



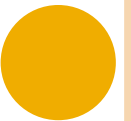
# **ENGAGING WIC IN COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECTS**

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**National WIC Association**

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WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE WIC  
PROGRAM?



# SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

- Federally funded, state run
- 4 pillars of service
  - Nutrition education
  - Breastfeeding promotion and support
  - Referrals to health care and social services
  - Nutritious food package



# WIC SERVES...

- Pregnant, breastfeeding, and post-partum women
- Infants and children up to Age 5
- Who meet income requirements
  - Document income at or below 185% of poverty
  - Demonstrate enrollment in SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid
- Who demonstrate nutrition risk
- About 8 million clients per month in 90 state agencies through 10,000 clinics across the country



# WIC GOALS

- Reduce nutrition-related illness and give children a healthy start in life
- Children arrive at school ready-to-learn



# THE WIC EXPERIENCE



pre-clinic



travel  
To clinic



enter  
clinic



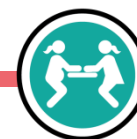
nutrition  
education  
session



receive  
checks



leave  
clinic



post  
clinic



pre-retail  
outlet



enter  
retail  
outlet



produce  
section



other  
grocery  
sections



checkout  
counter



leave  
retail  
outlet



post  
retail  
outlet



“pre”-  
preparing  
meals



preparing  
meals



serving  
meals to  
family



post-serving  
meals to  
family



# THE WIC EXPERIENCE

- “WIC means hope.”
- “WIC for me has meant ‘support’ in my journey to becoming a mom.”
- “I’m a single mom and don’t have any help so WIC is like my other parent.”
- “WIC means a lot to me because eating healthier is living healthier.”



# WIC IMPACTS

- Improved health behaviors and health outcomes
- Health care cost savings

For more than 40 years,  
**WIC** has helped  
women become  
**Confident Parents**  
of  
**Healthy Kids.**





# WIC IN THE COMMUNITY

- Many WIC agencies are interested in partnering to provide more opportunities for their clients
- Many others could potentially become interested with thoughtful engagement by community partners



WHY MIGHT A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION OR  
COALITION WANT TO ENGAGE WIC IN THEIR  
PROJECTS?



# WIC ASSETS

- Access to a population that can provide valuable insights on their needs and wants, and some are eager to engage in projects that help their community.



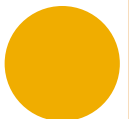
# WIC ASSETS

- Professional and paraprofessional staff with a wealth of knowledge about nutrition and breastfeeding.



# WIC ASSETS

- Established relationships with retailers and a built-in incentive for retailers to stock healthy products in order to be authorized as a WIC-approved vendor



# WIC ASSETS

- Established relationships with health care and social service organizations through referral networks





