



WIC NEWS

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Special Supplemental Nutrition Program
for Women, Infants, and Children

June 2022

DIRECTOR UPDATE

As we "Spring Forward" this year with great momentum and positivity, let's do so by continuing to provide the best customer care to each of the clients that we serve daily.

In the midst of the pandemic, the significant rise in productivity from all of you was massive, which has helped us achieve our targeted goals. I am extremely proud of your hard work and diligence, and we navigated through tough and uncertain waters.

I want to thank all of you for persevering yet again through the recent Abbott Laboratories formula recall. It is not lost upon me that many of you faced a lot of frustration and stressful moments while trying to assist clients with the challenges of obtaining formula. Thank you for staying the course and treating each client delicately while offering alternative solutions until this situation is resolved. I assure you that my team and I are working closely with Abbott Laboratories and USDA to remedy this unfortunate situation as quickly as possible.

On a lighter note, I would like to thank all of you who attended the 2022 Michigan WIC Training & Educational Virtual Conference on May 4-5. What an outstanding job done by our NPE TEC (Training, Evaluation and Compliance) Team spearheaded by Gloria Zunker and Kaitlin Skwir! The speakers were phenomenal, and the Conference offered a vast array of great training and educational opportunities that each of us can utilize in our efforts to continue to "Partner in Excellence."

It's that time again! We are excited that Project Fresh redemption began on June 1 and runs through October 31. Clients will receive \$25 in coupons that can be redeemed for locally grown unprepared fruits and vegetables only at authorized farmers markets or roadside stands. Special shout out to Pam Gove, Constance Godinez and Michelle Moore for all of your hard work in making sure Project Fresh runs smoothly.

Amy Thompson and the team will continue to host our Local Agency Coordinator calls and small groups to provide State updates and hear issues and/or concerns from each of you.

I would like to conclude by saying that each of you has shown true dedication and determination. Without your support, the WIC program would not be the successful program that it is. WIC is truly graced with employees like you. A massive thank you to each one of you!

Warm Regards,

Christina Herring-Johnson, WIC Director

Nutrition 101

WIC Meals of the Month

by Sidney Przystup, Michigan State University Dietetic Intern

How do you tackle the age-old question of *What's for dinner tonight?* If you're looking for new ideas like so many of us, look no further than this cool new resource on WIC Works called *Meals of the Month*. Each month, *Meals of the Month* focuses on a different nutrient, providing some information about the nutrient as well as meal ideas and recipes using approved WIC foods. Incorporating some fresh and new ideas may not only help you and your family break out of a dinner rut – but you can share this resource with your clients too, to help improve their health and intake of essential nutrients.

Choosing meals can be difficult and time-consuming. Then, there are so many different sites and resources to find recipes. Plus, typically it's just the recipes and not how they might benefit your family's or clients' nutrition. *Meals of the Month* wraps all this into one site!

Currently, there's an index of more than 25 nutrients, including folate, iron, protein, and many more. As WIC staff, we likely know and appreciate the importance of iron for so many reasons, including preventing and reducing lead absorption. Children are especially at risk for lead exposure throughout their early growth and development, which can cause issues with brain development and function. One can lower the chances of lead absorption by eating foods containing iron and vitamin C. Vitamin C also helps iron be absorbed into the body, which also helps prevent lead absorption. One quick, easy, delicious and fun recipe packed with iron and vitamin C found in *Meals of the Month* is 'Cowboy Caviar'. Only 15-minute prep time using WIC foods, including beans, peppers, corn and onions. Check out the recipe below!

Again, if you or your clients are looking for a quick and easy recipe resource to get more essential nutrients into your meals, look no further than *Meals of the Month*. Everyone can benefit from a balanced healthy diet and *Meals of the Month* can help you get there.



