

WIC Outreach Morsel Series Information Sharing

September
2012

Welcome to the fourth installment in the WIC Outreach Planning Series, Information Sharing. This is one of six focus areas to support local agencies in developing a strategic, comprehensive outreach plan to build and sustain caseload, and improve the delivery of service.

Using Testimonials to get the WIC Message out

"WIC saved me. After having my daughter, I and my baby's father were both laid off and WIC fed my daughter. Thank you." This is one of many Oregon WIC participant quotes collected and submitted recently to the National WIC Association. Thank you to the Lane, Linn, Umatilla-Morrow Head Start, Marion, Jackson, Multnomah, and Josephine WIC programs for providing these powerful testimonials (see below "Oregon WIC Participant Testimonials").

Why Use Testimonials

Testimonials provide compelling material for marketing WIC. There is nothing more valuable than hearing from peers on what their positive experiences have been with WIC. The words of testimonials are valuable assets and carry more credibility than anything you could say yourself.

Where to Use Testimonials

Print-It is best to have testimonials stand alone from the text rather than weave them into the ad, flyer or brochure. Adding the participant's first name and how long they've been on WIC will add credibility to the testimonial (for example, *Mary H, WIC participant for 4 years and proud mother of 3 children*). **Radio and TV**- Have the announcer or, ideally, a participant recite the testimonial. **Other marketing pieces** that can feature your testimonials could include your website, direct mail pieces, postcards, the waiting room bulletin board, posters for state/national meetings, newsletters, billboards, and even social media updates.

Selecting & Collecting Testimonials

A good testimonial tells a story even though short – it is specific and real, alive and full of voice. It tells how a program has helped a participant. Be sure to share testimonials with your staff so that they can be reminded that their hard work is making a difference in the lives of many. Collect testimonials occasionally to keep your stock fresh and relevant. This works best at the end of a nutrition education session. Ask the facilitator to take the last 5 to 10 minutes to request a written statement from the participants (see the "Collecting WIC Testimonials in NE" attachment to get started). Take advantage of the power of the testimonial!

Oregon WIC Participant Testimonials

Provided by the following fabulous WIC sites: Jackson, Josephine, Lane, Linn, Marion, Multnomah and Umatilla-Morrow Head Start. Thank you!

The best narratives for marketing are those that tell a story in one to two sentences, are specific and real, alive, full of voice, diverse, and note how WIC has helped. Some of these listed below are better for marketing than others. All are amazing to read and share with staff on the impact of WIC!

Healthier Families

"WIC has been a crucial part in raising all of my three children to be healthy and pick the right foods to help them grow and learn to their potential."

"WIC has helped us make sure we have healthy food to put on the table for our girls."

"I lost my job due to cut-backs, and our family was down to one income. That put a lot of stress on our family to pay all our bills and have enough money for groceries. WIC has provided our family with great information that we needed. WIC has provided my girls with the nutrition that is needed for their healthy growth. Fruits, vegetables, cereal, eggs, protein foods, and baby foods are wonderful. I am a nursing mother, so it is very important that I get the nutrition I need to feed my baby. WIC has provided it all for me and my family. If I didn't have WIC, my family and I would be struggling to buy the nutritional food we need for my girls to stay healthy."

"WIC helps us eat healthier especially with the farm fresh vouchers!! Thank you!"

"We went to Farmers Market with our 23 month old daughter and took the Big Red Wagon with us. We got our Farm Direct FI's, bought fruits and vegetables, and piled them around our daughter. She was so excited! She was all smiles with arms and legs hanging out of a large pile of fruits and vegetables. Such a good day, and we got great pictures. We took everything home, and made" home-made" chicken noodle and vegetable soup in the crock pot. The kids LOVED it!!!! Thank you so much for all your work at WIC to help our family eat better and healthier."

"WIC to me means keeping my daughter healthy."



Breastfeeding Support

"WIC is the only place I hear "good job" for nursing my children for the past two years. Not even my doctor says that!"

