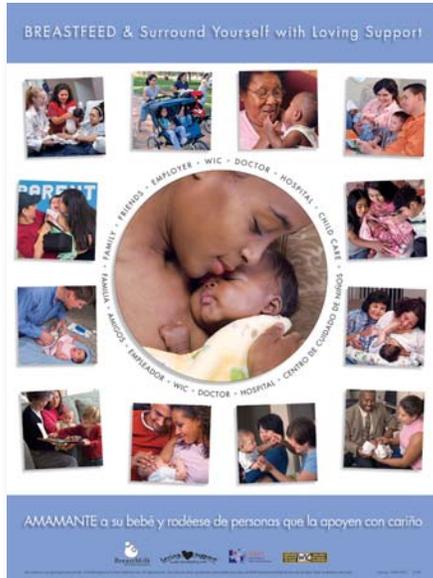


by Tracy Erickson, R.D., L.D., I.B.C.L.C.
WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator

The 2008 World Breastfeeding Month theme for Texas is *Surround Yourself with Loving Support*. This theme, a slight variation from 2007, emphasizes community support of breastfeeding moms wherever they are — hospital, home, health care provider office, workplace, and out in public. World Breastfeeding Month 2008 materials include prenatal breastfeeding education bags designed to motivate pregnant moms to breastfeed. The materials also aim to motivate family members to support and encourage the mom in her efforts. Other materials are designed to encourage employers to make breastfeeding families feel welcome in their place of business and to encourage business managers to accommodate their breastfeeding moms when they return to work. ■

Surround Yourself with Loving Support poster

This beautiful poster depicts a breastfeeding mother and baby surrounded by people who are supporting them in their breastfeeding efforts.



Surround Yourself with Loving Support poster

Breastfeeding Education Bags

The state agency is hoping to time the rollout of the prenatal Breastfeeding Education Bag project with 2008 World Breastfeeding month. The drawstring backpack style bag contains the following materials:

- Congratulations on your pregnancy letter
- *Breastfeeding: Keep it Simple* book, by Amy Spangler
- *To Baby with Love/The Comfortable Latch* DVD
- *Just for Dads* brochure
- *Just for Grandparents* brochure
- *Loving Support Makes Breastfeeding Work* burp cloth

Each backpack will have flip cards attached with breastfeeding quick-tips on each card.

WBM Banner

These beautiful banners were sent out to all local agencies last summer. The banners can be displayed for permanent breastfeeding promotion or can be used to make a big statement for World Breastfeeding Month or outreach purposes.

Assessing Adequate Feeds Magnets

The popular *How to Tell if Your Newborn is Getting Enough Breastmilk* magnets are back with a beautiful new design. The magnet provides new moms with three indicators for adequate feeds.



Breastmilk Storage Magnets

The Business Case for Breastfeeding Training & Resource Kits

All local agency breastfeeding coordinators who complete The Business Case for Breastfeeding training on July 11, 2008, in Austin will receive one of these resource kits. The kit contains all the documents needed and a CD with PowerPoint presentation to approach business managers about becoming Mother-Friendly.

To order WBM 2008 materials, contact Tracy Erickson at tracy.erickson@dshs.state.tx.us.



the lessons *Rita* taught new moms

by Gloria Hale, R.N., I.B.C.L.C., R.L.C.

When Petra Orrosquieta, Project 56 Peer Counselor Coordinator, heard the news that Hurricane Rita was headed for Houston and Galveston, she and her husband Juan got their car ready to go rescue relatives living there. Petra, Juan and baby Juanito left San Angelo around 5:30 pm and arrived in Houston at 3:00 am the next morning.

They picked up Petra's teenage sister-in-law and her newborn. At the next stop they picked

up another young family friend who also had a newborn. Both infants were formula fed. By the time they were on the bridge heading back from Galveston to Houston, it was daylight. The bridge was backed-up for miles with a long line of vehicles attempting to leave the area. Heat from the roadway and the pervasive automobile exhausts caused everyone in the vehicle to be thirsty and irritable. The newborns were crying, distressed because the bottles of formula their mothers packed for them were already consumed.



“Those who had no food or water simply had no food or water.”

The adults breathed a sigh of relief with the newfound silence. Petra broke the silence, “I always have an over supply, anyway!” The two young mothers agreed they should have breastfed, and if it wasn’t too late they were going to try.

By afternoon, the travelers only managed to make their way to Katy. The traffic had slowed to a stand still. Those who had no food or water simply had no food or water. They came upon a major retail grocery store and stopped. Petra and one of the girls left the vehicle and walked to the store. The management was allowing only five people in at a time. When they saw how flush Petra’s face was and that she had little ones with her, they allowed her in. The store had sold out of bottled water and ice. Snacks and convenience foods had been snatched up. Shelves were basically bare except for food requiring time and heat to prepare. There was no baby formula except a few cans of special or medical formula.

During the trip back to San Angelo, Petra continued to breastfeed each infant as needed. The infants slept peacefully between feedings, arriving healthy and well-hydrated. Petra’s sister-in-law began re-lactation efforts once they were in San Angelo.

Hurricane Rita taught that breastfeeding is the most convenient way to feed an infant. It makes sense anytime, but especially in a hurricane. ■

Petra knew the threat of dehydration was much greater for the babies than for the adults.