Image source: <https://www.homemadeinterest.com/easy-cowboy-caviar/>

Cowboy Caviar

Makes: 15 1/3 cups

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 15.5 oz black beans (canned, no salt added, rinsed and drained)
- 15.5 oz pinto beans (canned, no salt added, rinsed and drained)
- 15.5 oz chickpeas (canned, no salt added, rinsed and drained)
- 15.5 oz corn (canned, no salt added, rinsed and drained)
- 4 oz can of green chiles
- 1 red pepper (small and chopped)
- 1 green pepper (small and chopped)
- 1 red onion (small and chopped)
- 5 stalks of celery (chopped)
- 3 cloves of garlic chopped
- ¾ cup olive oil
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Add all canned goods and chopped ingredients into a bowl. Then add oil and vinegar.
2. Stir everything together. Be sure to taste for seasoning!
3. Let sit in the fridge for at least 30 minutes or overnight to let the flavors come together.
4. Enjoy!

Training, Evaluation & Compliance (TEC) Corner

The TEC unit is in the process of planning trainings for the next fiscal year.

[Coordinators may click here to request a training.](#)

We always want to provide great service to our clients. But when they are upset, what should we do? Below are a few best practices to use when working with clients:

H – Hear Them Out

- Be silent and let the client express emotions, feelings, and concerns.
- Take a deep breath and focus on the client's words and the feelings behind them. Don't withdraw to avoid the unpleasant nature of the situation.
- Show you are listening by nodding your head or making a verbal acknowledgment.
- Use nonverbal behavior, such as leaning forward, to show you understand and care.

E – Empathize

- Rather than urging the client to calm down, use empathy to acknowledge the client's feelings and defuse his or her anger.
- Use the Empathy Key Principle to address the facts of the situation and the client's feelings: "I can understand why you're frustrated."

A – Apologize

- "I'm sorry that this happened." "I apologize for the inconvenience." "I'm sorry this upset you."
- Keep your tone neutral to avoid being perceived as sarcastic or insincere.
- Acknowledge your desire to make things right: "Let me take care of this for you."

T – Take Responsibility for the Action

Local Agency Highlights

DHD #10

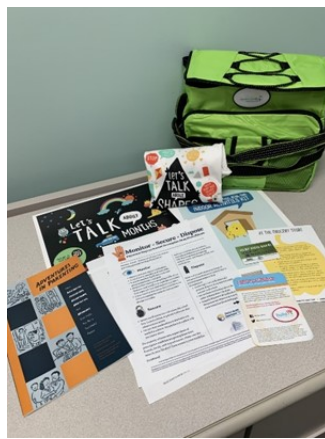
DHD #10 partnered with the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) and the Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC) in Wexford, Missaukee, and Manistee counties to put together bags of goodies to be given to clients when they come in for their WIC appointments. The bags contain items like blankets, cups, T-shirts and books!



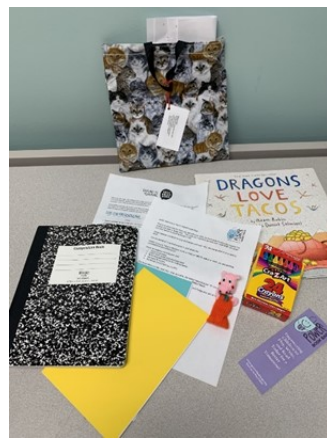
Newborn Appointment



1-Year Appointment



2-Year Appointment



3-Year Appointment

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Update

As an outcome of the WIC DEI Action Plan, the WIC DEI Committee has launched the following social determinants of health (SDOH) initiatives in collaboration with WIC staff, managers and leadership to advance the WIC Division's intentional commitment to eliminate systemic racism and promote an equitable and inclusive culture at Michigan WIC.

WIC SDOH Initiatives

Breastfeeding Supporters of Color Network

Goals & Objectives:

A statewide initiative focused on creating a safe space for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) WIC Breastfeeding Peer-Counselors, Lactation Consultants, and WIC staff that support breastfeeding in Michigan to uplift existing challenges in the breastfeeding space as professionals, and address barriers for breastfeeding WIC clients from communities of color to receive quality care that is equitable and culturally responsive.

Vendor Advisory Council (VAC)

Goals & Objectives:

- Receive vendor feedback on WIC policies.
- Gain insight into vendor barriers to improve service to WIC participants.
- Develop and improve marketing and promotion and retention materials.
- Develop and improve training tools.
- Address food access and security needs.
- Advance Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Racial Equity efforts.

