

## Great things happening for WIC

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The Colorado WIC office made significant advances in 2013, implementing new systems, policies and technologies. The addition of special services such as piloting a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor text messaging service, initiating efforts to use Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards in place of checks, and connecting local agencies with immunization information have enabled us to serve our 94,000 participants more effectively and efficiently.

Our breastfeeding programs have contributed to the highest 6-month exclusive breastfeeding rates in the country and our exemplary efforts were recognized with a \$535,000 grant award from the USDA. The grant is being used to promote and support breastfeeding in 2014.

We updated orientation materials for new WIC staff, conducted statewide Regional Workshops to improve counseling skills and developed the first WIC Nutrition Services Delivery Blueprint for Action plan.

Our move into automated processes in 2012 continued into 2013 as we make further use of technology for online services and training, including web-based and video technology.

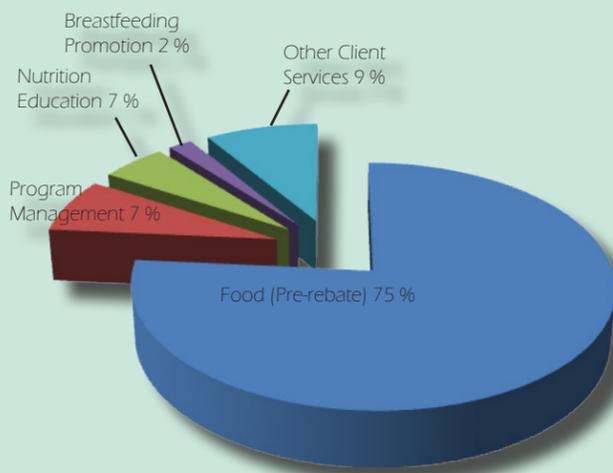
Meanwhile, we reinforced the collaboration efforts, by establishing the Nutrition Services Advisory Group and Communications Advisory Team. We continued collaboration with local agency Wellness, Breastfeeding and Retail Coordinators.

WIC's collaboration with local public health agencies, retailers, health care providers, community organizers and other partners who deliver our services is key to our continued success. Their dedication and service to WIC participants is the heart of our success and reflected on our participant satisfaction survey in the praise given for the quality of WIC services.



## 2013 WIC Funding

Total: \$75,387,870



## Major WIC Accomplishments

- Received \$535,000 award from USDA, in recognition of exemplary efforts to promote and support exclusive breastfeeding.
- Piloted a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor text message platform with participants residing in rural areas.
- Improved access to program information through website and communications with participants and partners through social media.
- 445 CO WIC retailers were reauthorized.
- Contractor chosen to implement the Electronic Benefits Transfer system.
- Local Agency Wellness Coordinators established to advance obesity prevention efforts.
- Conducted statewide Regional Workshops that focused on improving counseling skills.
- Developed the first WIC Nutrition Services Delivery Blueprint for Action plan.
- Completed year 2 of the Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Action Plan.
- Produced the 2012 Pediatric Overweight/Obese data using a CDC-endorsed analysis procedure.
- Established an interface between local agency CO WIC staff and the Colorado Immunization Information System.

Colorado

# WIC

Women, Infants and Children

# 2013 Annual Report



The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides benefits to low-income pregnant and postpartum women, and to infants and young children who are at nutritional risk.

Research shows that poor nutrition during fetal development and a baby's first five years causes life-altering effects to health, limits memory development and a child's ability to learn, and adds to health care costs.

WIC helps families combat food insecurity and nutrition-related health problems, including obesity and type 2 diabetes.

During this critical period of a child's development, WIC provides nutritious food, healthy eating education, breastfeeding support and referrals to other health and social services.



# Our participants thrive because of the support and advice they get at WIC



"You should get on WIC. It's helpful for your nutrition and your baby's health."

Elizabeth Smith and Alexander Gipson  
Gipson Eastside Family Health Center



"WIC educators are nice and very understanding. They help us in every way they can."

Zornísta Dramova and Mateo Levi Parr  
Gipson Eastside Family Health Center

## Exclusive Breastfeeding Promotion

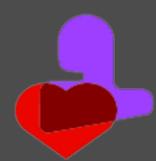
WIC supports mothers with breastfeeding through prenatal and postpartum counseling addressing mothers' concerns and plans; preparation for the hospital experience; assessment of the need for supportive equipment, such as a breast pump; and referral to community resources for additional support.



Colorado was recognized for its outstanding achievement in breastfeeding promotion with a \$534,989 USDA Breastfeeding Performance Bonus Award for Federal Fiscal Year 2013-2014. It was the only state to be awarded and had the highest increase in issuance rates of food packages for fully breastfeeding infants from the previous year.

With that money, WIC is working to improve breastfeeding by:

- A pilot texting/telephone WIC breastfeeding peer counselor program
- Awarding special breastfeeding grants for 15 local WIC agencies to strengthen community based support for breastfeeding.
- Nine regional statewide 2-day lactation management trainings for WIC staff and community health care providers.

 **30%** WIC staff trained as Lactation Management Specialists

 **77%** WIC infants initiated breastfeeding

## Early Childhood Obesity Prevention

WIC created a 3-year Healthy Weight Action Plan, informed by an advisory group of state and local agency staff.

As part of the plan, Colorado WIC implemented the WIC Wellness Coordinator System, which designates wellness advocates within WIC local agencies to advance obesity prevention and wellness efforts in WIC.

Twenty-four Wellness Coordinators in 14 WIC local agencies actively engage WIC staff and families in activities to prevent obesity in young children. The Wellness Coordinators incorporate nine Colorado audience-tested early childhood obesity prevention messages that address important healthy lifestyle behaviors found most promising in preventing overweight and obesity before it begins among our youngest children.

## Average participation compared to birth rate

Average total WIC participation



CO Births



Average infant WIC participation

