Holida\t\t\t\th\tes can be hard for families we serve in WIC. In an increasingly harsh and unforgiving economy, they are struggling to get ahead, pay the rent and bills, keep gas in the car, and put food on the table. So the festive fireside scenes and expensive gifts advertised on TV and in store windows can be somewhat depressing or stressful.

Local WIC sites — no matter how humble! — can be a beacon of hope to moms and caregivers, who, despite many obstacles, manage to show up and share their lives and their beautiful children with us. Every day, a WIC employee somewhere is sharing a supportive word, encouraging touch, or small kindness with a WIC participant. These small “holiday gifts” can work miracles!

This issue of WIC WATCH features many other miracles: your creative efforts to streamline services, promote healthy eating and active living, and grow caseload. We hope you enjoy catching up on current policy and practice issues that your colleagues want to share. We also invite you to take a peek into the future: the next two years promise some major changes and improvements in WIC.

We look forward to working in 2006 to support your frontline efforts to improve the health and well-being of millions of Californians — our collective hope for the future!

Happy Holidays!

Thank you all for your dedicated service to WIC families this year. Best wishes for a great holiday and Healthy New Year!

CWA Board & Staff
WIC leaders and their IT personnel gathered for the Fall Management Conference in beautiful Palm Springs. In the past year, Agency directors have embraced the blueprint for Changing WIC Changing Lives to help improve WIC services. For federal fiscal year 2006, they established that California WIC will concentrate primarily on two priorities: implementation of the requirements of the WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and increase in participation.

Focus on Technology
Since both priorities depend on technology, the theme of the conference, “Managing Programs and Resources: Focus on Technology,” was especially timely and apt for the programs. The day-long pre-conference workshop on the new Contract Management systems gave WIC managers information on using technology to reach WIC participants as well as to gather data for improved WIC management, automate inventory systems, and improve calling and tracking systems.

“Go for the Gold” Launched
Linnea Sallack, WIC Branch Chief, officially launched the “Go for the Gold” campaign (see related article in this issue). This campaign addresses the need to use the surplus from the supplemental food funds that we received in 2004 to reach the thousands of families living in poverty who should be on our program but are not. CWA took a leadership role in translating the ideas into a campaign with the “Gold Medal” strategy of bringing caseload to 100 percent of allocation in every agency, with special focus on counties with greater unmet need.

Linnea challenged WIC leaders to seize this unprecedented opportunity to use every kind of resource and expertise they possessed to make this goal a reality. A special issue of the WIC Watch, without increasing their staff numbers. Linnea expressed confidence that WIC personnel could achieve this goal with continued cooperative work, all-out local effort, and careful monitoring.

Linnea also spoke of the opportunities to implement requirements of the WIC Reauthorization Act. As early as January 2006, WIC will begin to achieve vendor cost-containment requirements, using cost criteria based on peer groups to ensure competitive prices and distinguishing requirements between 50 percent stores and others. She noted that work was underway with vendors to implement the USDA-approved plan of Food Instruments that participants could use at Any Authorized Vendor (AAV) by July 2006.

Linnea applauded the Institute of Medicine’s recommendations for revisions to the Food Package, and she discussed the Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Projects that have been conducted in the state. She said that soon the vision of California WIC extending services to meet the needs of its underserved population in a culturally competent manner with healthy fresh produce from local growers and food vouchers that recognized ethnic diversity and were easier to use would finally become a reality.

In closing, Linnea congratulated WIC leaders for working with their staff to incorporate the blueprint measures so successfully.
Three WIC Directors Saluted at Fall Meeting

The State WIC Branch recognized three dedicated WIC leaders whose enthusiasm and long years of service are an inspiration to the California WIC Community. Congratulations to you all!

- **Marie LeClair** is not only director of the San Francisco City and County WIC program, she is also a nutrition leader at the national level. She serves on the Board of the National WIC Association, the American Diabetes Association’s Latino Outreach Committee, the March of Dimes Council on Folic Acid, San Francisco Breastfeeding Coalition, and the California Conference of local health department nutritionists. Dedicated and articulate, with a wealth of knowledge and experience in the field of public health, Maria has been a strong advocate for improving the lives of the families of women who walk through the doors of her clinic. Her staff love her for her unfailing support, her commitment to building a strong WIC team, and her great sense of humor.

- **Wilma Austin**, Fresno County EOC WIC Program Director, has been with the WIC program for more than 40 years, constantly adapting to the shifting needs of the community. She was part of the Strategic Planning Stakeholder Group in 2000, and she is currently a member of the California WIC Growth Integration Task Force, the Babies First Consortium in Fresno, and the Central Valley WIC Dietetic Internship Advisory Council. Her staff appreciate that she is by their side through good times and bad in their professional and personal lives. Her love of the WIC community has been shown over the years by the long hours she puts into a position where the intensity of work is far more than the monetary remuneration.

- **Lynda Young**, Director of the Ventura WIC program, has been a guiding force for a better WIC. Dedicated to making California WIC best in the nation, Lynda’s persistence and efforts have earned her many “firsts”: She opened the first WIC site in the state; she was a member of the first Nutrition Education Task Force; she was the first to introduce the concept of Triple Issuance for participants; she initiated one of the first literacy campaigns in WIC; she’s been a vocal member of the California WIC Association and a member of the Policy Streamlining Committee. Her passion, energy, support and expertise have helped her ensure that her program is family friendly and has full support from the local community.
2006 CWA Conference is Coming!
“CHANGING LIVES, CHANGING WIC: SERVICE WITH A PURPOSE”

WHEN: April 10-12, 2006
     Preconference April 9
WHERE: Town and Country, San Diego
WHY: This conference will provide educational opportunities that support the plans laid out in our Blueprint to streamline WIC, maximize resources, restructure the WIC experience and activate obesity prevention strategies.

Here is a sampling of speakers and topics planned under our traditional workshop tracks of Nutrition Education, Breastfeeding, Management and Policy/Advocacy: Dr. Jack Dillenberg, DDS and Peggy Yamagata, RDH providing strategies for improved oral health; How to Calm Your Baby with Laura Sobell, Infant Mental Health Therapist, John Fontanessi, PhD, UCSD with his latest data on the cost benefits of WIC services; and a huge breastfeeding line up including Marsha Walker, Carol Lopez-Melcher and Dr. Jane Morton! Plan to attend the popular Exhibits and Trade Show.