We are also exploring best practices to establish a statewide WIC Client Advisory Council to inform changes in WIC programming and policies by receiving direct feedback from WIC clients, and build a stronger relationship with WIC clients to identify equitable solution-based approaches focusing on the following core objectives:

- Remove barriers to accessing WIC benefits and services.
- Increase WIC client retention in the state.
- Advance health equity and address SDOH needs.

Key Accomplishments

In the first quarter of this year, Michigan WIC achieved the following accomplishments:

- Held a virtual kick-off meeting to celebrate the launch of the VAC. The event brought together State staff, WIC Director Christina-Herring Johnson, to provide remarks, and a diverse group of vendors from large corporate to small independent stores representing the Upper Peninsula and Lower Peninsula demographically. Our VAC members have a wide range of experience serving Michigan WIC clients from 3-20 years, and most agreed their favorite thing about being a WIC vendor was helping the clients and sharing MI-WIC benefits.
- In April, the VAC State Steering Committee held the first vendor quarterly call for WIC vendors to raise issues shared by clients and employees, and for the State agency to effectively deliver program updates to all WIC vendors, including small independent stores that serve rural and marginalized communities in Michigan.
- Established a DEI Review Committee to develop standard operating procedures for the WIC Division to review.

Upcoming Events

- Michigan WIC will be hosting our 2022 WIC Black Breastfeeding Week Celebration which will be a live webcast held on Monday, August 29 at 2-3 p.m. The event will highlight the importance of Black Breastfeeding Week and how the WIC community can collaborate with healthcare providers to improve breastfeeding outcomes for Black families.

We are excited to announce our special guest speaker will be Dr. Kimberlydawn Wisdom, Senior Vice President of Community Health Equity and Chief Wellness and Diversity Officer at Henry Ford Health.

Please save the date!

Next Steps

The DEI Committee is looking forward to working with our local agencies to advance health equity and address social determinants of health needs within our WIC community. In preparation for the WIC Coordinator Summit this fall, we would like to learn more about what your local agency is doing to promote diversity, equity and inclusion at WIC by sharing your feedback in response to the questions below.

1. What DEI initiatives are you currently working on to improve your workplace culture and/or the WIC client experience?
2. What guidance/resources would be useful from the DEI Committee to support your DEI efforts at your local agency?

Please submit your responses via email to Myra Lee Fowler at LeeFowlerM@michigan.gov.

Sincerely,

Myra Lee Fowler

Social Determinants of Health Policy Analyst, WIC Division

DEI Committee Chair

MDHHS Update

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services will host three Virtual Baby Fairs this June. The Baby Fairs will provide information and resources to new and expectant Michigan families. Participating programs include WIC, Infant Safe Sleep, MIHP, Newborn Screening, and Immunizations, among others.

Participants will have a choice of three date options and will have opportunities during all events to ask questions of program representatives.

[Interested clients may register here.](#)

WIC Staff Celebrations



Jackson

Jackson County Health Department has had a big year with lots to celebrate!

- ◇ Congratulations to Laura Marks on her marriage! The beautiful wedding took place on October 30, 2021. (left image)
- ◇ Julie Moore became a foster mom to her first child, a 2-year-old boy, in October 2021. She also has an almost 4-year-old little man that is keeping her busy!
- ◇ Amanda Marsh started a new weight loss journey in September 2021 and has lost 83 pounds to date!
- ◇ Tracy Lackey has a high school senior graduating this year, her baby boy Camren.
- ◇ Jackson has also brought on seven new staff in the past year! Welcome Laura, Dani, Allie, Allie Jo, Samantha, Davina and Paulina! They are still going strong!

Grand Traverse



Congratulations to Becca Noonan on the birth of Clare Noonan, born October 8, 2021!



Congratulations to Cindy Purvis on the birth of Madelyn Purvis, born November 3, 2021!

Muskegon



Congratulations to Tia McCormick of Muskegon County on the birth of Isla, born November 17, 2021! Tia is a CPA who is still exclusively breastfeeding and working full-time!

