



# WIC Changing Lives Healthy Eating, Active Living How WIC is helping families stay healthy



What is WIC doing to help prevent childhood and adult obesity? For years, The San Francisco WIC Program has been active in promoting healthy eating and physical activity. Through the Healthy Eating, Active Living campaign and our “Eat well and play” nutrition messages, our WIC families are learning how to be healthier.

## PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### ● **Nutrition Services Plan**

- As stated in our WIC Nutrition Services plan, our goal is to reduce the incidence of overweight WIC children (age 2-5 years) by 2% annually. Rates are monitored monthly.
- Also, we have met our 2004 Nutrition Services Plan goal of increasing the rate of exclusively breastfed infants to 11% (up 2%). We continue to work towards maintaining that rate every month.

### ● **Revitalizing Nutrition Services**

- A guiding document that sets out goals and objectives for lesson plans and education materials, staff training, networking and building partnerships, administrative and policy support. This documents accomplishments and proposed activities for the coming year in those areas.

## PARTICIPANTS- A review of some of the services WIC provides to help families be healthy

- **Classes:** Group education is offered monthly for all WIC participants addressing good nutrition and physical activity. All classes are taught in 3 different languages (English, Spanish, Chinese) with accompanying handouts in these 3 languages.
  - Examples of FIT WIC classes being taught in the WIC clinics include the following: Portion Sizes, Sharing Healthy Family Meals, Preventing Childhood Obesity, Active Play for Families, Be a Fit Family, Healthier Fast Foods, and Reading Food Labels for Smart Shopping. Other classes offered monthly are the breastfeeding and infant feeding classes which promote breastfeeding and the ‘why/when/how’ in appropriately introducing solids to a baby.
- **Individual Education by WIC Nutrition Assistant (WNA) and Registered Dietitian (RD):** Each individual encounter with a WIC staff person is based on the needs of the participants with an emphasis on healthy eating and physical activity. The newly revised nutrition questionnaires have been designed to facilitate an open ended discussion based on the individual and family needs. The questionnaire also addresses issues such as frequency of eating meals out of the home, TV time, and family activities.
  - Overweight children and many women receive individual nutrition counseling and follow-up visits with a RD. Children > than or equal to the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile (BMI-for-age), based on National Center Health Statistics/CDC age/sex specific growth charts for children 24



months or older and their families receive individualized nutrition counseling to help the child and their families find practical ways to eat healthy and get physically active.

- Children at risk for overweight receive individualized nutrition counseling by a certified WNA with the same nutrition emphasis in efforts of preventing childhood overweight.

- **WIC Farmers' Market Summer Nutrition Program**

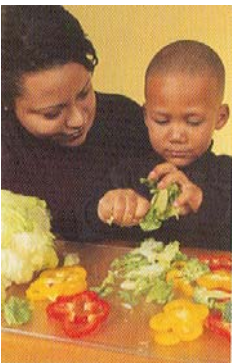
coupons given to participating families encourage them to buy and eat more fruits and vegetables at local farmer's markets. Group education on *Easy Ways to Eat Fruits and Vegetables* or *Eating from the Rainbow* is given to all families participating in this popular seasonal program.



- **Individual Tailored Food Packages:** Every participant receives a food packages tailored to their needs. Each package includes food rich in calcium, iron, protein, and vitamin C. Not only does WIC offer low lactose milk, WIC offers 2%, 1%, and Skim milk choices. WIC cereals are lower in sugar and contain more whole grains than the popularized high sugar brands.

- **Prenatal Women:** WIC offers a food package high in calcium, iron, and protein.
- **Exclusively Breastfeeding Moms:** WIC offers extra milk and beans to support the energy requirements needed for breastfeeding her infant.
- **Infants:** WIC offers infant cereal starting at 5 months of age, with the emphasis that cereal can be introduced when the baby shows signs of readiness to take solid foods. Participants are educated that cereal should always be offered from a bowl and spoon, and never be put in the bottle.
- **Toddlers:** The WIC food package is specifically designed with the toddlers needs in mind and can be tailored at each WIC visit.

- **Bulletin Boards:** WIC staff prepare bulletin boards on nutrition education topics including Iron rich Foods to Prevent Anemia, How to Read a Food Label, Portion Sizes, FIT WIC, and Breastfeeding. Topics are rotated regularly to provide new and current information and are often accompanied with handouts, recipes, and other nutrition education reinforcement items.
- **Nutrition Education Materials:** WIC has numerous written materials as additional resources to educate families on healthy development, growth, eating, easy and fun physical activities, safety, recipes, sample menus, dental health, breastfeeding, as well as ways to prevent lead and mercury poisoning.