Petra breastfed her infant regularly and he slept through most of the trip. She was concerned for the two hungry infants and offered to breastfeed them. The youngest mother said “Sure, if it will stop his crying!” The thirsty, hungry infant latched on and nursed voraciously. The other newborn was now crying, so Petra made the same offer with the same results.



Hats Off To You And Wic!

— promoting the Texas Ten Step Program & how WIC can help

by Kristina Arrieta, I.B.C.L.C.
Training Specialist

Texas has met the Healthy People 2010 goal of having 75 percent of mothers initiating breastfeeding. If you teach breastfeeding classes or talk to mothers about breastfeeding during their prenatal visit, then you had a hand in this. Give yourself a pat on the back! Our boots are pointed in the right direction but we still have some work to do.

Healthy People 2010 Breastfeeding Goals

	HP 2010 Goals	Current Texas Rates*
Ever breastfed:	75%	75.4%
Breastfed at 6 months:	50%	37.3%
Breastfed at 12 months:	25%	18.7%
Exclusive breastfed at 3 months:	40%	25.2%
Exclusive breastfed at 6 months:	17%	7.1%

*2006 National Immunization Survey, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Now we need to increase the number of mothers breastfeeding at six months. Many mothers get frustrated in the early days of breastfeeding and give up — you see them in the clinics asking for formula vouchers. During the early days of breastfeeding, a mother needs the support of hospitals and birth facilities. To help get the needed support, the Department of State Health Services' Texas Ten Step program recognizes facilities with policies that protect and support breastfeeding. Encourage the birth facilities in your area to apply and meet the steps required to become a Texas Ten Step Member.

Why would a hospital or birth center want to apply? Over 75 percent of women in Texas choose to breastfeed their infants and they seek medical care that will support them in their decision. The Texas Ten Step designation allows facilities to advertise as a breastfeeding-friendly facility. Texas Ten Step facilities receive materials to help them advertise the designation. They have the opportunity to receive DSHS trainings and receive a quarterly newsletter with updates, promotion ideas, tip sheets and sample staff trainings.

What are the ten steps?

Step One: Make breastfeeding the preferred method of infant nutrition.

Step Two: Employees who care for mothers and infants should receive breastfeeding training within six months of employment, with updates regularly.

Step Three: Breastfeeding is presented as the feeding choice for all mothers, including those that must be separated from their infant.

Step Four: Mothers are encouraged to breastfeed their newborn within one hour of birth, within thirty minutes is ideal.

Step Five: Breastfeeding should be assessed within six hours after birth and at least once per shift.

Step Six: Newborns should be given artificial human milk only if is medically indicated and ordered by the physicians or requested by the parent.

Step Seven: Mothers and newborns should be encouraged to room-in unless separation is medically indicated.

Step Eight: Mothers should be encouraged to breastfeed their newborns without restriction and breastfeeding should take priority over non-emergent events.

Step Nine: Artificial nipples should be discouraged for the healthy newborn.

Step Ten: Breastfeeding mothers should receive support following discharge.

How can WIC help facilities meet these steps?

The Department of State Health Services and WIC offer free materials and programs to hospitals. As a WIC clinic you can inform the facilities in your area of these programs.

Here is a check list of what you can do in the facilities in your area:

1. Schedule a Mini I training in your area
 - Invite hospital and birth center staff
 - Invite staff from obstetricians' and pediatricians' and family practice physicians' offices
2. Offer free materials to your facilities
 - Brochures
 - Posters
 - Videos
3. Tell your facilities about the Texas WIC breast pump program
 - Every NICU should have a pump poster with clinic information
 - Tell the staff of the criteria to get a breast pump
4. Inform facilities about the PC program. Many Peer Counselor Programs go into the hospitals to help staff support breastfeeding
 - Talk to your director to see if this is a service your program could offer
 - Talk to your facilities about the need for a Peer Counselor Program

It is important to bridge the gap between the hospital and the first WIC appointment. Talk to your facilities and let them know that you can help them support breastfeeding. Check the Texas Ten Step website to see if the facilities in your area are already designated. Even if the facility has received the designation the WIC clinic's support could help increase breastfeeding rates.

To introduce your facilities to the Texas Ten Step Program you can download a letter from the Commissioner of Health available at the Texas Ten Step Web site <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/lactate/TXfact.shtm>. The Web site explains the program and the free application process. The PowerPoint presentation on this site can be presented to administration or staff to encourage implementation of the Texas Ten Step Program.

If you have any questions about how to accomplish any of these suggestions please contact Kristina Arrieta at (512) 341-4400 ext. 2281 or email: Kristina.Arrieta@dshs.state.tx.us. ■

by Kathy Clatanoff, R.N.
Title V Family Health
Research Development

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends infants be breastfed for at least 12 months. With fifty percent of breastfeeding women returning to work when their children are three months old, following the recommendation means at least nine months of pumping and storing their milk after returning to work.

To aid in this recommendation, Texas law assigned the Department of State Health Services the duty of designating Texas' businesses as "Mother-Friendly." Since its enactment, hundreds of businesses in Texas have been designated as "Mother-Friendly," which means they have voluntarily written a policy to support employed mothers — providing flexible work schedules allowing time for the expression of milk, access to a place to store her milk, a private room or area that locks, and access to a nearby sink with hot and cold water.