Network with other agencies and showcase your accomplishments in the Local Agency Sharing. Don’t miss the California Nutrition Corps Scholarship celebration included in your registration!

HOW: Easy on-line registration at the CWA website. Conference updates and registration materials and Local Agency Sharing applications will be posted at www.calwic.org.

WHO: All your friends and colleagues will be there. Educational units offered for RD’s, CHES’s, IBCLC’s, and RN’s. Join us for the best educational opportunity of the year for statewide WIC.

‘Wall of Wellness’ at Conference

Have you taken steps to improve your health? Want to share your story with colleagues? At this year’s conference we will feature a Wall of Wellness where attendees can share stories of efforts they have made to improve their health. The opportunities for sharing are wide open. Are you taking time to laugh? Improved your eating habits? Cut down on smoking? Making time for physical activity? Finding ways to reduce stress? Improved health happens for many reasons and in many ways. We invite you to share your stories! Get as creative as you like - pictures, collages or just a simple note. Remaining anonymous is always OK! CWA will provide details in the Flash and an area will be provided at the conference for posting your story.

First Smiles Oral Health Training Embraced by Agencies

Recognizing the urgent need to assist WIC participants with improved oral health education, CA WIC agencies enthusiastically signed up for training as part of First Smiles, the First 5 California Oral Health Education and Training Project, a joint venture between the California Dental Association Foundation (CDAF) and the California Dental Health Foundation (CDHF).

Recognizing WIC as a natural partner for spreading the word on good oral health, First 5 partnered with CWA and PHFE WIC. Gauri Rao and Louise Mast, trainers extraordinaire of PHFE WIC, traveled all over the state for this first of two years of training opportunities and provided staff trainers from 48 agencies with oral health education training and oral health kits! Now back in their clinics classes are being scheduled. Interested in knowing which consumer education interventions prove successful the project has developed a large evaluation component. Ten agencies will participate in the upcoming year with mini-grant funding to assess the classes and participant oral health knowledge. Don’t miss the workshop planned for the spring conference with Dr. Jack Dillenberg, DDS of the Arizona School of Dentistry and Peggy Yamagata, RDH, of the oral health collaborative of San Diego to discuss the issues surrounding oral health access, collaborations, and oral health provider protocols.

Interested in oral health training for your agency in 2006? Contact Gauri or Louise at gauri@phfewic.org or louisem@phfewic.org.
**Legislative Update**

**The Big Picture.** Anti-poverty advocates, supported by the California WIC community, have been working for many months to avert deep cuts to health and human services programs targeted by leaders in Congress, in the form of a sweeping budget reconciliation bill. Despite some signs of discomfort brought on by grassroots outrage, Congressional Grinches seem poised to steal Christmas from the poor this week. Almost incredibly, even after Hurricane Katrina exposed the depths of American poverty (which is rising), and the inadequacies of federal and state safety nets for children, GOP leaders and President Bush have forged ahead with their plans to shrink spending — while bloating the deficit with tax cuts for wealthy corporations and individuals.

The bottom line is clear: the Budget Reconciliation bill about to be passed means that millionaires will receive lavish tax cuts that increase their already large incomes, while low-income families are made worse off, a disgraceful fiscal policy that Robert Greenstein has simply termed “inconsistent with the notion of shared sacrifice to tackle the nation’s fiscal woes.”

Grassroots advocacy has been effective in softening the worst ideas for cuts, but only partially. After several dramatic postponements and noticeable moderate defections, Republican leaders pushed a Budget Reconciliation Bill through the House on November 22, with a mere two-vote margin. The bill cut $50 billion in funding for critical safety net programs including food stamps and Medicaid. House and Senate conferes will soon meet to work out major differences in their bills — the Senate bill cuts $35 billion and does not include food stamps.

**FEDERAL NEWS**

WIC advocates who want to continue supporting efforts to turn back Congressional budget cuts to programs our participants need for basic survival are urged to continue responding to periodic alerts during the critical next few weeks. Your calls and letters have already made a difference: votes have been extremely close and moderates are peeling off under constituent pressure. During Thanksgiving recess, Republican Senator Gordon Smith (R-OR) affirmed that he will not vote for any bill if it contains cuts to food stamps and Medicaid — making Senate vote counters nervous about the final outcome of the bill. Read more about what’s at stake on the websites of the Coalition for Human Needs (www.chn.org) and the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (www.cbpp.org).

**WIC Funding Approved.** WIC funding for next year has been finalized via the FFY 2006 Agricultural Appropriations bill, signed by President Bush in early November. The bill: funds WIC at $5.257 billion for next year, expected to support current caseload, restores the Contingency Fund at $125 million, and funds Breastfeeding Peer Counseling at $15 million, Infrastructure at $14 million and MIS Funding at $20 million if not needed for caseload. The bill continues the WIC-Only store authorization moratorium until a state’s vendor cost containment program is approved by USDA, thus closing a loophole in the House version of the bill. Despite the appropriates, the final bill may shave 1% from WIC in across-the-board cuts, with an as-yet-unknown local impact.

**USDA Issues Timeline for Food Package Changes.** On October 31, USDA published a notice in the Federal Register, laying out plans for long-awaited revisions of the WIC Food Package. USDA is required by law to issue a final rule on these historic changes by November 2006. FNS is in the process of developing a regulatory impact analysis of specific costs and benefits associated with these changes. It is expected that the first “draft” of the food package regulations will largely reflect the Institute of Medicine’s scientific recommendations, which can be read in their report WIC Food Packages: Time for a Change (summarized in our Fall 2005 Newsletter). However, it appears that some tweaking may be necessary to make the final package meet cost neutrality requirements set by OMB.

Nutrition advocates who are eager to see fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as more culturally appropriate dairy options, made available to WIC families are expecting considerable controversy over the proposals. Certain food industry and commodity groups will be unhappy to see their bottom lines impacted by recommended reductions in, or substitutions for, milk, eggs, and juice, for example, and will be arguing against these reforms. The recent Register notice provides a rough timeline for rollout of the new regs: Proposed Rule by January 2006; Comment period ends April 2006; Interim Final Rule published by November 2006 (effective immediately); and final implementation by states by May 2008. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for public education opportunities.

