A hallmark of the WIC program is the dedication, passion, and tenacity of staff to serve families in need. Despite being a program with many proven outcomes, at times in WIC’s history services were challenged or families and communities experienced greater outside stresses. Such a time is upon us. For nearly five years we have experienced declining participation, and in recent months greater uncertainty as proposed changes to federal strategies addressing health care, poverty and immigration have rocked communities.

What should we do? First, stay engaged and innovate! Implement practices that invite and engage all eligible families to your agency. This will require modernizing in some areas and working in new ways. Networking with local, state and national colleagues, or dialoguing with health care or tech industries for new ways to serve our users, has never been more important. Conference is a great place to do this!

Second, share widely WIC’s proven return on investment for all Americans. Everyday, in WIC clinics across the nation, employees witness the lasting impact of WIC benefits and services on the lives of mothers, their children and families. With this ability to connect with community members, we have a great responsibility and opportunity. Collect and share these stories with diverse local and state organizations. Don’t stop there! Reach out to state and federal decision makers to share the WIC story.

We talk about grit and resilience when it comes to survival for low-income families, and we need to call upon those strengths and capacities among ourselves right now. Committing to finding new ways to serve families will be invigorating. Representing the program as a solid investment will be a testimony to your own power.

As we gather for our 25th Annual Conference & Trade Show, remember: We will stand strong together, because WIC Works for US!
TWO PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS provide continuing education on Sunday to inspire and update your professional practice:

- **Updates in Breastfeeding Care Practice with Laurel Wilson, IBCLC, CLE® CCCE, CLD, of MotherJourney** exploring hot topics in breastfeeding support, including Epigenetics, Social Media, and Milk Sharing, and **Nancy Wight, MD, IBCLC, FABM, FAAP, of Sharp HealthCare Lactation Services** covering In-Hospital and Post-Discharge Nutrition for the NICU Infant

- **Motivational Interviewing Skills Update with Dawn Clifford, PhD, RD, California State University, Chico, associate professor and co-author of Motivational Interviewing in Nutrition and Fitness**

PLENARY SPEAKERS share their energy and expertise with us on Monday and Wednesday mornings:

- **Dr. Fatima Cody Stanford**, Harvard Medical School, brings us the latest research on Obesity, Breastfeeding & Interconception Health.


- Local agency staff members **Valerie Ward**, PHFE WIC, and **Reem Salameh**, American Red Cross WIC, will share their unique stories to illustrate why WIC Works for US.

- **Jennifer Byrne**, California Perinatal Oral Health Quality Improvement Project, will get us smiling as we learn about WIC’s Critical Role in the Oral Health Plan.

- **Bruce Thao**, LIT Consulting, will provide inspiration and insight to help send us back into the work world.

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**Welcome to the 25th Annual CWA Conference and Trade Show!**

WIC is approaching a half century of service in local communities across America, helping young families in need get established. Besides providing healthy foods, nutrition and breastfeeding support, and referrals to critical services, WIC is an integral partner — with grocers, food manufacturers, health providers and community organizations — supporting local economies, improving health outcomes and ensuring our children have a successful start in school. Join us as we learn together, network and celebrate our Silver Anniversary!
FOUR CONCURRENT WORKSHOP TRACKS, planned by a dedicated committee of your peers, are designed to bring you professional renewal and continuing education in nutrition, lactation, leadership, wellness, diversity, strategic collaboration, and program innovation:

1. Begin Early to Nurture Child Health
2. Lead & Manage to Promote Wellness
3. Embrace Challenges to Strengthen Families
4. Innovate & Collaborate to Advance WIC

Conference attendees can engage with top speakers on a variety of subjects. Here are just a few:

- Lisa Marasco, on breastfeeding and insulin dysregulation and Jane Heinig, on Baby Behavior for toddlers
- Rob Knight, on the human microbiome and infant feeding plus Patricia Novak, on nutrition intervention in autism
- John Parker, on successful customer service and Dr. Linda Reid Chassiakos, on media’s impact on young minds
- Helena Vissing, on pregnancy loss/neonatal death and a panel of collaborators, on maternal mental health

Plus more insights from our pre-conference and plenary presenters and panels, on self-care, father-friendly strategies, communicating across languages & cultures, digital outreach, and client retention technologies.