E. Jill Pollock, the associate vice president and chief human resources officer of Texas A&M University said, "With the State of Texas designation as 'Mother-Friendly,' the university affirms its sensitivity to needs of nursing mothers. This public recognition is another signal as we competitively and inclusively recruit and seek to retain high-quality faculty, staff and students."

Texas is one of the few states given federal grant money to help businesses recognize the benefits of becoming "Mother-Friendly" and support their breastfeeding employees. The initiative, called Business Case for Breastfeeding, is gaining momentum. People are being trained to enter the community and facilitate businesses becoming "Mother-Friendly." If you know of a business that already meets the guidelines or is interested in becoming "Mother-Friendly," an easy online application is available at <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/lactate/mfwapp.shtm>. Technical assistance is available by calling (512) 458-7111 ext. 6917. ■



“Mother-Friendly”

Worksites Gaining
Momentum in Texas

Managing Information Overload

These days, most of us feel information is coming at us faster than we can process it. With internet technology, news is traveling at greater speed than ever before in history. If the glut of information was only at work, if it didn't follow us everywhere we go, then it would be easier to absorb. But with cell phones, e-mail, the scrolling headlines at the bottom of the nightly news, and even the automated voice at the gas pump gabbing to you — it's easy to feel overwhelmed.

We are especially vulnerable to information overload during periods of change, when a volume of information descends upon us. Texas WIC has been riding a wave of change. With VENA, the EBT rollout across the state, and the new food package on the horizon, you might be feeling saturated with new content to learn and absorb. This feeling is often termed "information overload."



"INFORMATION OVERLOAD" CAN LEAD TO:

- **Loss of Time and Productivity:** Amid too much information, it's easy to waste time on unimportant information and lose sight of our goal and purpose.
- **Mental "Noise":** Excessive information can create mental clutter that distracts you from more important mental activity, like self-reflection and problem solving.
- **Stress & Anxiety:** Information overload creates an illusion that we have more tasks than we have the time or energy to accomplish.

Minimize the flow of unnecessary information. Reserve your attention for what really matters.

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Recipe:

Cantaloupes are one of many Texas grown items. Buy them in season April through August.

A good quality cantaloupe should be well shaped with good netting or webbing over creamy-colored rind. Tip end should be smooth and slightly depressed. A ripe cantaloupe will have a distinctive aroma and the blossom end should yield to gentle pressure. Avoid shriveled or bruised fruit or cantaloupe with punctured or cracked rinds.

STORING TIPS

If cantaloupes are going to be used in 1 or 2 days, they may be held at room temperature (68-72 degrees F/ 20-21 degrees C). Otherwise, they should be refrigerated.

The orange color of cantaloupes makes them an excellent source of Vitamin A.

CANTALOUPE SOUP

(adapted from *Gourmet* magazine)

A dash of curry powder transforms this cool fruit soup into a sweetly savory one.

Start to finish: 10 min Servings: Makes 4 first-course servings.



Ingredients

- 2 lb ripe cantaloupe, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch pieces (3 cups)
- 3 to 4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chilled sparkling apple cider (nonalcoholic)
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon curry powder

Garnish: curry powder; lemon slices

Preparation

Purée cantaloupe with 3 tablespoons lemon juice in a blender until very smooth, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and stir in cider and curry. Season with salt and additional lemon juice. Serve immediately, at room temperature.

NUTRITION INFO: 1 serving (about 1 cup) 90 calories; 1 g fat; 25 mg calcium; 737 mg potassium; 101 mg vitamin C; 466 RAE vitamin A.



Enrique Prieto

No one embraced the wellness message more than Enrique Prieto. A City of Dallas WIC employee for nearly 17 years, Enrique was a wellness superstar for the WIC Wellness Works program. Sadly, at the age of 47, Enrique passed away while on vacation in Puerto Rico in January of 2008. He led a vibrant life and will be remembered for his happiness, charisma, humor, enthusiasm, passion to promote wellness, and his unending desire to follow his dreams and goals.

Born in 1960 in Columbia to Luis and Ana Prieto, Enrique moved to the United States as an adult, where he quickly enrolled in English classes. He began working for the City of Dallas WIC in 1991, delivering supplies to clinics and was promoted to managing the WIC supply warehouse. Enrique maintained sole responsibility for distributing WIC materials and supplies to area clinics serving approximately 95,000 clients.

Enrique's spirit and eagerness to live life to the fullest was apparent. He was full of energy and loved to inspire others to reach their goals. As the WIC Wellness Works Coordinator for the Dallas WIC Administrative office, he was creative and passionate about promoting wellness to his co-workers.



At monthly agency staff meetings, he would begin at 7:30 am with "Exercise with Enrique" to encourage physical activity. At 9:00 am and 4:00 pm he invited co-workers to join him for a brisk indoor walk using a walking video. Enrique did not limit participation to WIC employees only, but offered the opportunity to all Dallas County employees in his building. Enrique ensured that wellness should be viewed not as a task, but more like a fun "club" that he spearheaded.

Although Enrique was excited about his job as Wellness Coordinator, one of his most noteworthy accomplishments included receiving his U.S. citizenship.