"I am the proud mother of a nine month old baby boy. From the beginning of my pregnancy until now, I have sought the guidance of the WIC breastfeeding team and they have been a tremendous help on my breastfeeding journey. The bond I have with my baby due to my breastfeeding counselor is worth more than gold. She has gone above and beyond her call of duty for me, doing everything from bringing me different types of breast pumps when another wasn't working, giving me home-made cookies to help with my milk supply (and recipes), praising my efforts by awarding me with milestone certificates, offering a special keychain and being available to me at any time of day. If I need advice or help in any way, she has taken personal interest in me and my son, which has made me feel like she is much more like a friend than a WIC employee. It makes me so happy that there are strong, dedicated, and experienced women such as herself to help new moms like me, or any other mom needing breastfeeding support for that matter, in a time where breastfeeding seems less common and less prolonged, and yet so important for our little ones. I want to thank her from the bottom of my heart and hope to stay in touch long after I stop breastfeeding."

"WIC has helped my family learn how much breastfeeding is beneficial to my son's growth. The support and assistance from WIC has helped tremendously."

"The WIC Clinic has made such a difference to the breastfeeding challenges I have faced. Without the support and advice I have received, I am unsure that I would be breastfeeding today. My breastfeeding peer counselor has helped me to believe that I could overcome the obstacles in my path and has given me the emotional support I needed. I trust her and am so very thankful for her, and that this program exists."

Informative

"I did not plan to have a baby. WIC helps with the financial burden of buying food. I like the prenatal classes and have learned a lot. I have books of what to expect when you're expecting, but the classes really help with answering my questions."

"WIC has been a big part of my life. When I got pregnant with my son at 16, I had no idea what to expect. But with help from WIC, I got all the information I needed from newborn care, to breastfeeding, to toddlers. Then I had my daughter, and once again, I got help. I breastfed my son for three years and plan to breastfeed my daughter for two years."

"Thank you so much for including me in your breastfeeding class! It was wonderful, and I learned so much about having a healthy breastfeeding relationship with my new baby girl. I can't wait to show her to all of you at the WIC office! Thanks again, so very much!"

Overall Support

"WIC is awesome!! All the stress I went through being a new mom, WIC was there. When I stressed out about something, I would call WIC and they would help me. I couldn't do it without WIC."

"I enrolled in the WIC program when my daughter was only a few months old. My husband and I wanted to make things work on one income, so I could stay home with her, and WIC was a huge support. Although I wouldn't have predicted it, we stayed enrolled continuously until my second daughter aged out of the program. Your program gave us over six years of support, during some of the most challenging financial times we have faced as a family, but also the most joyful times as our little ones grew from babies to school-aged. Thank you for the services you provide. We especially enjoyed the Nutrition Story Time with the library staff, and we loved getting the farmer's market vouchers every year. Working with the dietitian was helpful too as we worked on our youngest daughter's food sensitivity and boosting calories in her diet. I hope you are all convinced that the services you offer to vulnerable families in our community are valuable and helpful beyond what you know."

Making Ends Meet

"Sometimes WIC is the only food we have."

"WIC helps to make ends meet. I save vouchers for the end of the month. Right before payday-it's a huge lifesaver!"



"My family and I are so thankful for the WIC Program. We needed help after my husband lost his job, and WIC was there for us right away. This program truly is a BLESSING. Thank you!"

"WIC saved me. After having my daughter, I and my baby's father were both laid off and WIC fed my daughter. Thank you."

"WIC has often meant the difference between eating and not."

We welcome your feedback – What does WIC mean to you?



Thank you for your participation in WIC! We would like to hear about your experience with WIC. Will you take a few minutes to write down one to two sentences and answer this question: **What does WIC mean to you and your family?** Your quote or personal story is powerful and can help us improve services and reach others who may need WIC.

Is it ok for WIC to use your words to promote our program? If so, please check the box and provide you first name, last initial, and how long you have been on WIC. Thank you!

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