Whichever workshops you choose, be sure and take back to your colleagues new knowledge, tools, and best practices for continuing your work together to collaborate and innovate, support diversity, and nurture wellness among coworkers and the families you serve.

TRADE SHOW & EXHIBITS, featuring over 50 booths, give you a chance to see, feel, taste, and try out new foods, clinical products, and publications from industry reps. You can also visit our farmers’ market or learn about key government programs and resources and nonprofit services, all while networking with your colleagues and partners. And the Exhibitor Scavenger Hunt will keep you moving and talking!

Don’t forget to connect with your WIC peers at Local Agency Sharing Exhibits, concurrent with the Trade Show, and learn about wellness, innovative service models, and other ways to improve your program.

SPECIAL EVENTS
Our second annual Movie Night on Tuesday evening will be a great chance to gather with colleagues to watch The Dark Side of the Full Moon, then discuss the realities and impacts of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders portrayed in the film. Come ready to listen, ponder, and ask questions. Continuing education credit – plus snacks to hold you until dinner - are provided.

Many of you practice WIC Worksite Wellness at your own worksites, and keeping fit and alert at the conference should be no different. Rise and shine with group exercise each morning, or use the self-paced Workout Room any time. All will Move to the Groove during Wednesday’s plenary break.

This year’s CWA Go! Photo Scavenger Hunt will keep local agency teams moving throughout the conference to capture and share fun photos! Finally, we look forward to honoring several local agencies recertified this year as Well WIC Worksites.

NEXT STEPS: If you couldn’t join us this year, visit the CWA conference web page to download select presentation materials, available only through June. Then, plan to join us at the 2018 Annual Conference & Trade Show, April 29-May 2, 2018. Once again we’ll be at the Town & Country Resort in San Diego for more great education, networking, and recharging!
New Materials for You

CWA recently released a number of issue briefs and resources and provided a webinar series addressing WIC modernization and provision of nutrition preventive services. Explore them and more on our updated Engaging WIC Families web pages here: http://www.calwic.org/focus-areas/engaging-wic-families.

MyWIC: Updating WIC for a New Generation looks at the needs and expectations of millennial mothers and families and provides recommendations for program and benefits modifications to serve the needs of eligible participants.

Foreground to Horizon: Opportunities for WIC’s Next Half Century: Like any business, WIC must adapt to stay valuable and relevant. This issue brief makes recommendations at the local, state and federal levels, including short and long term opportunities, which could ensure WIC remains the vibrant program that it is.

Nutrition Preventive Services: Existing Gaps in a Critical ACA Benefit: While the future of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is being determined, provision of nutrition counseling could very well remain a health plan benefit. Following an in-depth study, CWA provided a webinar on the status of nutrition counseling benefits; you’ll find materials at http://www.calwic.org/focus-areas/wic-public-health-a-health-care-reform.

Also available is an online platform that can be used as a presentation or teaching tool. It includes slideshows on WIC program background, benefits and services; breastfeeding and nutrition counseling services; and resources related to health care reform. The platform can be adapted to individual needs. The large file can be obtained by contacting CWA.

2016 Hospital Breastfeeding Report & Fact Sheets

Released last October (but after our Fall WIC Watch went to press), the 2016 California Hospital Breastfeeding Report plus State and County Fact Sheets are available on the CWA website.

We can be very proud that across California more hospitals are Baby Friendly or adopting comprehensive breastfeeding policies and practices! Working collectively, hospitals, WIC agencies, and community health centers are building stronger continuums of care.

The 2016 report, Using Data to Drive Change, highlights ways the data have been used for improvement strategies over time and identifies gaps or lack of coordination in collecting data.

We are most fortunate that California Department of Public Health collects in-hospital breastfeeding data. The report identifies pre-natal and postpartum data as areas for improvement, along with standardized measures and outcomes including collection by health plans and through electronic medical records.