Enrique Prieto showed us that hard work and a positive attitude not only make a difference in our own lives, but also inspire and motivate those around us. The City of Dallas and the Dallas WIC Program will miss a cherished friend and dedicated employee.

Monday

by Camilia Deon Taylor 1/08/08

Dedicated to Enrique Prieto, 1960-2008

Monday came just as it had before only you were not there to greet us as you had done so many times before. As I made my way through the office door I braced myself, paced myself, holding back my thoughts, my emotions, my tears – for the friend I'd known for years was gone now, and I'd have to go on somehow, without your smile, and spark in your eye, your silly giddiness and flamboyant way you always seemed to make our day.

I am smiling through denial and disbelief, leaping over the hurt of losing you, and working through my day, just as I had done so many times before, fumbling through thoughts of why, how – how could this happen to one filled with so much life?

As Tuesday arrived, reality was vivid, and acceptance had approached me, and I began to cry for once again I was starting another day without you not understanding why. I was not as close to you as others may have been, but I still considered you as my friend. It hurts me that life for you has so abruptly come to an end. Who will keep us healthy and fit? Who will make us laugh until we cry? Who will give us advice that was good to only you and never made sense to us? Who will we argue with?

Monday will always be the first day of the work week, and it shall hold a memory of the day we started without you.



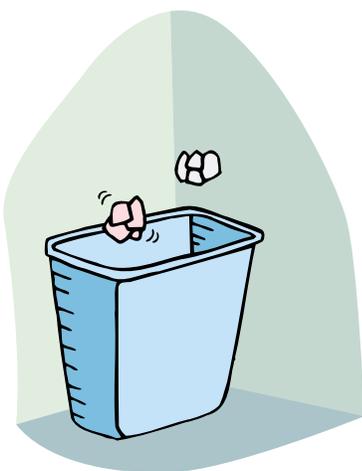
(continued from page 1)

Fortunately, there are strategies for avoiding your saturation point. You can minimize unnecessary information so that you still have “mental space” for what you really need to know.

- **Banish paper piles to the waste**

basket: Is your desk top suffocating? Is your file cabinet about to burst? Research shows that over 80 percent of filed papers are never used again! Go through your paper overflow with this statement in mind, “When in doubt, throw it out.” As a preventive tactic, invest at least one hour per week going through newly received papers instead of waiting until they form a towering stack.

- **Accept being behind:** Consuming the mountain of information that greets most of us on a daily basis would require reading around the clock, and then some. Take comfort in knowing that it is impossible to “keep up” with all of the information available, and even if you could, most of it is not relevant information. Try to focus on the most relevant information first!



- **Change your internet habits:**

Limit the time dedicated to reviewing and responding to email. When you reply, keep responses brief and don’t “reply to all” unless necessary. This will cut down on the overall flow of e-mail communication you are sending and receiving. Additionally, keep your overall internet use to a minimal period of time.

- **Go on a news fast:** The nightly news, internet headlines, and radio shows may be engaging sources of information, but most of what they provide is bad news which can raise feelings of anxiety. Try going on a “news fast” for a week, or even a few days, and then evaluate how you feel.

- **Focus on what’s important:** Most of what we hear throughout our day isn’t critical to the decisions we make about our lives. Filter information that is unimportant by asking yourself, “Is this relevant to my personal or professional life?” If not, it’s probably information you don’t need.

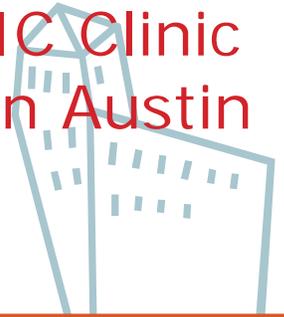
- **Schedule quiet time:** We schedule just about everything else in our lives, but often forget to include periods where our minds can rest. This can be as simple as driving to or from work with the radio off, taking a walk at lunch without headphones, or taking up a peaceful hobby like gardening or painting. Quiet time is the antidote to information overload.

- **Limit your availability:** Thanks to the internet, cell phones, and pagers, we are now available 24/7. Remove yourself from feeling constantly “on call” by turning off your technology for set periods of time, or by only answering absolutely necessary calls and pages.

Information is a good thing — but only if we can absorb it. Managing information overload is as easy as hitting the “off” button. By minimizing the flow of unnecessary information, you’re reserving your attention for what really matters.

Mom's Place and Northwest WIC Clinic Celebrate Their New Location in Austin

by Rebecca Lopez-Aviles
Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services
WIC Program Outreach Coordinator/Vendor Liaison



Above photo – Mom's Place (left to right): Drasha Cravin, Maryann Todd-Thompson, Patricia Sanchez, Gail Gresham, Belinda Rico and Maria Rendon. Not pictured: Lauren Reyes. Left photo – NW WIC Office (left to right): Gaby Cenicerros, Diane Turner, Dolores Salinas, Gaby Youmans, Hong Nguyen, Belinda Aguilar, Belinda Munoz, Diane Martinez, and Rachel Hoyland.