# WIC ASSETS

- Established in many communities as a trusted resource for families



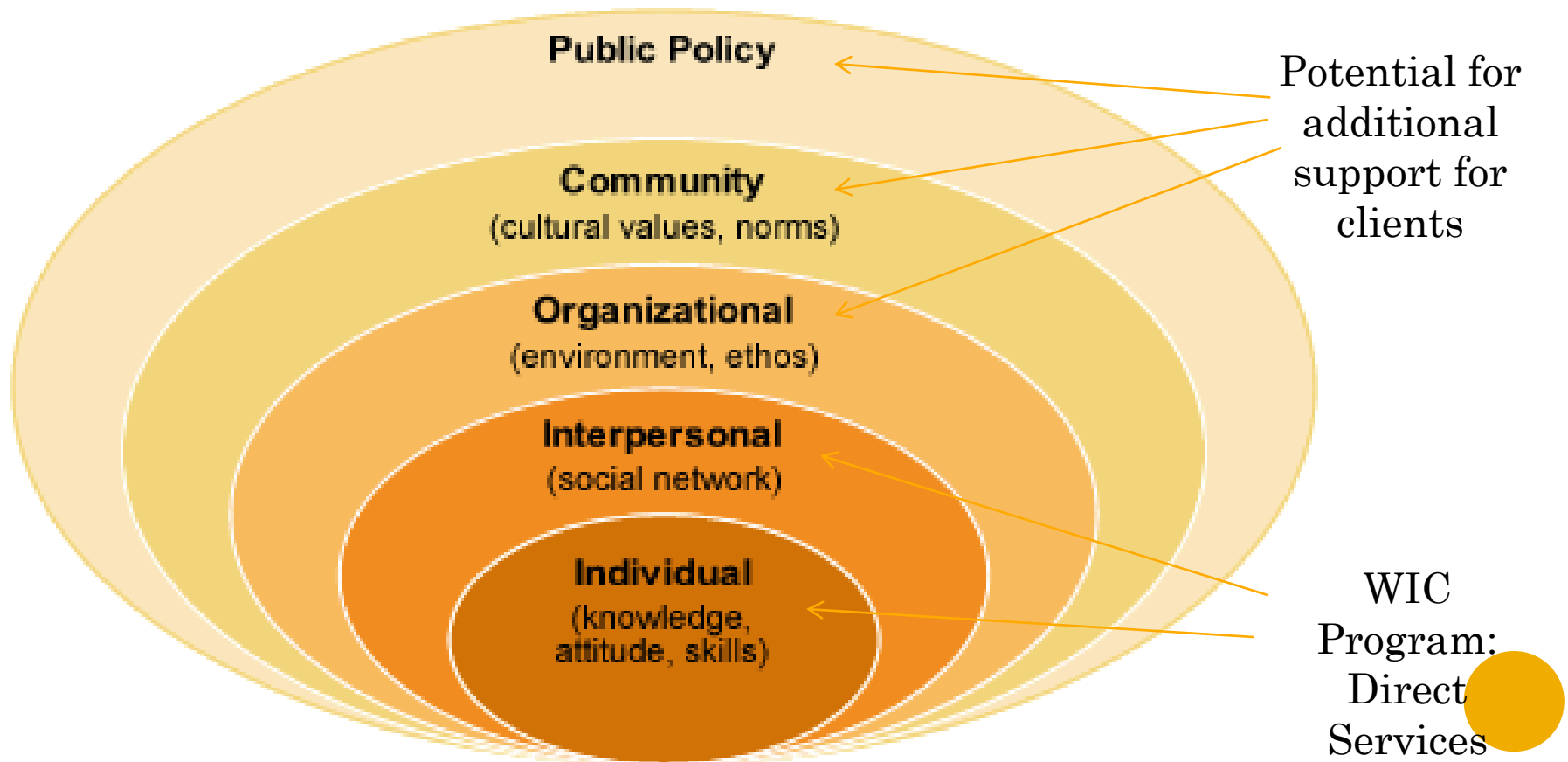
# WIC COMMUNITY HEALTH LEADERSHIP

- NWA's Community Partnerships for Healthy Mothers and Children Project
- WIC Agencies working on policy, systems, and environmental change with community partners to
  - Improve access to healthy food and beverage options
  - Improve access to chronic disease prevention and management services





# WIC WORKING WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS CAN HELP PROVIDE THE FULL SPECTRUM OF SUPPORT FOR WIC CLIENTS



# IMPROVING HEALTHY FOOD INVENTORY AND PROMOTIONS





# IMPROVING AND PROMOTING HEALTHY OPTIONS AT RESTAURANTS



**Eat Well, Wichita County**  
**Choose ¡Por Vida!**

 **Nopales Tacos.....\$7.00**  
Choose 2: Grilled Chicken, Fresh Side Salad  
or Boiled Potatoes

 **Veggie Burrito.....\$7.00**  
Choose 2: Grilled Chicken, Fresh Side Salad  
or Boiled Potatoes

 **Fiesta Chicken Salad.....\$7.50**  
Lettuce, tomatoes, onion, jalapenos, cilantro,  
green bell peppers, cheddar cheese, avocado, salsa

 **GUTIERREZ Restaurant**

Proud ¡Por Vida! Participant  
[www.EatWellWichitaCounty.com](http://www.EatWellWichitaCounty.com)

# STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY/CLINICAL LINKAGES

- Cultural competency training
- Training community organizations and health care providers on WIC and breastfeeding
- Strengthening referral networks between WIC, health care, social services, and other community resources





# ENGAGING LOCAL WIC AGENCY STAFF AND CLIENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Do ask them to tell you more about WIC and their experiences in providing and receiving services and for their opinions on how to compliment their work with community support.
- Don't tell them or imply that what they are providing and receiving is not working and that you are there to save the day with a new project.



# ENGAGING LOCAL WIC AGENCY STAFF AND CLIENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Do ask them if they would like to learn about your community coalition and/or project, and explain how your coalition/project may be relevant to them.
- Don't push the project on them and expect them to immediately engage.



# ENGAGING LOCAL WIC AGENCY STAFF AND CLIENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Do spend time building a relationship with WIC staff and clients to better understand one another's roles in the community and how you can best work together.
- Don't give up on developing the relationship if at first WIC staff and clients do not seem interested. They have been asked to do a lot over the years from participating in studies to unfunded requests related to clinic service delivery.





# ENGAGING LOCAL WIC AGENCY STAFF AND CLIENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Do ask them to participate as coalition members or leaders.
- Don't assume that they have time to meet during normal business hours or that they can easily travel to your meeting location and have access to childcare.



# ENGAGING LOCAL WIC AGENCY STAFF AND CLIENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Do ask if they would be able to offer advise and input on a project
- Don't tell them you need access to the clients for X,Y, and Z. There are often rules and formal processes related to this.



# ENGAGING LOCAL WIC AGENCY STAFF AND CLIENTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Do brainstorm together the best ways to leverage resources and ideas.
- Don't expect staff to be able to spend "just 2 more minutes per client" on another health care or other service during the WIC visit without providing resources, and don't expect that the WIC clients will be able to stay for these "extra two minutes."



## IF YOU FOLLOW THESE TIPS...

- Do expect WIC staff and clients to be excited to provide you their perspectives and engage with the coalition or project.
- Do expect WIC staff and clients to contribute valuable insights, knowledge, and partnerships to a coalition or project.



SCENERIOS: IS THIS A GOOD WAY TO  
APPROACH WIC ENGAGEMENT OR NOT?



SHARING OF STORIES: DO YOU HAVE ANY  
SUCCESES OR LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT  
ENGAGING WIC IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