**USDA Publishes Vendor Cost Containment Rules.** Responding to new federal requirements spelled out in the 2004 WIC Reauthorization bill, USDA published Interim Final regulations on November 29th. The new rules...
Maintain Quality Nutrition Services and Grow – But How??

Life in WIC is always challenging. One of the biggest challenges facing us right now is balancing three very important priorities:

• Restructuring the WIC experience from a clinical to a public health program;
• Maintaining quality nutrition services; and
• Building caseload

At first glance, these may seem to be contradictory, but actually they’re all very interconnected. While funding for WIC depends on the number of participants we serve, in the long run, quality WIC services will help to keep our participants coming back each month. WIC staff throughout the state are applying tremendous effort and creativity to provide WIC families the knowledge and skills to make healthy food choices and develop and maintain healthy and active lifestyles—in a learner-centered way. This investment in education pays off: WIC studies have found that the impact of WIC education lasts long after participants have cashed their last vouchers.

Create Fewer, More Learner-Centered Classes

Learner Centered Education (LCE) has been the cornerstone of our commitment to implement Obesity Prevention Strategies (OPS) for our WIC families. If our efforts to reduce diet-related health problems are to be successful, we have to reach our youngest participants, who are at the greatest risk of obesity. Recognizing this, many local agencies have improved their nutrition services by adopting LCE techniques for their individual and group education sessions.

So the question comes up: “How can we keep growing and keep up the quality of our education and our commitment to preventing obesity?” First, many aspects of learner-centered education either take no more time or may actually be quicker. One basic principle of adult learning is relevance – adults hate to feel that someone is “wasting their time”. By cutting out the “nice-to-know” parts of educational sessions, you not only save time but are much more effective.

As local agencies shorten class times, they focus on interactive components of a class. Using short clips of videos to demonstrate messages and then following up with discussion is one way this can be done. This is a great illustration of the learner-centered adage “less is more”. Another is to examine the range of classes offered. Many agencies have decided to limit the variety of classes they lead, concentrating instead on broader topics that address multiple subjects.

The WIC Branch has developed and conducted a number of trainings that have helped agency staff to integrate LCE approaches, and make their education more interesting and effective. Training sessions include “Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach”; “Family Centered Education”; and “Motivational interviewing.” Twenty-five agencies have also completed the comprehensive year-long LCE program, “Finding the Teacher Within.”

Motivational Interviewing: An Example

In individual education, staff should concentrate only on what the participant wants and needs. One local agency staff person outlined how this “motivational interviewing” approach can help you focus your precious time with a WIC participant. You could say:

“I have five minutes to offer a few suggestions about health for your children, would that be OK?”

“Here are some subjects that we can talk about - healthy snacks, healthy meals, physical activity, TV, etc.”

(Use the Circle Chart prompting tools, available on the WIC website.)

“What one would you like to talk about?”

When the participant focuses on one topic, you enter into a dialogue with questions such as:

“Why did you pick healthy snacks?”

“What are your ideas to change your child’s snacks?”

“What do you see yourself doing when you leave today?”

“If you commit to making this change, I am confident your child will be healthier.”

With skilled listening, this can be done quickly, adding only key tips or support relevant to the participant’s concerns.
Re-think Staff Training

Staff training does not have to mean shutting down clinic for lengthy workshops. For example, one agency found an great alternative to closing all their sites for half-day joint trainings. They decided to carve out an hour for training at the end of the day at each clinic site. This is a great way to de-brief the day, train new staff, and allow time for work on WNA certification. It also provides a refreshing challenge for site managers!

Another agency took a new approach to bringing staff up to speed with new materials. They circulated packets of new pamphlets and asked staff to answer several open questions, such as, “What is new and different?” “What do you like about these new pamphlets?” and “What do you think staff would need training on to effectively use these pamphlets?” (the last question was found to be especially helpful). Staff answered these questions in writing, the trainer gathered and condensed their responses, and — as a wrap-up — presented the results in a mini-meeting. This was quicker — and more fun — than reviewing materials from scratch.

By always keeping the ultimate goal of healthy WIC families in mind, we’re constantly finding new ways to keep up quality education and implement obesity prevention strategies — AND increase participant access and utilization of WIC benefits. As one agency staff person puts it, “Our motto is work smarter, not harder!”

If you would like more information about state-developed trainings on learner-centered education, please check our online training bulletin at www.wicworks.ca.gov or contact Kim Frinzell at kfrinzel@dhs.ca.gov or (916) 928-8653.

Thanks to Mike Elfant -State WIC Branch, Chris Husing -Sacramento County, Michelle Fox -Monterey County WIC, and Julie Grunsky -Delta Health Care WIC for contributions to this article.

By cutting out the “nice-to-know” parts of educational sessions, you not only save time but are much more effective.

For a Finding the Teacher Within training at Delta Health Care WIC, each staff person designed a quilt square with her own personal resolution for action steps to make new nutrition education classes a success. The completed quilt was unveiled at a follow up training.
# Streamlining Policies to Achieve Health Outcomes