Macomb

Angela Ballor, RD retired from the Macomb County WIC Program in June 2021 after a long career in public health nutrition. Angela and Martha Brooks, pictured here, graduated from the same dietetics class in 1985 and both started working for the WIC program in Detroit in 1986. Angela went on to work with Head Start for a number of years, and then eventually made her way back to WIC in Wayne County and then Macomb County. Angela's kind and gentle nature will be missed. She will be spending lots of time in her garden and with her grandchildren.



WIC Staff Celebrations

Saginaw

- ◇ Porche Spiller delivered a baby boy, Knoah, on March 14, 2021, and he is exclusively breastfed! Porche is Saginaw's Senior Breastfeeding Peer Counselor.
- ◇ Ashley McCardle delivered a baby boy, Coleson, on August 14, 2021, and he is also exclusively breastfed! Ashley is Saginaw's newest Breastfeeding Peer Counselor.
- ◇ Ashley Martin's daughter Adalyn, 15 years old, played saxophone with the Freeland Marching Band at Disney World in March of 2022. Ashley serves as a Clerk/Tech.
- ◇ Susan Olguin RD, IBCLC, one of Saginaw's CPAs, was promoted to WIC Coordinator. Susan's daughter Amber graduated high school and is attending Michigan State University. Go Green! Go White!



State Agency

Michele Abbruzzese's daughter, Lauren, recently received two student leadership awards from the University of Michigan-Dearborn where she is studying biomedical engineering. She also got a job on-the-spot as a Meijer pharmacy technician and will be working there during summer break. Michele serves as the NPE section secretary.



Fun Stuff

An unexpected meeting and friendly/feisty competition took place between the daughters of Summer Korponic (ACC) and Tara Fischer (State Office) at a basketball tournament in March. Summer's daughter Jade (#5 in black/red) and her team came out the winner in this battle, while Tara's daughter Annika (#5 in white) is looking forward to a rematch, though maybe next time on the soccer field.

State Consultant Joyce Bryant shares this sweet photo taken during a trip to Marquette.



STATE UPDATES - E-NOTICE RECAP

Policies and Procedures:

- #2022-65: WIC Coordinator Connections Call 2/23/22 Meeting Minutes – See E-Notice attachments for minutes, chat record, and slide deck.
- #2022-74: Revised WIC Consultant Assignments – See E-Notice attachment for details.
- #2022-87: Revised Policy 3.03 Dual Participation – [Access the updated policy here.](#)
- #2022-104: CVB Extension Information – Increased CVB extended through September 30, 2022.
- #2022-119: Destruction of WIC Records – See E-Notice for Details.
- #2022-125: WIC Coordinator Connections Call 3/16/22 Meeting Minutes – See E-Notice attachments for minutes, chat record, and slide deck.
- #2022-142: MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) Change in Blood Lead Filter Paper Specimens – See E-Notice for details.

Nutrition:

- #2022-48: Emergent Situation - Abbott Formula Recall – [Access formula recall information here.](#) Refer to subsequent E-Notices with the same title, numbered sequentially, for additional formula recall information.
- #2022-72: Client Blast Messages - Reminder to Redeem CVB Benefits – Blast messages sent 3/1/22.
- #2022-100: Nutrition Education Workgroup Follow-up Resources + Webinar Registration + Survey Feedback Requested by Friday 3/25 COB – See E-Notice and attachments for details.
- #2022-128: Register for April 21 webinar: Michigan WIC and the wichealth Difference – [Access the recorded webcast in the Nutrition Education subfolder of the WIC Webcast Catalog.](#)

Vendor:

- #2022-130: Spring 2022 WIC Vendor Newsletter – [Access the newsletter on the WIC Vendor Website.](#)

Breastfeeding:

- #2022-85: Breastfeeding: Relactation and milk sharing resources, LCE & HUG Your Baby training, Work Group – See E-Notice for details.
- #2022-89: Breastfeeding Connections and (more) Relactation Resources – [Access the newsletter here.](#)
- #2022-146: Free Breastfeeding Training Opportunity, Black Breastfeeding Week Webcast Registration & Peer Update – See E-Notice for details.

