

# Nutrition & WIC Update

KANSAS NUTRITION AND WIC SERVICES



## Go WIC Team! You can do it!

Minerva Vazquez RD, LD, Reno County Health Department

It was my first time attending a National WIC Association (NWA) Conference and it was great! I was able to meet dietitians from around the nation and to see people again from my previous WIC jobs in Massachusetts and Missouri. This

conference reassured my love and passion for this program, I felt privileged to be part of the WIC Team. As the conference's title says, we must "Engage & Inspire" not only our WIC participants, but also our fellow co-workers and the community in general.

Once again, we heard those words "immigration, policy, administration, and public charge." Changes in the political and administration arena can affect our program and the people we serve. If approved, changes to the Public Charge Policies would require that WIC participation be considered in the decision to grant permanent status to immigrants. Participating in WIC would be considered a "heavily weighted negative factor" in the decision process.

NWA is doing its part in responding to the potential changes to public charge. We can help our participants by explaining to them that right now WIC participation does not compromise their immigration application/status.

Go WIC!

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## Did You Know???

HaysMed, in partnership with the Ellis County BF Coalition, has a collaboration with the Mothers' Milk Bank in Denver; they have a depot where women can get screened/tested and can drop off their milk. It just started last summer; they've had less than 10 moms donate, but have had over 3,000 ounces donated. How cool is that?!



## National WIC Association Meeting in April 2018

Susan Lukwago, PhD, RD, LD, CBE

Thanks to the support of Kansas State WIC, I was able to attend the National WIC Association 2018 Annual Education and Training Conference and Exhibits in Chicago, Illinois. It was absolutely wonderful – the city, the hotel, the food, walking at sunrise on Lake Michigan, and oh yes, the sessions at the conference!

One of the sessions I attended was “What can we learn from EBT data about WIC participants’ behavior?” The researchers used data from Virginia WIC EBT to analyze over 150,000 WIC participants’ behavior. The presenter delivered his presentation in sections as appetizer, salad, main course and dessert. The bottom-line is that EBT data is rich and easily reveals what participants buy more of and what is redeemed less, and when. Virginia was also able to use the information to determine when it is necessary to use intervention strategies to retain clients.

From “Results from the WIC Infant and Toddler Feeding Practices Study (ITFPS-2): Findings through age 2”, I learned that this is a national longitudinal study of 3,777 infants followed from prenatal or infant WIC enrollment to their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. The infants were recruited from 80 WIC sites in 27 states and US territories. This is a USDA study and you can easily find out all about it online. So far what we have previously seen about breastfeeding holds. For example going back to work has a negative effective on duration of breastfeeding. Among this cohort, about one in four of the toddlers were already high weight for length.

And how is this for an intriguing session: “Does purchasing behavior of WIC participants align with recommendations for the WIC food package revision?” Right? What do you think the answer is? For the most part yes actually! But one of the more important findings was the necessity to make the food package relevant to ethnic minority participants. USDA is conducting research over the current food package and looking towards the next revisions.

This is just three sessions of nine I attended. NWA conferences are giant but they are a lot of fun both for learning, meeting people and opening your eyes and mind to the huge effect and influence of WIC on the health of our country.



## Helping the Grieving Family

Kara Watts, BFPC Coordinator

At a BFPC webinar several months back we had the opportunity to hear Christy Schunn, a social worker with the Kansas Infant Death & SIDS Network (KIDS Network), talk on the complexities of grief and how we, as WIC staff, can help families through difficult times, such as after a miscarriage. This seems like an important topic for everyone to know more about, so I'm going to share a few things that I learned from her presentation.