Northwest WIC Office (formerly Parkfield) and Mom's Place have a long-standing relationship as neighbors. For thirteen years both offices served over 4,500 clients working out of a small 2,400 square foot facility. At times there weren't enough chairs to accommodate the clients in the WIC waiting area. From a tiny four-room office adjacent to Parkfield WIC, Mom's Place served WIC and Medicaid breastfeeding clients, conducted trainings for WIC staff and other health professionals from all over Texas, and operated the Texas Lactation Support Hotline.

Parkfield WIC and Mom's Place outgrew their facility of 13 years

In September 2007, they moved into a more spacious Austin facility at 8701 Research Boulevard. WIC supervisor, Diane Turner, made sure the design of the new WIC clinic included offices and rooms for data gathering, income screening, nutritionists, and breastfeeding peer

counselors. There's also a large classroom and waiting area. Mom's Place offers four clinic rooms and offices to house the clinical assistants, the lactation consultants, and practicum students. At the request of the Mom's Place staff, director Maryann Todd-Thompson included in the building plans a large workroom to clean breast pumps returned by clients. Shared spaced for WIC and Mom's Place includes a staff restroom, staff break room, janitorial closet, and copier/recycle area. The design also included patient flow analysis help from DSHS PFA specialist, Anna Garcia.

New facility hosts open house

In January 2008, Mom's Place and the Northwest WIC clinic hosted an open house at their new facility. Community partners, health professionals from local hospitals and agencies, DSHS staff and breastfeeding supporters gathered to tour the facility. Light refreshments

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Mom's Place and Northwest Clinic

(continued from page 11)

were served which included recipes from the Helping Hand for Breastfeeding Moms (BF-000-13) lesson.

Several demonstrations were held during the open house. Mom's Place demonstrated the Creatocrit equipment, which estimates the fat and caloric content of a mother's milk. Using a centrifuge, a sample of mother's milk is spun in a capillary tube much like blood is spun to obtain a hematocrit. Gail Gresham, breastfeeding coordinator for LA 01 stated that they use it mostly to help put mothers at ease. "Often, a premature baby is supplemented with some 'special' high calorie formula (usually 22 kcal, but sometimes up to 24 or 30 kcal/oz). We never doubt the 'power' of breastmilk; but, with the Creatocrit values, most moms are shocked to find out that their milk is high in caloric value and fat — sometimes more than the 'special' formula."

WIC displayed information on the Mini Obesity Grant Projects "Walk with WIC" and "WOK with WIC." The "Walk with WIC" project is a walking program to encourage physical activity. The project increases access and opportunities to walk by providing a safe and encouraging environment, strollers for children and chances to network with people to walk outside of WIC scheduled walks. Participants are eligible to receive a free pair of walking shoes provided through the Shoes for Austin general grant, and other incentive items such as caps, water bottles, and pedometers when a ten week commitment is fulfilled. The "WOK with WIC" project is a cooking demonstration class. Cooking demonstrations focus on showing easy fruit and vegetable recipes. Samples tasting with printed recipes in Spanish and English are provided to participants with incentive items such as aprons, measuring cups, and measuring spoons.

The Northwest WIC staff and the Mom's Place group look forward to serving more clients at their new facility. And you can look forward to continuing the Clinical Lactation practicum and the breastfeeding hotline services at 1 (800) 514-6667 at Mom's Place. Come visit if you are in town! ■

WIC news briefs

WIC Video Wins Two Prestigious

The video *WIC: EBT in the Fast Lane* recently won two prestigious video awards: a silver award in the 29th Annual Telly Awards and a bronze award in the International Worldfest Houston film festival. *WIC: EBT in the Fast Lane* introduces the viewer to an overview of the WIC EBT system. A series of computer-generated graphics, animation and video stock footage of customer transactions using the WIC EBT system illustrates the system operation and WIC EBT policies and procedures.

Shot and produced by the Publishing, Promotions and Media Services video team of Joe Delgado, Tom Bleich, and Rich Tharp, *WIC: EBT in the Fast Lane* was the cooperative effort of many WIC staff: Shirley Ellis, Lorise Grimbball, Sharon Hipp, Tamika King, Mark Morrow, and Bill Spence.

"We are so fortunate to have a wealth of expertise, talent and experience specific to video communications here in WIC." PP&MS branch manager Shari Perrotta said when she heard about the awards, "Joe Delgado, Bill Spence and Tom Bleich worked endless hours to make sure that *WIC: EBT in the Fast Lane* conveyed information that could have been tedious in an imaginative, creative way that holds the viewers' attention long enough to impart important information. Everyone who worked on this video did a fantastic job."

WIC Loses a Valuable Director

On February 13, 2008, Denise Marie Wolf of the Collin County Health Care Services WIC program passed away. Denise began her career in 1984 working as a nutritionist at R.H. Deadman Hospital in Farmers Branch. She then worked for the WIC program, where she was director for 22 years. During her tenure with WIC, Denise initiated a new program in Collin County and went from being the only employee to opening four new clinics in McKinney, Plano, Wylie and Frisco. She is survived by her husband Tim Wolf and two children – Dillon and Madison, as well as many loving extended family members.

An education trust fund has been set up for Denise's children, Dillon and Madison at: Tim Wolf c/o Turrentine-Jackson-Morrow Funeral Home, 8520 Main Street, Frisco Tx 75054.