## STAFF - Walking their Talk



- The WIC staff is dedicated to staying current with the latest nutrition issues our families are facing, and have attended and conducted numerous trainings on nutrition and physical activity. Those trainings and activities include the following:
  - Monthly staff inservices on various healthy eating, active living topics. These trainings allow the staff to stay current with issues and trends in nutrition and prepare them to offer appropriate nutrition counseling to our 16,000 WIC participants.
  - **FIT WIC:** WIC has long been dedicated to childhood obesity prevention. The FIT WIC program is communicating healthy eating and physical activity to the diverse communities in San Francisco. The goals of FIT WIC are to incorporate physical activity into all aspects of WIC services, provide staff with the tools, support, and information they need to be role models for participants in healthy eating, active living. They strive engage WIC participants in practical, effective, learner-centered educational experiences at WIC. The WIC staff hosts WIC classes and activities on how to incorporate physical activity and good nutrition into our busy lives.
  - *Supporting WIC Families and Staff*, a Train the Trainer workshop for Childhood Obesity Prevention and sponsored by the California WIC Program, Nutrition Education Unit. July 17, 2003
  - *FIT WIC: Active Play for Families* sponsored by the California WIC Program, Nutrition Education Unit and the SPARK Programs. August 2003
  - Nutrition Services All Staff meeting: A full day of training on FIT WIC principles and practices for 50 DPH nutrition services staff. Staff developed strategies and participated in activities to help our families keep moving and have fun staying active. This training was conducted by the staff who attended the above listed Train the Trainer workshops. December 2003
  - Presentation and sharing session on FIT WIC at the Child Nutrition Council Meeting. March 11, 2004
  - National WIC Association Annual Meeting “*Food and Fitness Striving for a Healthy Balance*” April 2004
  - Maternal and Child Health All Staff Meeting: This 4 hour training highlighted many of the FIT WIC principles and practices (including a beach ball give away) for all 100+ MCH staff. Staff were updated on the effects of food on our mood and also participated at a physical activity break.
  - Article printed in the California WIC Association newsletter *WIC Watch* (“*San Francisco WIC and California Nutrition Network: A Team at the Farmer’s Market,*” Winter 2004 Page 8) about the benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables as a daily healthy routine.
  - MCAH Newsletter article submission about easy and fun activities (based on FIT WIC ideas) to keep your child physically active. Summer 2004 issue
- **WIC Walks the Talk:** The WIC staff have been “walking their physical activity talk” for almost two years now by participating in a group physical activity walking program: *WIC Walks the Talk*. We have collectively walked over 16,121 miles around the globe hitting spots such as Washington, D.C., Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Athens, Greece, and Tibet, China. We are also participating in the statewide “Walk to the Moon” hosted by the California WIC Association.
- Viewing & Discussion of: *Supersize Me* by Morgan Spurlock, *Diet Wars* (Frontline PBS), Be Active as A Family participant video



- Physical Activity Breaks at in-services (*Fuel Up, Lift Off* fitness video, dancing to “5-a-day” song, beach ball activities, dance lessons)
- San Francisco’s WIC Walks the Talk program presented at the California WIC Association Annual Conference *Changing WIC, Changing Lives* April 2005
- Child Exercise and activity book reviews written by Julie Engberg, RD in the California WIC Association’s newsletter *WIC Watch* (Spring 2005 Conference Edition). Book reviews include these titles: 365 Activities for Fitness, Food, and Fun for the Whole Family by Julia E. Sweet, Real Kids Come in All Sizes by Kathy Kater, and Fit Kids! The Complete Shape-up Program from Birth through High School by Kenneth H. Cooper, MD.
- For staff trainings and events, we serve healthy food & beverage options at breaks. For staff potlucks, staff is encouraged to bring and eat healthy lunches, snacks, and beverages.
- **Finding the Teacher Within:** San Francisco WIC was chosen by the California State WIC program to participate in a special nutrition education project. In March 2004, the WIC staff participated in a 2 day training called *Finding the Teacher Within*. The purpose of this training is to improve nutrition education by using “learner-centered” approaches that encourage the WIC participants to actively participate in the learning process. The focus is on providing education that appeals to participants, is relevant to their needs, and engages them in a meaningful way. Using these “learner-centered” principles and practices, the San Francisco WIC program is providing innovative and dynamic methods of nutrition education and obesity prevention.
- **Motivational Interviewing:** Steven Malcolm Berg-Smith, MS, worked extensively with the WIC staff on this client-centered, directive counseling method for enhancing intrinsic motivation for change by exploring and resolving ambivalence. This in depth training helped equip the WIC staff on ways to encourage participants to make their own behavioral changes to improve their health and nutrition. September 23, 2004. Follow-up 3-Day Training on Motivational Interviewing on June 20-22, 2005.

**BE ACTIVE**

Better Breathing  
Eye/hand coordination

A way to build strong bones  
Control weight & stress  
To reduce health problems  
Improve self-esteem  
Very fun!  
Energizing

CCSF WIC