Promotion and Retention:

- #2022-44: National WIC Association Quarter 1 Social Media Content – See E-Notice attachments for social media content, including some that may be used at any time.
- #2022-77: March WIC News – [Access the newsletter here.](#)
- #2022-126: April 2022 National WIC Association Social Media Content – See E-Notice attachments for social media content, including some that may be used at any time.

Events:

- #2022-32: Coordinator Summit 2022 – Virtual Announcement – The 2022 WIC Coordinator Summit will take place virtually on October 25-26.
- #2022-70: Addressing Burnout - COVID Related Distress Webcast March 17 – [Access recorded training in the Other Public Health Topics of Interest subfolder of the WIC Webcast Catalog.](#)

STATE UPDATES - E-NOTICE RECAP

Legislation and Partner Updates:

#2022-43: 2022 State of WIC Report – [Access the report here.](#)

#2022-80: Cultivating Joy – [Access video series created by Michigan's Stay Well Team here.](#)

#2022-97: Miscellaneous Updates - Immunizations Messaging, Social Media Content and NWA – See E-Notice and attachment for details.

#2022-112: Statewide Update: Afghan Placement Assistance – [Access report here.](#)

#2022-129: USDA I Speak Statements and Translators Resource List – See E-Notice and attachments for details.

#2022-135: National Public Health Emergency Extension – Approved WIC waivers will continue through at least mid-October 2022.

#2022-149: 2022 Eat Safe Fish Guides – [Access Eat Safe Fish Guides here.](#)

Data and Systems:

#2022-34: WIC Client Connect Platform Training – [Access recorded training in the Administrative Tasks/Operations subfolder of the WIC Webcast Catalog.](#)

#2022-37: Deduplicated Enrollment Report for CY 2021 and FY 2021 by Service – Reports attached to E-Notice.

#2022-66: MI-WIC Blast Message Guidance – See E-Notice for comprehensive blast message guidance and troubleshooting.

#2022-141: MDHHS-WIC Website Transition 4/22/22 – Please update bookmarks.

Breastfeeding Update

Out with the old, in with the new!

Have you been thinking lately about refreshing your agency's breastfeeding handouts and online resources? If so, we have exciting new resources to share with you!

For resources available online, check out the new and improved [Client Resources](#) section of the MDHHS WIC Providers website. You can find free, printable materials such as Ready, Set, Baby, USDA breastfeeding resources and the Coffective checklist and handout. Many of these resources can be printed or downloaded in multiple languages. You can also find links to websites that could be easily texted or emailed to clients, such as USDA WIC Breastfeeding, Kelly Mom and Milk Mob. There are many useful links to various educational videos for paced bottle feeding, baby feeding cues, milk supply, latches and holds and much more! You can even find contact information for the Infant Risk Center, as well as ideas for parent-friendly phone apps.

Many agencies are beginning their preparations to bring clients back into the office for appointments. If you feel the breastfeeding education in your filing cabinets is a bit outdated, check out the recently updated [Michigan WIC Client Resource List](#) for new and fresh resources! If you have been assigned the E-forms role in MI-WIC and are unsure of how to order publications, you may be interested in this instruction [guide](#).

If you have questions or suggestions regarding client education resources, contact Marji Cyrul at cyrulm@michigan.gov or Hanna Thelen at thelenh1@michigan.gov.

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Questions/Comments
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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

UPCOMING EVENTS/TRAININGS/WORKGROUPS

June

9: Nutrition Ed Workgroup
14: Lab
15: Anthro
21-23: BF Basics
29: Advanced CPA

July

15: BF Workgroup

August

3-4: Clerical
9: Lab
10: Anthro
17-18: CPA
18: Clerk/Tech Workgroup
29: Black BF Week Celebration

*All events, trainings, and workgroups will be conducted virtually until further notice.
Additionally, training dates are sometimes adjusted. Please be sure to verify training
information on MPHI's [WIC Events Calendar](#), as this list may not reflect the final schedule.

Visit MPHI to sign up for trainings!

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