Kudos to the advocates and health providers who use these materials in their communities to improve maternity care practices and breastfeeding outcomes! For the reports and related information, visit http://www.calwic.org/focus-areas/breastfeeding/339.

New WIC Directors

CWA is excited to be working with these Directors who are new to their positions or have recently moved to a new agency. Be sure to make them feel welcome if you see them at Conference or regional meetings!

Butte County – Lisa Webster
San Mateo County – Ankita Tandel
San Ysidro Health Center – Rebecca Gills
Tehama County Health Services Agency – Ashley Cizek
**Events on the Horizon....**

**Summer Regional Trainings**
Coming to a WIC Training Center near you this summer: learning opportunities for use of farmers’ markets and hot topics in breastfeeding! Summer trainings will provide continuing education units for lactation, nutrition and nursing. Trainings will be scheduled for July-September. Want the training in your region? Let CWA know ASAP: lworkman@calwic.org.

**Fall Education Day**
Plan to work alongside your colleagues in MCAH for the Fall Education Day; location coming soon for this annual October event! This is a very popular day of learning and networking on topics of interest to both WIC and MCAH providers – earn continuing education, too!

**Capitol Education Day**
Back-to-back with Fall Education Day is Capitol Education Day, a time for visiting our state legislators to share WIC program education. This exciting, high-energy day brings out the pride we have for the important services and support WIC provides for families in need.

**Because Every Child Deserves the Best Nutrition**
WIC and Medela share a mutual commitment to breastfeeding because breast milk provides important protection and the best nutrition for every child. Working together, we can provide the healthiest choice in nutrition.

www.medela.com 1.800.435.8316

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www.calwic.org
WIC Leadership in DC!

This time of great transition and uncertainty did not daunt 38 California WIC Ambassadors as they visited all Congressional representatives last month in Washington DC to provide WIC program education. After attendees participated in the annual National WIC Association DC Leadership Conference to hear federal updates — on the budget, ACA, new WIC food package report, and more — they stormed Capitol Hill to tell the WIC story. With plenty of convincing data, facts and family stories, they easily described how WIC works and put a human face to families in need.

With newly elected representatives, the work is just starting! All Congressional offices need to be invited by local agencies to visit local WIC clinics. Let’s make it 55 in 25: all 55 California representatives or their staff visit a local agency in the next 25 weeks, or by October 1. The first step is to contact and invite your representative; find tips at http://www.calwic.org/storage/documents/ambass/four_easy_steps.pdf and ask Sarah at CWA for assistance: sdiaz@calwic.org.

State Policy Advocacy & Bill Updates

WIC Linkages: CWA will continue to advocate for WIC to electronically link to health and social services. These linkages, although badly needed, are quite challenging from the data and technology perspectives. As participants of the Horizontal Integration workgroup, which includes state staff, CWA, and stakeholder groups, WIC is included in ongoing discussions.

Breastfeeding Month Resolution: Working with the California Breastfeeding Coalition, CWA will co-sponsor a Resolution to annually recognize August as World Breastfeeding Month.

State Bills: CWA will be supporting a number of bills addressing relevant issues, including:

- Warnings on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Paid family leave to bond with a child within one year of the child’s birth, adoption, or foster care placement
- Home visiting program for CalWORKS
- Nutrition, including using Medi-Cal to enroll children in school lunch
- School lunch debt assistance
- Fund for CalFresh for emergencies.

Visit our state policy webpage for an update on our bill list.
The stories you hear and feedback you receive from WIC families are very valuable. Sharing these stories with decision makers helps tremendously in educating them about the positive impact WIC has in their constituent communities: not just healthy foods and breastfeeding and nutrition counseling, but support for military families, revenue for local businesses, parenting education, connecting families with social services, preparing kids for school, ...and the list goes on.

We need your help with collecting and sharing more stories, and CWA’s **WIC Works for US Campaign** provides a number of resources to help you. Please visit [http://www.calwic.org/policy-center/wic-works-for-us-campaign](http://www.calwic.org/policy-center/wic-works-for-us-campaign) and discover some great tools.