## Status Update

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Round One Policies</strong></th>
<th><strong>Status</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orientation</strong></td>
<td>Coming out with new Orientation Package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamlined requirements at first enrollment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Separation of Duties</strong></td>
<td>Being edited at Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledged small agencies and sites</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th><strong>Round Two Policies</strong></th>
<th><strong>Status</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breastfeeding</strong></td>
<td>At USDA for approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamlined breast pump inventory control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inventory</strong></td>
<td>Changes in new contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamlined process to control inventory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Certification: Proof of Address, Income and Identity</strong></td>
<td>Being edited at Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamlining requirement to align with federal regulations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FI Security and Integrity</strong></td>
<td>Being edited at Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FI Reconciliation and separation of duties, clarifying and streamlining requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INEP</strong></td>
<td>Recommend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Clarified/simplified policy via PWPC on February 15, 2005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Put “Per Standard Protocol” check box in ISIS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Add sample standard protocols on Web</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Therapeutic Formula</strong></td>
<td>Recommend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•Continue to complete request for Therapeutic Formula-DHS 4150 and medical justification forms-DHS 4143/4144 for all therapeutic formulas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subcommittee on Streamlining Nutrition Education Documentation</strong></td>
<td>Began in August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Triage Matrix</strong></td>
<td>September 26, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move A24 from level 3 to level 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Date of implementation at local level optional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medical Nutrition Therapy</strong></td>
<td>September 26, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Add “x” to list of options X= “MNT not available”</td>
<td>Clarified/simplified policy via PWPC on February 15, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. MNT box not visible on screens for intervention levels 1-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New nutrition education questionnaires out</strong></td>
<td>October 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dietary risk code consolidation</strong></td>
<td>January 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prepare local agency staff for AAV</strong></td>
<td>April-June 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implement AAV</strong></td>
<td>July 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Put questionnaires in ISIS, provide training &amp; materials</strong></td>
<td>Summer 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition questionnaires in ISIS (pending coordination of work with Any Authorized Vendor &amp; Peer Group projects)</strong></td>
<td>October 2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The policy redesign workgroup continues to work to streamline workload at local agencies. Meeting in October, the group discussed several events to occur in 2006. The following chart represents what has been done and what is on the horizon. The group focused on general ideas that local agencies and the Branch can do to prepare for changes in policies and processes. These ideas will be finalized at an upcoming meeting in January 2006.
COMING SOON: BIG CHANGES TO WIC CHECKS!

The Branch is very busy planning implementation of new state and federal WIC food instrument requirements in the coming year or so. These include allowing WIC participants to shop at any authorized store (also known as “AAV” or Any Authorized Vendor); and major changes in the way the State will authorize and manage vendor pricing, called Vendor Cost Containment and Peer Group Pricing. These are expected to roll out in 2006.

By the end of 2006, we hope to have final federal rules that will allow California to make major improvements in the foods we offer WIC families, which the Branch wants to be able to implement as fast as possible during 2007-08. These changes will not only make life easier and healthier for WIC participants, but they will provide some positive market drivers to improve wider access to fresh, nutritious and affordable foods in low-income neighborhoods.

ANY AUTHORIZED VENDOR
No more vendor-specific checks! AAV will allow WIC participants to shop in any store that redeems WIC checks. Stores will begin reporting serial numbers of food instruments they have redeemed to State in a variety of ways. Expected to start in 2006.

NEW PRICING STRATEGY
The “Must Not Exceed” amounts will no longer be printed on WIC checks. For each WIC food item, stores will be expected to charge within the price range assigned to their vendor “peer group.” Expected in late 2006.

NEW FOODS
We are hoping to see less milk, juice and eggs, and new, flexible choices among tofu, yogurt, fortified soy milk, as well as baby foods. Most important, we hope to be able to finally “walk the WIC talk” with fresh fruits and vegetables with a $8-10 cash voucher! Expected in 2007-08.
HEALTHY EATING

Branch Plans Thematic

Have you heard?
The state WIC Branch is developing education campaigns to support WIC’s obesity prevention strategies. These campaigns will help strengthen staff’s knowledge and skills in two strategic areas:
• Promoting healthy eating among WIC families
• Making regular physical activity the norm for WIC families

What is a Campaign?
A campaign is an educational effort that focuses on a single theme and provides standardized messages, materials, and staff guidance on the topic. It is a way for us to address and reinforce our mission—Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL)—by exploring healthy eating behaviors and ways of incorporating regular physical activity with our WIC families.

We have identified five themes for which we will develop campaigns over the next five years and integrate them into other WIC priorities.

What are The Themes?
1. Easy, low cost, healthy meals
Focuses on home-cooked meals. Tools will help participants with meal planning, smart shopping, and food preparation.

2. Healthy eating behaviors
Focuses on how WIC families eat. Tools will help participants understand appropriate portion sizes, hunger and fullness cues, feeding relationship between parent and child, and family meals.

3. Smart choices for fast food
Focuses on eating out, especially at fast food restaurants. Tools will help participants make healthier choices and recognize appropriate portion sizes.

4. Low-fat milk products
Focuses on how participants can reduce dietary fat intake by encouraging them to select lower fat in milk and other dairy products. Topics will include promoting the nutritional quality of lower-fat dairy products and the importance of calcium and its relationship to osteoporosis.

5. Less screen time
Focuses on helping WIC Families explore ways to reduce time spent with TV and video or computer games. Components will include healthier alternatives to screen time, ways to monitor and reduce screen time, and ways to be a healthy, active family.
What Do Participants Want?
To find out what participants would respond to best, we conducted a needs assessment during September and October by meeting with groups of English-speaking and Spanish-speaking participants at several local agencies.

It was clear that most participants hear your nutrition messages on healthy eating. They know that they should eat more vegetables and fruit, less meat, fat, and sugar, and smaller portions.

Many praised WIC for providing the health information they needed, especially for their children. We also heard repeatedly that they wanted WIC to include fruits and vegetables on their checks.

When asked what would help them shop for healthy foods and prepare healthy meals and snacks, they listed the following tools:
- Planning ahead
- Using a shopping list
- Knowing how to read food labels and ingredient lists
- Having recipes to help vary meals

During these discussion groups, participants also looked at sample meal planners, shopping lists, shopping tips, recipes, and cookbooks and viewed a two-minute taped segment from a popular TV cooking show. Most participants responded favorably to these materials and offered their ideas for how these types of materials could be useful for WIC families.

What Will the First Campaign Look Like?
Since the first campaign theme is “Easy, low cost, healthy meals,” we have named this campaign Market to Meals. We are developing messages and materials around how to buy healthy foods and prepare healthy meals on a budget.

What is happening now?
Using the information gathered in our discussion groups, we are developing the Market to Meals campaign in two parts:
- **Part 1** will cover meal planning and smart shopping
- **Part 2** will focus on meal preparation

The campaign will include skill-building items for participants, such as a meal planner, shopping list, cookbook, and cooking demonstrations via video and/or DVD. There will also be lesson plans and training for WIC educators.