Grief is a normal, natural, human response to loss and is therefore highly individual. Prior grief experiences help us to identify coping strategies and defense mechanisms, which can in turn help when we're coping with subsequent grief, so it's important that we find healthy ways to cope. Some common grief reactions include shock, denial, disorganization, depression, anger, guilt, and acceptance. What do most parents want? They want to be able to tell their story and have someone truly hear them. It's ok to visit with parents who have lived through it, and it is important to remember that their child's life had value, regardless of the age of the child. What can you offer to families? Condolences, permission to grieve, acknowledgement of their loss, non-judgmental acceptance of their grief expressions, and continued support. Also make sure to refer them to the KIDS Network for additional help (<http://www.kidsks.org/>). Here are some things you could say:

- I'm calling from WIC and just wanted to check in with you about how you're doing.
- I'm so sorry to hear you've had a loss.
- (If appropriate) I would like to hear your story. What can you share with me?
- Make sure to wait through the silence, if any
- What can you tell me about your support system?
- Would you be open to receiving grief information from the KIDS Network? They are a free statewide grief support program that will send you a packet of information, will let you know what grief resources are in your area, and basically be available if you just need someone to talk to.

Here are some coping strategies to potentially suggest: journaling, scrapbooking, creating a memorial (eg. plant a tree), talking, reading, music, visiting the grave or memorial site.

Counseling families who are grieving can be challenging and stressful for staff, and it's important to remember to care for yourself as well. Some suggestions for self-care include:

- Talk with your supervisor or coworkers (debrief)
- Sleep, eat well, exercise, and rest
- Plan leisure time
- Utilize your Employment Assistance Program or see your health care provider

If you'd like to learn more by watching Christy's presentation, visit our WIC website: [http://www.kansaswic.org/download/WIC\\_Peer\\_Counselors\\_12-13-17.pdf](http://www.kansaswic.org/download/WIC_Peer_Counselors_12-13-17.pdf)



## Excel: Creating Charts

Kristi Glessner, RD, LD--Riley County Health Department

On April 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> I was lucky enough to attend a Fred Pryor training course in Kansas City, KS. Fred Pryor trainings are held all throughout the United States and offer a wide variety of courses for professionals to improve their skills. The training I attended was Microsoft Excel-The Basics and Microsoft Excel-Beyond the Basics. Throughout these two full days of training I gained vast knowledge on this program and found there is so much more to Excel than just simple tables and charts.

I hope to use the skills that I learned in Excel training here in our local office. I can now create spreadsheets easily, quickly and effectively to collect and present data clearly to the rest of our local WIC staff and health department employees. Normally when I have been tasked with making a spreadsheet of some sort it has taken hours to complete just the basics. This not only takes away time from my other WIC responsibilities, it also doesn't always present the information as it should. I now have a good insight on short cuts to decrease the time it takes me to make a spreadsheet. I also learned about different tools that can be used to present the information accurately in a way that is appealing to the viewer and easily understood.

The skills from Excel training will help our clinic put together visual representations of different statistics used in meetings to explain what is going on with a particular part of our clinic. Colleagues will be able to see how we have grown as a clinic and see where we are with the goals we have set for ourselves during the year. There will be so much we can do with this training that I know we will be able to use the knowledge that was gained to the best of our ability.

Simple Excel how-to:

### Creating Charts

We've all entered data into an Excel spreadsheet that we know would better be expressed visually rather than just the numbers. Here are a few simple steps on how to create a chart using existing information already put into Excel:

Select the cells which contain the data you would like to be charted.

Click the **Insert** tab.

Click the dropdown arrow for the desired chart type and click the desired chart.

OR

Click **Recommended Charts** to open the **Insert Chart** dialog box for chart recommendations.

### Modifying Charts

It is simple to change the data and appearance of a chart in Excel

- Select your chart.
- On the **Design** tab, in the **Type** group, click **Change Chart Type**.
- Make the desired changes.
- Click okay.



## Top Sessions at NWA in Chicago: Immigration and Social Media



Lisa Tomlinson, Finney County

When I attended the NWA Conference there were two sessions that had an impact on me. The first was the session on the current government and immigrants and the second was the use of social media to get and retain clients.

I was, and still am, concerned about the government and immigrants. But it was nice to know that WIC and other programs are fighting for their need to exist. It was nice to find out that WIC has their own lobbyists to try and preserve our program. They are there looking out for us while we provide services. Along with WIC, Head Start and SNAP are on the list for reduction or removal. They are trying to prevent immigrant parents from having to repay for services they received for their children, whether they are citizens or immigrants, and to be able to obtain permanent residency or citizenship. I am thankful for the work that these dedicated people are doing.