- CWA provided a workshop while in DC and at the CWA Annual Conference on creating video stories; the presentation, sample videos, and other information are on the campaign webpage.
- Sample audio and video stories on this page can provide inspiration.
- A new WIC storybook, jointly produced by Moms Rising, NWA and CWA, features stories from across the US.

All these stories help make WIC real for those less familiar with the program. They put a face to WIC, highlighting issues such as:

- Healthy food access in times of food insecurity
- Breastfeeding support that saved a baby’s life or bolster a mom’s confidence
- Therapeutic formula for special needs children
- Critical support in times of crisis, and more.

It’s also important to hear about people who used WIC in a time of need and now are thriving on their own. We need all these stories, and they are easy to collect in writing, audio, or video format.

Whether you help clients tell their stories or tell your own, we hope you’ll find your voice and get involved! If you have questions about story collection, Sarah Diaz can help: [sdiaz@calwic.org](mailto:sdiaz@calwic.org).
Raptor Provides Easy Access to Useful Data Reports

What’s the difference between exclusive and partial breastfeeding rates in my agency? What staffing changes are needed to meet the language needs of participating families at my WIC center? Is our recent policy change impacting participation?

Raptor, a web-based software application developed by the Public Health Foundation Enterprises, Inc. (PHFE) WIC Program, can help answer these questions for your agency. Already used by 51 California WIC agencies, Raptor is a caseload reporting system which makes over 400 reports based on a local WIC agency’s MIS data quickly available, with no need to learn complicated query tools.

With just five minutes of training, you can be learning more about your local agency and exploring all these reports. Raptor allows you to easily…

- monitor your caseload performance
- evaluate the impact of changes to your procedures and policies
- look at trends
- compare performance between different WIC sites or centers
- run audit reports for quality assurance

... and more. This can help with staffing and other management decisions, and makes for a cleaner State program-monitoring visit. Did we mention it only requires five minutes of training?

Every report allows your local agency to export the underlying data to Excel® for further analysis and reporting. Many of the reports also allow you to export additional details about participants, which can support easier contact with clients via email, text, or voice messages, or facilitate better training of staff, for example.

The current Raptor database contains information on over one million WIC participants per month. Some reports allow you to compare your agency’s performance against other local agencies (which remain anonymous). This helps you understand where you might be excelling or where you may need improvements.
2. Enrollment Data such as Enrollment of New Families:

3. Audit of Missing Blood Work Holds - This is a count of all the individuals in the system with a missing blood work HOLD that should have a blood work hold for one particular WIC Center:

4. Workload by Hour - Family Counts (In Person):

These are just snapshots of the many reports available. Here's what some current Raptor users have to say:

"Raptor is a great tool that complements and verifies the data we pull from the State WIX database. ...when some of the data fields are not available to local agencies through WIX, we are fortunate that we can extract the data we need from Raptor." — LA Biomed WIC Program

"I rely on it (Raptor) for breastfeeding reports." — Planned Parenthood WIC Program

"I enjoy using Raptor because it is very user-friendly. The reports are easy to read and provide valuable data, to track/compare trends within our WIC participants." — Planned Parenthood WIC Program

The subscription process includes a simple Memorandum of Understanding between PHFE WIC and the local agency that assures the confidentiality of the data, as well as informing CDPH/State WIC that the local agency approves the monthly release of its data to PHFE/Raptor. The subscription also requires a nominal annual fee based on caseload.

To subscribe to Raptor, contact the Raptor Coordinator, Samar McGregor, at samar@phfewic.org or (626) 856-6650. For more information about Raptor, please contact Mike Whaley at mikew@phfewic.org or Samar McGregor at samar@phfewic.org.
Lactation Leadership: One Person Makes a Difference!

Patients in San Diego served by Neighborhood Healthcare can count on receiving excellent lactation support. This effort, while collaborative, has been also been part of the leadership of Leslie Munoz, International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC). Reaching beyond just her own career aspirations to become an IBCLC, Leslie understood the importance of establishing lactation practices and policies in the health center.