*Market to Meals*, Part 1 education materials and lesson plans should be ready for field testing by Spring 2006. Following field testing, materials will be finalized and could be available for local agency use as early as next Fall.

Want to get involved?
If your agency would like to participate in field testing these materials, contact Delfina Shelomenseff at dshelome@dhs.ca.gov or (916) 928-8541.
Nutrition Education Tips

Active Living: Guidelines for Babies and Toddlers

Does your baby or young child stay in a stroller, playpen, infant seat, or car seat for long periods of time? If so, you may want to make some changes.

Babies and young children need to be active. Being active early in life helps our children develop in a healthy way and become physically active adults.

How do we help young children be physically active? The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) developed the National Physical Activity Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers. Here is a brief summary of these guidelines.

INFANTS
Physical activity should:
1. Encourage them to explore their environment.
2. Be in settings that do not restrict their movement for long periods of time.
3. Develop movement skills.
4. Be in safe areas that meet (or exceed) recommended safety standards.
5. Include a variety of baby games such as peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake.

TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS
Physical activity should:
1. Include at least 60 minutes and up to several hours per day of unstructured physical activity.
   (Toddlers and preschoolers should not be inactive for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.)
2. Include at least
   • 30 minutes per day of structured physical activity for toddlers
   • 60 minutes per day of structured physical activity for preschoolers
   (For ideas on structured physical activity, see Suggested Activities for Toddlers and Preschoolers.)
3. Be in safe areas that meet (or exceed) recommended safety standards.
4. Develop movement skills in toddlers.
5. Improve movement skills in preschoolers.
6. Include movement such as running, jumping, throwing, kicking, stair climbing, and bouncing and chasing balls.
## Nutrition Education Tips

### Suggested Activities for Babies

Get your baby out of the infant seat and let her/him move! Your baby wants to be active. You can use common household items such as a blanket, a cardboard box, a paper towel tube, and a laundry basket to help your baby be active.

Here are some ideas to help get you started:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity and Things You'll Need</th>
<th>What to Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>For Playing Outdoors</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Blanket</td>
<td>• Take your baby outside and lay out a blanket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For Exploring</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Laundry basket</td>
<td>• Put an empty cardboard box or laundry basket in the middle of the room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>• Crawl around the floor with your baby.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Empty cardboard box</td>
<td>• Go around, over, in, and out of the box or laundry basket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Row, Row, Row Our Boat”</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Empty paper towel tube</td>
<td>• Sit on the floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>• Put your baby between your legs so that you are both facing forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Empty wrapping paper tube</td>
<td>• Grasp the paper towel tube so that you are both holding it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gently move forward and back in a rowing motion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Suggested Activities for Toddlers and Preschoolers

You can also use common household items, such as newspaper, plastic gallon jugs, a paint brush, and rope to design active play for toddlers and preschoolers. The list of things you can use is endless. Be creative! Here are some ideas to help get you started:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity and Things You’ll Need</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Clean Your Space”</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Newspaper “squished” into ball shapes and taped</td>
<td>• Divide play area in half by placing rope or yarn on floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rope or yarn to divide play area in half</td>
<td>• Scatter balls on each side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Scoop Up the Ball”</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Plastic gallon jugs with bottoms cut off and cut edges covered with tape</td>
<td>• Divide children into 2 teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Socks rolled up into balls (or use any lightweight balls)</td>
<td>• Have children toss balls from their side to other side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Invisible Art</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paintbrush</td>
<td>• Pair children up with partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Container with Water</td>
<td>• Toss ball between partners using scoops and balls.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using paintbrush and water, “paint” various shapes or pathways onto pavement area. Have children jump, walk, or run to different shapes or along pathway.
**CAREER CORNER**

**Taking the RD Exam**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Q. I’m getting ready to take the RD exam and I’m nervous about taking a test on the computer. How can I be better prepared to pass the exam?

A. As a WIC employee you may be eligible for the RD Exam Study Program offered at no cost to you or your agency. It includes online study assistance, tutoring and monitoring as well as access to DietitianExam.com an interactive, web-based review with tests that simulate the RD exam. If you would like assistance, ask your agency director to E-mail me with your name verifying that you are a WIC employee. Once I receive the referral from your director, I will E-mail you with program information and get you started within a few days.

Q. I was eligible to take the RD exam a couple years ago but for personal reasons did not take the exam. Can I still take the exam?

A. You can take the exam but ADA/CDR authorization is for one year so you must reapply for another year. Since you have been out of school for awhile, I'd suggest you take a “refresher” course online in medical nutrition. Cosumnes River College ([www.crc.losrios.edu](http://www.crc.losrios.edu)) offers several online courses through their Dietetic Technician Program. A 3-day RD exam review workshop is also very important and Breeding and Associates offers two in California ([www.dietitianworkshops.com](http://www.dietitianworkshops.com)). The last step in preparing for the RD exam is the online program DietitianExam.com described above.

If you would like assistance to complete the requirements to become a RD, please complete the “Dietetic Career Development Questionnaire” and return to me. For an electronic copy or questions contact Nancy Nesa, Statewide Career Development Coordinator at: nnesa@projects.sdsu.edu

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**Congratulations to our Newly-Minted Lactation Consultants!**

Anna Presley, Butte County Public Health  
Aleyda Salvatore, Solano County Public Health Nursing  
Carol Allwine, Sonoma County DHS WIC  
Donna Vaughn  
Ethel Chou, Delta Health Care WIC  
Gladys Palomera, LA Biomed Research Institute  
Gueidi Beltran, La Clinica de la Raza WIC  
Julie Casillas, Fresno WIC  
Laurie Tiffin, DHS State WIC Branch  
Leslie McDonnell, Glenn County WIC  
Lindsay Haynes, Community Medical Center WIC  
Lisa Hieb, Tuolomne County WIC  
Loretta L. Porta, Golden Valley Health Centers  
Marcie Hughes, PHFE WIC-Pico Rivera  
Mary Woelfel, Delta Health Care WIC  
Susanna Murawski Roxas, Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center WIC  
Teresa Camacho, Alliance Medical Center WIC  
Tina Lavy, Sutter County WIC  
Vanessa M. Annibali, La Cienega WIC Center  
Wendy Sober, HRC Mother Lode WIC  
Yang Her, CRP WIC  
Joy Mendoza, Monterey County WIC  
Lori Buendia, Golden Valleys Health Center  
Priya Khullar, Community Action Partnership  
Paula Standard, Butte County WIC

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**San Francisco WIC Employee Receives High Honor!**

Nutrition Assistant Angela Vasquez was recently presented with a certificate of recognition from Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi for her dedicated service to the WIC community. Modest about accepting praise for this tremendous honor, she feels that her award is more of a representation of what we all do serving our WIC families.
Vickee Greer, WIC Director Wears Many Hats!