The other session was on the use of social media to obtain and keep clients. There are standard messages that can be downloaded by local WIC agencies to use and they also have some in Spanish. They provided statistics with real numbers and results. They also provided information on what and how to say it for the best results.

Overall there wasn't a session I attended that I feel didn't bring something fresh and useful to my local clinic. It is nice to get out of my remote corner and see what other clinics are doing. I loved the experience and always come back so energized and hopeful for a more productive and informative clinic experience for my clients.

## Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition Update

Brenda Bandy, IBCLC. Executive Director, Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition

We have great news to share! The CDC released the [2018 Breastfeeding Report Card](#) recently and highlights include:

- Kansas is one of **only 4 states** to exceed national averages and Healthy People 2020 goals in 4 core measures – any breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding at 3 & 6 months and any breastfeeding at 12 months. Kansas also improved in each of these measures over last year.
- Kansas formula supplementation rates in the first 2 days of life continue to decline and are well below the national average of (13.5% Kansas v. 17.2% U.S.).
- 41.1% of babies in Kansas are born in Baby-Friendly facilities, far exceeding the national average of 27.6%. This is a dramatic increase from 0% only 3 short years ago. Kansas is one of **only 12 states** to exceed 40% of births occurring in Baby-Friendly Hospitals. We expect the percentage of babies born in BF hospitals in KS to climb to over 50% within the next 2 years.

Take a moment to let these accomplishments sink in and celebrate how far we have come together. Our shared vision of a state where breastfeeding is normal and supported is closer to becoming a reality. Thank you for the role each of you have played in creating a culture of breastfeeding support in Kansas. We look forward to working with you to build on this momentum!



## “Pacify App Helps Nevada Moms Increase BF Rates”

Ashley Lause MS, RD, LD, CBE, Wyandotte County

The session “A New Frontier: How Smartphones Transformed the Way One Nevada WIC Agency Supports Breastfeeding Participants & Mobile-izing WIC!” at the NWA Nutrition and Breastfeeding meeting was very interesting. It was about how a Nevada WIC office utilized the “Pacify” App to increase their breastfeeding rates. Pacify is an app that offers 24-hour lactation support from IBCLCs. It also provides access to nurses and nutritionists as well, but these functions were not utilized by the clinic. The app uses Facetime with the client to provide counseling between the client and the IBCLC. The Nevada WIC office wanted to pilot this app with their clients to see if this extra support, along with their breastfeeding peer counselor program would increase their breastfeeding rates.

To utilize the app, the Nevada WIC office had to purchase a subscription to the app. They would give their clients an access code to use when they were signing up with the app, which made it free for the client. Also, with this code, the IBCLC having contact with the client knew which WIC office the client was coming from and could send an email to that clinic to report on the counseling session. This report was helpful for the BFPCs because it allowed them to follow up with the client about what was discussed and provide that continuity of care. All IBCLCs who work for Pacify are trained on WIC policies and procedures, so they can provide accurate information to the WIC client about the WIC program policies regarding breastfeeding. The Nevada WIC office had many clients utilize the app and found that it helped increase their breastfeeding rates.

I love the idea of utilizing this app in our WIC clinics. WIC can't be open 24-hours a day and most problems with breastfeeding occur after WIC hours, when mom is exhausted and needing extra support. This app also provided continuity of care and helped everyone providing education to be on the same page and give the same messaging.

The only downfall is the cost. Being pregnant myself, I wanted to download the app to see the cost. A one-month subscription is \$39.99. A subscription for one year is \$199. I believe this is too costly for our WIC clients to purchase on their own. The Nevada WIC did not disclose the cost associated with their contract with Pacify, but it would be helpful to find out the actual cost a State agency could pay for this service. This app helped a lot of the Nevada WIC moms, and this this could be a great option for our Kansas moms as well.

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