<http://www.turrentinejacksonmorrow.com/>

Awards!



Video team left to right: Sharon Hipp, Mark Marrow, Joe Delgado, Tom Bleich, Rich Tharp, Shirley Ellis, Lorise Grimbball and Bill Spence. Not pictured: Tamika King.

Growing Healthy Families: A Way Of Life For LA #17

Employees of LA #17 take to heart the phrase Growing Healthy Families. This summer 6 of our 49 employees are due to have new additions to their families. All but one of the babies is due between August and September. What a great way to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week. "This is a history making event", says Karen Gibson RD, WIC director. "We have never had so many expecting at one time". The staff celebrated the big event with a surprise baby shower and presentation of Growing Healthy Families t-shirts for the little ones.



Left to right: Sarah Whitworth, Anabel Valdivia, Rebecca Flores, Crystal Sanchez, and Blanca Miranda. Not pictured: Diana Loera.

Oscar Receives Kudos from Clients

Oscar Hernandez's thirteen years in the El Paso Department of Public Health WIC Program have been a journey of personal growth and professional development. He has worked as a clinical clerk, clerical supervisor and health education specialist, which awarded him recognition by his clients for his commitment to teaching. Oscar was promoted to certifying authority in November 2007.



"Oscar Hernandez exemplifies the adage of a 'can do attitude,'" said Bertha Amaya, patient coordinator of the Department of Public Health for the City of El Paso. "His positive attitude and dedication is demonstrated by the positive comments made by WIC participants — he is one of our El Paso role models."

"I'm very passionate about the way the WIC program provides educational information to clients in the classes," he said. "Clients have responded positively to the classes especially the class on 'The Comfortable Latch' for breastfeeding moms."

Oscar continued his education, receiving a bachelor's degree in health care management from Park University at Ft. Bliss in El Paso and 12 hours of nutrition education from Santa Fe Community College.

"It's important for me to be able to address questions and concerns that clients have," he said. "It's been a challenge to learn as much as I have over the last 13 years but it's rewarding to be able to share my knowledge with the co-workers and clients."

Beyond Knowledge in Nutrition Education

by The University of Texas Nutrition Education Team*

Every day at WIC, you meet with people who want to make healthy changes in their lives. WIC provides moms and kids with nutritious foods and education for making healthy choices. However, behavior change ultimately requires both skills and the confidence to use those skills effectively.

While nutrition information is an essential component in nutrition education, knowledge alone is not enough to influence behaviors. In a recent study, The University of Texas at Austin Nutrition Education Team found that parents who knew a lot about nutrition did not necessarily make better choices when it came to feeding their children. The Texas WIC Child Feeding Study found that parents' confidence in their ability to buy, prepare and serve fruits and vegetables for their children was strongly linked with actual fruit and vegetable intake and with decreased sweet intake. This confidence is also referred to as self-efficacy.

What is self-efficacy?

Self-efficacy is a person's confidence in the ability to perform specific behaviors in specific situations. It is not focused solely on reaching a goal, but on the specific actions necessary to reach that goal. For example, a person's self-efficacy for eating more fruits and vegetables might include feelings of confidence to:

- ◆ buy fruits and vegetables on a budget;
- ◆ prepare vegetables in a way that she will like;
- ◆ substitute fruit or salad for French fries when eating out; or
- ◆ keep a daily log of how many servings of fruits and vegetables are eaten.



Self-efficacy is an important concept in nutrition education because people with high self-efficacy tend to be more motivated and are more likely to take action than people with lower self-efficacy. They also keep up their efforts over time, even in the face of barriers.

How can WIC help clients build self-efficacy for healthy eating and lifestyle?

The first step in building self-efficacy is to be specific about the desired behavior and work with clients to set goals for themselves.

There are four processes that can improve self-efficacy:

- 1) Learning through personal experience – approaching behavior change in small, manageable steps can build clients' confidence as they begin to experience success. Giving

clients a chance to practice each step along the way can help them gain a feeling of mastery over the behavior. For example:

- ◆ Talk with clients about times that they have been able to incorporate healthy choices in their lives.
- ◆ Ask clients to talk through the steps they will need to take in order to reach their goals.
- ◆ In a cooking class, invite clients to participate and practice the skills they are learning. Give clients feedback on what they are doing well.

2) Learning through observation – clients can gain confidence by role-playing challenging situations. Demonstrations can be valuable, especially if clients are able to observe or learn from peers who have been through similar experiences.

- ◆ Demonstrate how to mix formula, how to measure liquids, or how to perform an exercise with visual aids as appropriate. Then invite clients to practice themselves.
- ◆ Use peer counselors to model healthy behaviors or ask clients to share ideas and experiences with each other in a client-centered nutrition education class.

3) Positive feedback, encouragement, and reinforcement – play up the positive and talk through the challenges. By acknowledging the healthy choices clients are making, clients can recognize their progress. Then, help clients identify barriers and strategies to overcome them.

- ◆ Tell clients, “You can do it!” as they set goals and begin to make small changes.
- ◆ Remind clients that setbacks are normal; nobody is perfect.
- ◆ Point out that by coming to WIC they are making a great first step towards building a healthy family.

4) Understanding body signs and signals related to the behavior and creating strategies to cope with them – clients may experience physical sensations when changing their diet or starting a new activity program.