Vickee Greer, WIC Director for Sierra County, leads a busy life. In addition to her job at WIC, she is the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for Sierra County Health and Human Services. In that role, Vickee has been tireless in her efforts to regionalize preparedness and response capabilities within Office of Emergency Services (OES) Region III. Vickee drew the praise of OES recently when they recognized her for “Unique Contributions in Emergency Management for California.”

Vickee stresses that there is an important child safety link between public health emergency preparedness and WIC, as Sierra County’s Public Health Mobile Field Unit is available for both emergencies and community outreach for health services.

Vickee has also done an outstanding job at WIC. Sierra County’s population of 3,600 is scattered throughout a rugged, mountainous area in frontier communities, making it a challenge to reach WIC participants. In spite of this difficulty, the last evaluation of the Sierra County WIC program showed excellent health and social services linkages and impressive breastfeeding rates—above the state average.

Vickee does an exemplary job in both her roles to help the citizens of Sierra County, especially the children, stay healthy and safe. Congratulations, Vickee, you are an inspiration to us all!

California WIC Career Development Efforts Receive National Recognition

At the September 2005 USDA FNS Nutrition Education Conference, the California WIC Program was recognized with a national LINC award. These sought-after awards recognize Leadership, Innovation, and Nutrition Collaboration by individuals, organizations, or groups working within the USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service Programs. The California WIC Program received the top award in the category, “Nourishing Tomorrow’s Nutrition Leaders and Practitioners.”

The award lauded the achievements of California’s WIC-based dietetic internship and career development program, specifically its accomplishments in meeting the need for culturally diverse registered dietitians. The Branch topped several other excellent contenders vying for federal recognition for their innovative efforts to improve recruitment, training, or retention of diverse personnel in the field, with special emphasis on public health and community nutrition.

So, why was California chosen? The WIC-based Dietetic Internship (DI) program is the result of a vision shared by the California WIC Community to promote career advancement for qualified, culturally competent WIC employees. More specifically, the program seeks to nurture and support individuals who demonstrate the competency, talent, and dedication that are key to WIC’s effectiveness. The success of WIC DI program is due to the day-to-day commitment by the DI coordinators to support the interns to successfully complete their American Dietetic Association requirements to become registered dietitians.

A key reason for this success is the support and commitment by the WIC community, including the California WIC Association, and the State WIC Branch, local program directors Eloise Jenks (PHFE), Gayle Schachne (NEVHC), Cheri Sperl (Clinica Sierra Vista), Sarah Larson (SDSU), and Gloria Pecina (UHCSJ), and the San Diego and Central Valley Consortiums to meet the vision. Nancy Nesa, Statewide Coordinator oversees the WIC-based DI and career development. In the three years that Nancy has been in this position, she has introduced a number of tools for the DI programs including the RD Exam Study Program, work force development surveys, distance learning links, mentoring, financial aid advice, and tutoring.

The on-going financial commitment by the local agencies hosting DI programs, the CWA California Nutrition Corps, and the State, all contribute to the program’s accomplishment. In 2002, the California WIC Association established their highly successful scholarship fund, the California Nutrition Corps. To date more than $191,500 has been awarded to sixty-four talented and dedicated WIC employees who are enrolled in dietetic internships or undergraduate and graduate degrees.

California WIC dietetic interns are highly diverse and culturally competent: 52% racial or ethnic minorities (30% Hispanic, 17% Asian, 5% African American) compared to the national rate of 9.8% (2.4% African-American, 2% Hispanic, 5.4% Asian).

Way to go, California WIC!
require states to implement vendor peer group systems and competitive pricing, in order to insure that vendors that derive more than half their food sales income from WIC sales (in California, this includes WIC-Only stores and a small number of other “50 percent” full service stores) do not result in higher food costs to the program than other vendors. States must categorize vendors into peer groups, and establish price criteria for each peer group, which will be used when assessing vendor applications for WIC authorization and when setting maximum allowable amounts that vendors may charge, to make sure that all WIC vendors charge competitive prices. DHS is expected to roll out this new system over the next year or so. Comments are due in November 2006.

To read the lengthy new regulations, go to the WIC Page of the FNS website, http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/WhatsNewHTM.

While it may take at least a year for California to fully implement the new requirements for a peer group pricing system, the new federal rule is effective right away (on December 30, 2005). USDA has informed states in separate correspondence that they must take immediate steps to ensure that redemption prices at above 50% stores are no higher on average than redemption prices at regular stores, or face fiscal penalties from USDA.

To avoid these fiscal claims, the Department of Health Services will likely soon be implementing an interim reduction in maximum allowable reimbursement rates for stores that meet the above 50% definition. This will impact a number of WIC-Only stores, but it also applies to the full service “50 percent” stores. Once USDA provides clarifying guidance regarding the interim measure, the WIC Branch will be sharing more details about this imminent pricing change with the WIC community. This will help local WIC providers stay on top of the changes, so that they will be prepared to troubleshoot any potential problems WIC participants may experience with their WIC checks.

STATE NEWS

WIC-Only Incentives Limited. On October 26, the WIC Branch released a Grocer Alert advising California authorized stores about strict new limitations on participant incentives affecting WIC-Only and other above 50% stores. This new restriction implements federal law and policy guidance stemming from the last WIC Reauthorization bill. It only applies to stores for which more than 50 percent of annual food sales revenue comes from the sale of WIC foods obtained with WIC checks. By December 1, 2005, stores that meet the above 50% definition were required to submit requests for addendums to their vendor agreements, requesting approval to offer incentives. ONLY the following low-cost nutritious food items (worth $2 or less, wholesale) can be offered as incentives to WIC families once per calendar day, upon transaction of a WIC check: pre-packaged fresh fruits or vegetables; canned or dried beans, baked beans, corn tortillas and whole wheat bread, or canned tuna.