In her role as clinic lactation consultant, Leslie grew the lactation support for patients – and employees — from Escondido to El Cajon and Temecula health centers. Through her work with Laurelle Hiroshige and Kim Speckhahn, the Regional Breastfeeding Liaisons at North County Health Services WIC, health center staff receive lactation training.

As a result, four of their 10 Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program's (CPSP) Comprehensive Perinatal Health Workers (CPHW) are now certified lactation educators (CLE), with another two attending the course this year. Two more CPHWs with bachelor's degrees are working toward becoming IBCLCs.

Leslie’s career has grown as she is now the Perinatal and Pediatrics Services Manager. In her words, “It is important for IBCLCs to be managers. We understand how to establish effective breastfeeding support.” In this role, she ensures that the staff, including the administrative and medical staff, is part of the effort and understands the importance of comprehensive lactation support. These efforts have also been good for the business side of the health center.

Leslie and her team appreciate the tools and guidance provided by 9 Steps to Breastfeeding Friendly: Guidelines for Community Health Centers and Outpatient Settings, and hope that someday, there will be a special health center designation. For now though, they appreciate these materials provided by California Dept. of Public Health that supports best practices for their patients.

World Breastfeeding Week: Sustaining Breastfeeding Together

CWA isn’t the only organization celebrating a 25th anniversary (see page 2). World Breastfeeding Week is 25 years strong in 2017, and we encourage your local agency to work with partners during #WBW2017 next August 1-7 to educate your community about providing the support young families need to breastfeed successfully.

WBBW resources will soon be available at http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org/ As you are planning, get inspiration and ideas from other Local Agency Breastfeeding Events at http://www.calwic.org/focus-areas/breastfeeding/314.

Neighborhood Healthcare’s CPHW meetings always include two CLEs and some discussion of lactation issues.

Most of the Neighborhood Healthcare prenatal team, including CNMs – at top, left to right: Herlinda Muro (MA), Maricela Jaimes (MA), Magdalena Zamora (per diem CNM), Anne Allen (CNM), Leslie Munoz (Site Manager/IBCLC), Gabriela Garcia-Naranjo (CPHW/CLE), Anna Marie Tovar (CPHW). At bottom, left to right: Jovita Munoz (PSR/Prenatal Support), Mayra Donan (CPHW).
WIC RBLs Key in Golden Nugget Award

The Sacramento Breastfeeding Coalition recently received one of the coveted Golden Nugget Awards from the California Breastfeeding Coalition (CBC) for the work of Community Resource Project WIC Regional Breastfeeding Liaisons (RBL), Samantha Slaughter and Jennifer Pettus, active in the coalition.

‘Resourceful collaboration’ would describe their efforts to bring Dr. Ghaferi, an ENT physician, to the 2016 CBC Summit, specifically to train other medical providers on treatment of tongue tie. Reaching regionally, they collaborated with San Joaquin and Placer Breastfeeding Coalitions, health care provider offices, and health plans to raise speaker funds and conduct marketing outreach.

Their efforts were successful! Health care providers, mainly physicians who see a large population of WIC mothers, were among the 72 participants representing 21 counties. The CBC ensured that the training offered attendees continuing medical education (CME) credits to satisfy clinical requirements. The response was so positive, Dr. Ghaferi was invited back for the 2017 Summit.

Now all the providers attending know the effect of tongue/lip tie on breastfeeding, and the ENT manifestations of untreated tongue/lip tie. WIC mothers and others in many communities will be more able to meet their breastfeeding goals with these knowledgeable health care experts to assist them.

Breastfeeding Coordinator Jeanette Newman Velez, RBL Samantha Slaughter, and WIC Director Maureen Clark proudly display the Sacramento Breastfeeding Coalition’s Golden Nugget Award from the CA Breastfeeding Coalition.

RBLs Jennifer Pettus and Samantha Slaughter flank Dr. Ghaferi while Breastfeeding Coordinator Jeanette Newman Velez joins the celebration at the 2017 CBC Summit.