- ◆ Talk about soreness or fatigue clients might feel when starting a new physical activity program.
- ◆ Work with clients to recognize their own internal hunger and satiety cues.

- ◆ Develop coping strategies for dealing with feelings of stress.

Two examples of incorporating self-efficacy into the WIC classroom

Example 1: Building self-efficacy through cooking classes

- 1) Class members talk about experiences they have had with substituting low-fat ingredients for higher fat ingredients.
- 2) Instructor demonstrates how to chop ingredients and asks class members to help.
- 3) Class members practice preparing a recipe.
- 4) Class members sample the foods they have prepared.

Example 2: Building self-efficacy through physical activity classes

- 1) Clients share ways that they are physically active and address solutions to common barriers.
- 2) Instructor demonstrates stretches and strength-building activities that can be done while sitting in a chair or working in the kitchen.
- 3) Clients try out exercises, walk around the block.
- 4) Clients share how they felt during and after the walk.
- 5) Clients set a small goal that they can accomplish for the next week/month. For example: add 10 minutes of light to moderate activity on most days.
- 6) Instructor tells clients that some feelings of discomfort (soreness) are normal when starting an exercise program. Instructor provides ways to decrease discomfort (rest days between exercise, etc.) and addresses the signs of injury and signs that the body is getting stronger.

By addressing self-efficacy, WIC can move beyond knowledge in nutrition education and empower clients to make and sustain healthy choices for themselves and their families. ■

*Contact: Jennifer Greenberg Seth, M.S., Social Sciences Research Associate. Department of Kinesiology and Health Education. The University of Texas at Austin, jgreenbergs@utexas.edu, (512) 795-0254.

* What Did You Say?

The Skill of Active Listening

by Linda Brumble, M.A., B.S.
Unit Manager, NECS

The older I get, the harder it is for me to hear what other people are saying. I'm not sure if it's because my hearing just isn't as good, or that my attention span has decreased with the years. I "listen," but I don't engage in "active listening" as often as I should. And that means either I miss the meaning and answer the wrong question, or it takes me twice as long as it should to get the information I need.

In our WIC clinics, engaging in active listening is hard for a number of reasons. The clinics are noisy, and there are many distractions. The questions and answers can be repetitious. And many of us have "spent years focusing on getting our own message across rather than on fully understanding someone else," says Judi Brownell, Ph.D., author of two books on listening.

Elliott Jaffa, Ph.D., a Virginia-based psychologist, offers these tips to becoming a more proactive listener:

1. **Stop talking.**
2. **Cheat. Use a pencil and paper and take notes.**
3. **Sit down with the person.**
4. **Be aware of your body language and facial expressions. If you keep looking over the speaker's shoulder to see who else is in the room, the speaker won't think that you are listening.**
5. **Ask open-ended questions — and ask questions that will elicit the information you want to know.**
6. **Paraphrase. Repeat the main ideas back to the speaker.**

Test your knowledge of the subject. See how many true or false questions you answer correctly:

Listening Quiz

1. Listening ability depends on intelligence.
2. We listen well most of the time.
3. Listening is an active process.
4. Generally, most of us can read something and listen at the same time.
5. Listening ability is closely related to hearing acuity.
6. Effective listening is done with the whole body.
7. We learn to listen automatically as we are growing up.
8. You don't need to look at the speaker to listen well.
9. What we hear is often not what was said.
10. Thinking about what to say next will affect how well you listen.

Brownell offers a few deceptively simple techniques that expand on “paraphrasing.”

- Offer encouragement to the speaker by nodding or saying “uh-huh” or “I see.”
- Restate the basic ideas, using terms such as “if I understand you correctly,” or “so what you are saying is ...”
- Reflect on the feelings that the speaker is trying to convey. “Seems like that bothers you a lot ...”
- Summarize the speaker’s key ideas.

Brownell says *“this structured approach allows the speaker to hear the message as interpreted by the listener and to adjust it if it has been misunderstood or is incomplete. It also prevents the listener from becoming judgmental, so that the speaker is free to express herself without becoming defensive.”*

With the advent of VENA, active listening becomes a crucial skill necessary for the success of the certification and counseling process. While it can be challenging to learn, and may seem like an artificial way to communicate at first, with practice it can become an easier, faster way to communicate. Staff can zero in on the content most important to the speaker so they won’t

do what I do — miss the meaning and answer the wrong question or spend twice as long as they should to get the information they need. They won’t be asking: *“What did you say?”* ■

Sources:

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Answers:

1. False. Unfortunately, most of us need to work on our listening skills.
3. True. It requires our participation and involvement.
4. False. So don't read the client's records while she is talking to you.
5. False. Thank goodness again. I'm glad my age (and subsequent loss of hearing acuity) isn't really the problem.
6. True. Proper eye contact and body posture can facilitate effective listening.
7. False. Effective listening is not automatically learned. Effective listening requires practice and training.
8. False. A lot of listening cues come from the speaker's body language.
9. True. As human beings, we have a tendency to filter information we hear.
10. True. This detracts from our concentration and focuses our attention on our response.