After December 1, WIC-Only and other above 50% stores must cease offering any other types of incentives, including lotteries or offers of free pots and pans and other gift sets, cash prizes, free rides, etc. In addition, no personal information (name, WIC appointment info, etc.) can be collected by the stores from WIC participants. Local agencies should ensure all WIC staff is aware of this new policy. Go to the Grocer Information Page at www.wicworks.ca.gov and scroll the Grocer Alerts to find a copy of the Alert.

Advocates Gear Up for a Busy Year. Health and Human Services advocates took advantage of the late fall legislative recess to prepare for what is expected to be a challenging and exciting year. A recent convening in the Legislature gathered many Sacramento players, who allowed staffers to peek at their plans. Check these policy agendas — including CWA’s — out on the Working Families website, at www.ccrwf.org/working/index.html. CWA is involved and supporting these key WIC-related issues:

- Child care advocates are pulling hard to pass a major ballot initiative in June that would fund universal access to preschool for all four-year-olds. Keep up with this exciting campaign by signing up at www.preschoolcalifornia.org.
- Health advocates are pressing for resolution to the ongoing problem of healthcare access – a disgraceful 10% of our kids (800,000) still have no health coverage. Recently, two competing ballot initiatives were merged into one as leaders from both sides coalesced. The new proposal is now circulating for signatures. Read how it will benefit low-income kids on the 100% Campaign website, www.100percentcampaign.org.
- Obesity prevention advocates, fresh from their victories in reforming school nutrition, are focusing their energies on the built environment, physical activity and improving PE in schools. Keep up with them at www.eatbettermovemore.org and www.publichealthadvocacy.org.
- Social Services advocates will fight nasty Congressional efforts to make it even harder to get on and stay on food stamps and TANF, and work to protect other housing and safety net programs from further harm. Join the fray at www.california-partnership.org.
- WIC advocates will support all of the above, make sure USDA implements WIC Food Package Reforms as recommended by the IOM, track the implementation of vendor cost containment here in California, convene a statewide group of early childhood stakeholders to create a policy agenda around obesity prevention in the early years, and push ahead on a few choice breastfeeding policy issues. Read all about it at www.calwic.org!
**WIC Watch**

**WINTER 2005**

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**Nutrition in Action!**

**WIC Examples**

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**DEAR FRIENDS,**

I want to tell you how helpful the WIC program has been for me and my daughter. When my daughter Shelby was diagnosed with diabetes Type I earlier this year, she was only four years old. I had brought her to the doctor’s office due to a rash on her bottom. I thought maybe it was because she had wet the bed a few times that week. The doctor checked Shelby’s sugar with a finger prick and found it was 599! Shelby went into the hospital for a few days so her sugar could be brought under control. I, too, was going into the hospital overnight for some minor heart surgery. At that moment, I felt so helpless.

Since then, we have learned how to check her sugar, give her insulin shots, and be prepared for any highs and lows that might occur. Shelby is coping better now; we all are. And thanks to Marlena Pacis, our High Risk Dietitian, she’s learning how to eat healthier fruit and vegetables along with a variety of foods. Marlena been very helpful, teaching us portion sizes and giving ideas about foods to choose to help Shelby eat better.

This has been a struggle for me and my family, but I’m happy to say that Shelby will grow to be healthy and live a normal life.

Thank you for hearing our story.

**LORRAINE RODRIGUEZ**
Information and Referral Assistant @ Central Telephone Office South LA Health Projects, LA BioMed WIC Program

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**LA Biomed WIC Program Helps One of its Own**

**SHELBY’S STORY**

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**DEAR NORMA AND ALL AT LOVING SUPPORT:**

I have found your service to be a true blessing for my daughter and me. I had the benefit of good health care and education at Kaiser but found your service a great help for fast, hassle-free advice and support. I always received a quick return phone call, an empathetic ear, appropriate advice, and much needed encouragement from your staff.

I didn’t have the hassle of medical ID numbers, long waits for return calls, or advice from clueless nurses that I often encountered through health care providers.

My daughter was a healthy 8 lbs 4 oz at birth and became quite chubby by three months old. My doctor even mentioned that she might not reach her mile stones on time because she was chubby. Desperate to put into perspective several unwanted weight-related comments about my baby girl, I called for advice and was reassured that I was doing the right thing and that she would thin-out once she got moving.

My daughter is now 10.5 months old and still breast-feeding well! I have never had to spend a dime on formula and couldn’t be more proud of how healthy and happy my baby is (also it was an environmentally friendly way to feed her!). Thank you!

I can proudly say she crawled and is cruising all over - at least as early as all her smaller baby friends! My little girl is thinning out, just like you said, and doing awesome!! Also, she has accepted all kinds of great, healthy foods and has only had one real cold in 10.5 months.

I am so glad that you were able to help me get through the rough spots (including breast infections) and do the best for my baby.

With heartfelt thanks,

**SYLVIA**

(I am a chemist with a PhD but despite all the knowledge of why breast is best, I think all moms still need support to feed well)

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**Grateful Mom Pays Tribute to Riverside County WIC Program**

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*Baby Sarah Pastor (dob 5/13/2004)*

Bathing at 5 months - already over 20 lbs!!

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Yang Her, WIC Breastfeeding Advocate and Educator

Yang Her was born in Laos and moved to the U.S. when she was ten years old. She was introduced both to English and to formal education when she joined a sixth grade class in her new home in Oregon. A native Hmong speaker, Yang not only learned English, she also made up for her years of lost schooling to graduate from high school six years later.

When she became a young mother, she and her infant had trouble establishing breastfeeding. Talking about breastfeeding is not the norm in Hmong culture, so Yang could not bring herself to discuss her problems with her mother. In pain from her engorged breasts, Yang asked her OB-Gyn for help, only to be given pain killers and told to feed her baby formula and to stop producing milk. Yang tried this approach, but her son couldn’t tolerate the formula.