Riverside WIC Breastfeeding Celebrations

Last October (because other events precluded an August celebration), two Riverside University Health System WIC sites offered World Breastfeeding Celebrations. Their goal was to make families feel special and supported in their breastfeeding efforts.

In Perris, the safari theme really showed the staff’s vision, teamwork, and commitment to families. Over 300 families attended, learning about breastfeeding benefits and other health topics while taking souvenir photos and making memories.

In Lake Elsinore, staff was equally dedicated to making their Dr. Suess-themed event a success. Partner programs such as asthma/tobacco education, El Sol, First 5, and NEOP joined and offered resources and materials to over 150 families.

First 5 staff said they were impressed with the way WIC genuinely cares for mothers and makes them feel special; the clean facility; the organized, responsible and efficient staff; good flow to the event; welcoming environment; and great team work!

This kind of support may be one reason this site has one of the highest breastfeeding rates: 38% as of Oct 2016.

The Perris WIC site team on Safari, left to right: Christina Ruvalcaba, Irma Alatorre, Rick Moreno, Rocio Castaneda, Veronica Nwaigwe, Carela Murguia, Gina Joiner, Wendy Franco, Edith Hedia; mid-center: Felicia Francisco; lower center: Marisabel Aguilar.

Lake Elsinore WIC staff and partners having fun with Dr. Suess, left to right: Doris Dansoa, Eileen Ferrer, Norma Tapia, Yvonne Ortiz, Leslie Amaya, Sahar (First 5 California), Soraya Rathbun, Carela Murguia, Gabriela Doyle, Laura Lively (El Sol Program).
Have you heard about CWA’s recent efforts to encourage the use of WIC Fruit & Vegetable Checks (FVC, or Cash Value Voucher, CVV) at California farmers’ markets? Our goal is to foster deeper connections between growers and WIC families, so that more families have access to fresh, seasonal produce and a shopping experience that nurtures community and supports the local economy.

We’re officially kicking off our Farm2WIC Campaign at the Annual Conference and Trade Show. Find out more here and visit our booths in the Trade Show. Even if you're not attending, you can still be involved!

How It Works

Farmers’ markets must first be authorized to accept the FVC by attending State WIC Program training, via webinar or in person, separate from the Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) training. Over 80 California markets are already authorized! But another 400+ are not.

WIC participants can redeem their monthly FVC at a farmers’ booth, just like they can at a retail grocer, for fresh vegetables and fruits. Growers can process checks directly, or their market manager can process checks for all vendors at the market.

Benefits

Many WIC families want to shop at farmers’ markets to find quality seasonal produce, support local farmers, and enjoy a free, family-friendly community event. They also have more buying power than with the FMNP, since FVCs are of greater dollar value per check and are issued year round. For farmers, accepting the FVC can grow their monthly customer base and increase local revenue, which keeps markets operating.

Challenges

While families desire to shop at farmers’ markets, they can't always get there easily when markets are far away and transportation is limited. Even if markets are nearby, if they're not authorized to accept the FVC, families can only use their seasonal FMNP checks.

You Can Make a Difference!

You, your WIC colleagues and community partners can help overcome many of these challenges so more families can redeem their benefits at farmers’ markets all year long.

- Find out if your local markets are authorized to accept the FVC here: http://bit.ly/FVCmarkets. If they are, educate WIC participants about using their FVC at the market. CWA is developing materials to help you do that!
- If your local market is not yet authorized, begin a conversation with the market manager and encourage them and/or vendors to apply and seek training.
- Connect with local market managers and ask if a market can be set up at or near a WIC site.
- Let CWA know what materials or information would be helpful in the Farm2WIC Toolkit being developed: email Margaret Aumann (maumann@calwic.org) or call CWA at 916-572-0700.

Sonoma County hosts a farmers’ market in their Santa Rosa WIC parking lot every summer. WIC staff at the market provide nutrition education and issue FMNP checks. What’s more, WIC families can use their FVC monthly checks here, too! Staff say, “It’s gratifying to see families walking back by our table with bags of fresh fruits and vegetables, children munching on fresh peach samples.”
CEREALS FAMILIES LOVE

And you will love knowing that there is more whole grain in General Mills “Big G” cereals than any other single ingredient. In fact, the words “whole grain” are the first words you will see on our ingredient list.