If you got all 10 correct, congratulations! You know what you should be doing to be an effective listener. Keep putting your knowledge into practice. If you got 7-9 correct, you have the basics down, but still have a few misconceptions. If you got less than 7 correct, you may be asking “what did you say?” quite often.

Cameron County WIC Interns

by Renee Mims

Cameron County WIC continues to have a “bumper crop” of employees take part in the WIC internship program. The internship gives students the chance of a lifetime to grow and learn. The clinic benefits from having registered dietitians on staff who bring new and innovative ideas to WIC. Interns are able to take part in learning about health promotion, disease prevention, nutrition therapy, and food service management through the program.

Virna Rangel, R.D., L.D. Former Intern Believes in Continuing Education



Virna Rangel was traveling for her local agency at the time she decided to enroll in the WIC internship program.

“This was a great opportunity for me and a benefit to my local agency,” she said. “I wanted to become eligible to take the exam to become a registered dietitian.”

Her focus during the internship was

community nutrition awareness. She likes to teach the preventive approach to wellness. “It’s rewarding knowing that I have the opportunity to educate WIC participants on a new topic in nutrition that can impact their daily life,” she said.

Virna is the nutrition education coordinator/interim assistant WIC director at Local Agency 003. She also uses her clinical expertise at the South Texas Rehabilitation Hospital where she works part-time.

“Sound nutrition for my rehab patients can improve their recovery and lead to an independent healthy lifestyle,” she said.

Having received a degree in nutrition from The University of Texas at Austin, she wants to continue her education.

“I would like to continue my learning opportunities by pursuing a Master’s Degree next fall,” she said.

She loves the beach and has three dogs: Betty, Cookie, and Brownie and a cat named Bevo.

Christine Lister Former Intern Wants to Make a Difference



Christine Lister was working at the San Benito WIC clinic as the clinic supervisor and certifying authority, when she decided to apply for the internship program.

“I applied for the WIC internship program so I could become a registered dietitian,” she said.

“I wanted to be able to apply those skills to my work at the clinic.”

Her focus was on community nutrition and the resources available to clients.

“The internship has given me the ability to return to my clinic and to offer the most I can to my clients,” she said. “I have a better understanding of what community resources are available to them.”

Originally from Louisiana, Christine graduated from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette with a bachelor’s degree in dietetics.

“I want to make a difference in the lives of people not as fortunate as others,” she said. “I want to be able to apply my knowledge to helping people live a healthier life and make small but great changes for the next generation.”

She is engaged and plans to marry in November. She has two cats, Juan Santos and Espeon.

Reap What They Sow

Sandra “Sandie” Lopez, R.D. Intern Turned Quality Assurance Coordinator/Trainer



When Sandie Lopez’s son was diagnosed at birth with digestive problems, it fueled her wish to learn more about nutrition.

“I was told that he would grow out of his episodes of diarrhea and would be normal,” she said. “But after completing my first course in nutrition I realized the doctors never sought assistance from a registered

dietitian and I proceeded to solve the problem myself.”

Now her son is eight years old and is doing very well.

In her junior year at Texas A & M University, her professor shared a Texas WIC News article about the WIC internship program. Sandie was a former WIC client who wanted to “give back to the community.”

During her internship, she learned to network and to provide preventative care throughout her community. “I focused on taking in as much as possible from my local preceptors so that I could learn through experiences and not just through books,” she said.

During her semi-difficult pregnancy with her daughter Brie, she had to monitor her diet and the clinic staff helped her through it. Brie was breastfed until her second birthday; and the staff, (including the RDs) learned a lot about breastfeeding with Brie (nipple confusion, pumping at work, and what breastmilk looks like).

Currently she is the quality assurance coordinator/training coordinator at Local Agency 003. She is a registered dietitian and enjoys the time she spends with clients teaching nutrition.

“It is glorious teaching them how little things such as taking a walk can make a difference and in turn create a happier, healthier lifestyle,” she said. “I just need a handful of clients to say that I’ve made a difference in their health and their life and that’s what makes a difference to me.”

Noemi Hernandez, R.D., L.D. Breastfeeding Coordinator’s Goal is to Help Pregnant Moms

Noemi Hernandez wanted to pursue the WIC internship program because she wanted to become a registered dietitian.

She began as a certifying authority for Cameron County’s WIC program where she traveled throughout the agency and helped with certifications, nutrition counseling, and audits as well as formula approvals.

“Prior to the internship, I was an interim WIC clinic supervisor for six months,” she said. “This experience exposed me to management and the challenges that come with it.”

The internship was a positive experience for Noemi. “It strengthened my nutrition knowledge and exposed me to real world scenarios,” she said.

She is the breastfeeding coordinator, a position she has held for three years.

“My goal is to have all mothers try breastfeeding for at least the first month,” she said.

The internship helped prepare Noemi for graduate school as well. She is enrolled in the MBA program at Our Lady of the Lake University weekend college.

Originally from Houston, she graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a bachelor of science in nutrition. She has two chocolate Labrador retrievers, Buddy and Hunter; and one rat terrier, Rascal. She is also expecting her first child and “yes, I do plan to breastfeed,” she said.



The WIC internship program begins again in January 2009. If you would like more information on the program, contact Sherry Clark at sherry.clark@dshs.state.tx.us or (512) 458-7111 ext. 2142.



next issue:

VENA —
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