With her next child, Yang got help from WIC and breastfed her baby. From this experience, Yang became determined to help other mothers so they would not have to give up breastfeeding because of lack of advice and support. Soon after the birth of her third child, Yang joined the newly formed Peer Counseling Program at the WIC clinic in Sacramento. Yang soon used her skills as a full-time breastfeeding educator, teaching classes at WIC offices and local hospitals. A year later, she was hired as a full-time nutrition counselor at WIC.

Now a single mom with four children, Yang supplements the income from her full-time WIC position as a part-time health education consultant helping Hmong families. She facilitates a program at My Sister’s House, an organization that helps women who are victims of domestic abuse.

Yang reached her goal of being a Lactation Consultant last July. The fees for the lactation education courses and the IBCLC examination were paid by a grant from Catholic Healthcare West. She is the only Hmong Lactation Consultant in Northern California.

Yang’s motto is, “If you have a dream, no matter how many obstacles come across your path, you can achieve it by setting goals and going for it. Talking to people who share your vision helps you believe you can do it.”

Yang credits her success to the support of her family and colleagues. She says she couldn’t have had more understanding and supportive colleagues than WIC Director Maureen Clark, Breastfeeding Coordinator Jeannette Newman-Velez, Lactation consultant Karen Evon, and other coworkers. Yang’s children, too, have been supportive. Her six-year-old often insists on reading the Journal of Human Lactation with Yang for her homework reading assignment, as she knows this helps Mom reach her study goals, too!

Today, Yang’s greatest reward is to be able to help a mom who enters her office desperate and dejected and returns home empowered, confident, and hopeful that she will be able to nurse her baby successfully.

Congratulations Yang, you are a shining example and an inspiring role model for all of us!

Yang Her with her children (l-r) Leo, Lou, Kayla and Allen.

Yang Her, WIC Breastfeeding Advocate and Educator

Temecula WIC Achieves Top County Breastfeeding Rates

What do breastfeeding moms need for their babies’ first year? Support!

At the Riverside County Temecula WIC site, we have made it our goal to support moms by helping them reach their breastfeeding goals during their babies’ crucial first year. We work together as a team by collaborating closely with the countywide Loving Support Breastfeeding Program, local hospitals and health centers, all of whom are working to give the same breastfeeding message: “WIC supports breastfeeding.”

We encourage mothers to discuss how breastfeeding is progressing. Through support, assistance and positive reinforcement of their efforts, we help them with problems. Frontline WIC staff support our lead Lactation Educator, Letty Serrato, when she needs extra time to support breastfeeding moms, by picking up the pace and seeing Letty’s other participants.

Letty’s work is enhanced by her own breastfeeding experience with her daughter, Arianah. She worked with Kathleen Pickering from the Loving Support Staff, who came to her home and kept in constant contact until Letty and Arianah were well established with breastfeeding. Arianah had the benefit of being breastfed for more than eighteen months despite initial difficulties, and Letty had a great role model in Kathleen.

Every quarter, Laurie Haessly, our Breastfeeding Coordinator, recognizes the WIC site with the highest average...
rates of exclusive breastfeeding. We are proud to say that Temecula has earned this honor every quarter for more than a year! Moreover, in the last year our average exclusive breastfeeding rate increased from 23.8 percent to 27.5 percent—a healthy 15.5 percent increase. At 2 and 4 months our exclusive breastfeeding rates are 35%, at 6 months 20% and at 11 months 11.6%.

But we aren’t ready to stop there. Dawna Dobson, Senior Nutritionist for the Temecula WIC site, has set our team goal for one year from now at 30 percent of moms breastfeeding exclusively. We plan to make it!

—Jennifer Stewart
Senior Nutritionist

**BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Your Child’s Weight: Helping Without Harming Birth Through Adolescence.*
Ellyn Satter. Kelcy Press, 2005

*Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People For Change.*

*Patient Education: You Can Do It. A Practical Guide to Teaching and Motivating Patients.*
Ginger Kanzer-Lewis. American Diabetes Association, 2005

*Diabesity: The Obesity-Diabetes Epidemic that Threatens America – and What We Must Do To Stop It.*

**WIC Walks the Talk**

WIC Walkers to Land on Moon! That’s right, just two more laps and we will have completed ten laps around the world, the equivalent of the distance to the moon!

Let’s challenge ourselves be active this holiday season and with the coming of the new year. We can make it to the moon by April, in celebration of the birthday of WIC Walks the Talk! Our progress is due to the discipline and enthusiasm of all of you in the agencies who make the daily choice to be active! And kudos to our coaches who cheer us on and keep up our spirits! WIC Walks the Talk rocks!

**Andrea Craddick: Nutrition Educator and Triathlon Enthusiast**

Andrea Craddick raised $2,000 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society last September by competing in the Malibu Triathlon. Her training paid off when she finished the half-mile ocean swim, 18-mile bike ride and 4-mile run in poetic style. “I had a fabulous race and a great adventure that I’ll remember forever!” Congratulations, Andrea, on this tremendous and inspiring feat!

Andrea works for the California Nutrition Network, which is run by the Riverside Country Nutrition Program, providing nutrition education classes for Food Stamp and WIC-eligible residents. The RCNP also runs the WIC program, a Medical Nutrition team, and First Five programs. Andrea visits the other programs and makes presentations on 5-A-Day and physical activity. As might be expected, she is the coach for the Riverside WIC Walk the Talk teams and conducts physical activity presentations for the staff. Her team of 30 WIC walkers has logged 24,476 miles to the WIC Walks total in just 10 months. Way to go, RCNP WIC Walkers!

**HOT LINKS**

[http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/nccc/index.html](http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/nccc/index.html)
The National Center for Cultural Competence maintains a database of a wide range of resources on cultural and linguistic competence, training materials and products.

[http://www.rwjf.org/index.jsp](http://www.rwjf.org/index.jsp)
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation supports research that seeks to improve health and prevent childhood obesity.
You have a story to tell! You have a program to showcase! Contribute to the WIC Watch.

Upcoming Newsletters are already being planned around the following themes:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>DEADLINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2006</td>
<td>Obesity Prevention Strategies</td>
<td>March 1, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2006</td>
<td>Breastfeeding/Early Feeding</td>
<td>May 1, 2006</td>
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