Please check with your local WIC agency for WIC-eligible foods available in your state.

WIC is a registered service mark of the U.S. Department of Agriculture for USDA’s Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children.

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CERTIFICATION
Gardner Family Care Corporation

“The WIC Worksite Wellness program has helped all of our staff become healthier. We recognize that there is not a one size fits all program, so we offer a variety.” That variety at Gardner Family Care Corporation WIC in San Jose has ranged from nutrition and fitness to mindfulness and environmental awareness.

Several wellness activities and strategies have engaged the services of community partners, capitalizing on existing support. For example, to promote health eating: Fresh Approach offered food demonstrations for WIC participants and staff; a Dietetic Intern offered a class on “sustenance with smoothies;” and staff tapped into each other as resources by exchanging recipes and offering inspiration via email.

For fitness, they partnered with BaySport’s corporate wellness services to offer a “Fall into Fitness” challenge to maintain or reduce to a healthy weight prior to the holidays. Team weigh-ins — meaning 4 to 5 people on the scale at once! — were an effective way to track progress before and after the 10-week challenge. And team names, like Feisty Chicks and Healthy Nuts, made it even more fun!

Changing the work environment through policy updates has also helped employees choose health. Vending machine items and foods/beverages offered at meetings now follow healthier guidelines. And not to forget mental and emotional wellness, employees appreciate the motivational quotes, emailed once a week, that lift their spirits.

Congratulations to Gardner Family Care for becoming a Well WIC Worksite!
**RECERTIFICATIONS**

**Community Resource Project**

CRP WIC in Sacramento has been a Well WIC Worksite for many years, but they always seem to keep wellness going with a fresh approach. For National Nutrition Month 2016, they asked employees to bring a cultural dish – and the recipe – to a staff meeting potluck. They then created a cookbook which highlighted the significance of the dish for the contributing staff member. They enjoyed delicious food and learned a lot about each other!

CRP WIC has also spread the wellness message through two Employee Health and Wellness Fairs in the past three years for about 150 employees agency-wide. Over 30 local vendors are invited to provide information tables, health screenings, a smoothie bike, healthy food samples, a photo booth, and raffle prizes. They’ve even had massage therapists, exercise sessions, and a fire truck! Held in the agency’s warehouse, this event is popular with employees and vendors alike.

Bonus: thanks to CRP WIC, you can access the cookbook and the passport on CWA’s WWW web page; click on Agency Sharing Center in the left menu.

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**Glenn County**

Since Glenn County WIC (with just six staff) certified as a Well WIC Worksite in 2013, wellness has taken off. WWW efforts now reach 272 employees within the entire Health and Human Services agency: that’s a 45-fold increase!

Two main activities have fueled this successful agency-wide integration. Wellness Wednesday educational email messages increase awareness of nutrition, physical activity at work and home, stress management, limiting sugar intake, and more. And the 2016 all-agency meeting featured a health and wellness theme, where every employee received a Kleen Kanteen featuring the HHSA logo and was encouraged to drink more water every day.

As a result, many employees have chosen to “rethink their drink” and water intake by staff in many departments has increased. Over the last two years, one WIC employee quit coffee completely and now enjoys hot tea in the morning and water the rest of the day. She used to say she didn’t even like water!

Successful, though seemingly small, changes like this – plus positive support from the agency’s new director – will go a long way to nurturing a culture of wellness in rural Glenn County.
**North County Health Services**

Although we’ve provided breakfast at staff meetings for many years, two years ago or so, we did a presentation on eating whole, minimally processed, healthy food for breakfast. Instead of providing a typical starchy, low fiber breakfast we now provide a breakfast consisting of plain Greek yogurt, whole fruit, organic granola, nuts, and sometimes mini muffins.

After initial WWW certification, wellness efforts slowed a bit through some staffing changes. Recently, three new Wellness Champions have infused new energy and risen to the task of encouraging and supporting their site teams to better health. They maintain wellness bulletin boards and plan various activities such as team walks during lunch and themed potluck lunches, plus ‘wiggle breaks’ for all-staff monthly meetings.

**Shasta County**

Over the past few years, HHSA Shasta County WIC Program’s Wellness Team has been steady with walking breaks, Wednesday email reminders, and several yearly activities – including relays, games, and brainstorming ways to stay active at their annual day away team-building meeting.

Their latest challenge for National Nutrition Month included:

- Week 1: greatest variety of veggies eaten in a week
- Week 2: greatest variety of fruits eaten in a week
- Week 3: drinking the water intake recommended for one’s body weight
- Week 4: greatest variety of exercises in a week, and choosing a favorite
- Week 5: healthy recipe challenge during a staff meeting potluck

Shasta County WIC builds wellness into so much of their work: employees buying low-cost items from “healthy snack baskets” at three WIC sites; a “Fun to Be Fit” WIC class creating physical activity awareness daily; brainstorming sessions with SNAP-Ed and WIC colleagues to create a fun and healthy place to work; or healthy potlucks for all families during World Breastfeeding Week.

**MY WATER SUCCESS STORY**

My husband, two kids and I used to drink nothing but juice and soda for everything: when we were thirsty, for meal times, at parties, etc. Working at WIC I learned a few wellness tips that really changed our life. First I stopped buying soda. Then I watered down the juice, adding more and more water each time. I started asking for water at restaurants. When my husband asked for water a few weeks later, the kids also wanted water. One day I stopped buying juice; instead, I added sliced eggplant, lemon, and cucumber to a pitcher of water and put it in the fridge to infuse the flavors.

I prepared dinner and put the pitcher of nicely chilled water on the table. Everyone gave it funny looks and asked what it was; I just said, “try it” ...and they loved it. Ever since, there is always a pitcher of water with lemon or fruit in my fridge and we always ask for water at restaurants. — Esther, NCHS WIC

**DRINKS DISGUISED**

One Shasta County WIC employee had gained weight due to some underlying health issues. After finally getting a diagnosis and started to feel healthy again, she began looking at her diet, activity, and mental health wellness as a whole. She utilized all of the WIC activities at work, healthy snacks, and WIC Workout Wednesday. She even started to exercise with videos in the WIC classroom after hours and invited others to join her. By re-vamping her diet and increasing her activity, she lost 20 pounds over six months. Trying to be an example to co-workers and clients, she brings salads, veggies and fruit for lunch, and quit drinking soda and other sweet drinks. When she purchases a to-go cup with a soda logo she sharpies over it with the word TEA so co-workers and families know what she is drinking!
Tell Your Story
& Inspire Your Colleagues!

Send us your agency’s article ideas, photos, and best practices any time, and by September 1, 2017 for the Fall Education Day Edition.

We’ve moved! Have you? Keep us updated!

To update your e-mail or mailing address, request more copies, or submit article ideas or drafts, contact Margaret Aumann at:

maumann@calwic.org
CWA, 3120 Freeboard Drive, #101 • West Sacramento, CA 95691
916.572.0700 phone • 916.572.0760 fax

Read this and past issues of the WIC Watch online at http://calwic.org/news-a-publications/wic-watch.
Share the link with colleagues, family & friends!

Have you hosted your Legislator lately?

With so many new representatives recently elected in California, we’ve all got work to do! Educating your local, state, and national policymakers about WIC and its positive impact on families and entire communities is critical. And the best way to do that is to invite them to visit a WIC site! Let’s get all 55 national representatives or their staff to visit WIC sites in the next 25 weeks. Not sure how to start? Check out our WIC Ambassador tips for visits on the CWA website http://www.calwic.org/policy-center/toolkits or contact Sarah: sdiaz@calwic.org.

Save the Dates

World Breastfeeding Week
August 1-7, 2017

2017 Biennial NWA WIC Technology Conference
September 25-28, 2017
Memphis, TN