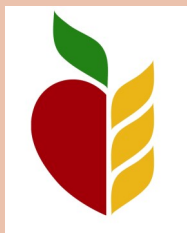




WIC Because You Care

North Dakota WIC Program Annual Report FY 2013

WIC FY 2013 Report



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Fiscal Year 2013 Annual Report

WIC began almost 40 years ago and over the years has been recognized as one of the most efficient and cost effective public health programs. The Special Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) reaches families who most need preventative health services. WIC helps parents give their children a healthy start by investing in their future with nutrition education and healthy foods. This report describes how WIC improves North Dakota's families, communities and economy.

ND WIC By the Numbers

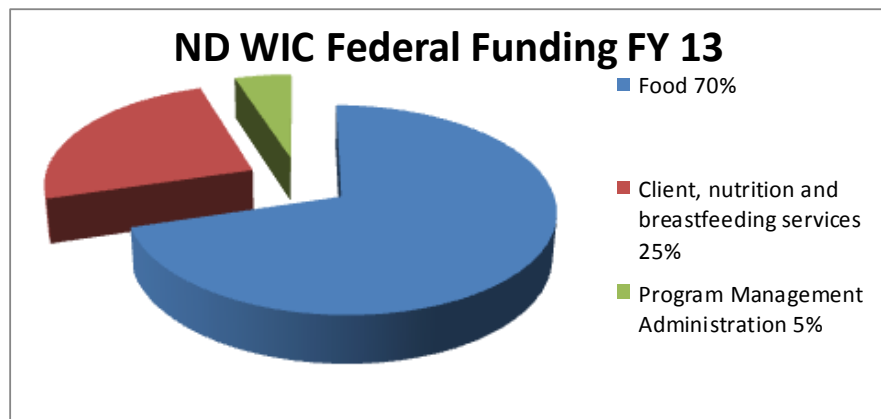
- **22,345** women, infants and children who were nutritionally or medically at risk were served in North Dakota this past year.
- **6,875** infants received WIC benefits in 2012, which is almost *70%* of the infants born in the state (based on 10,072 total live births).
- **\$10.2 million** were spent in grocery store sales at the 175 grocery stores approved by WIC statewide.
- WIC services are provided by local public health, hospitals and tribal agencies in **80** communities.

2013 WIC funding

ND WIC is sustained by federal dollars and rebates. In 2013 ND WIC benefits were available due to:

\$ 10.7 million in Federal funds from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
\$2.3 million from the rebates from infant formula manufacturers
(which all becomes more food funds).

The following chart is how ND WIC spent the federal dollars:

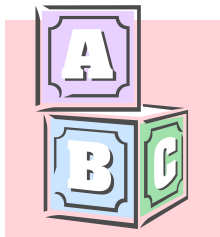


Who WIC Serves

Lower-income pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women and children younger than 5 who have a health or nutrition risk are eligible for WIC.

North Dakota WIC Household Characteristics

- The average household size is between three and four individuals.
- Sixty-two percent are two-parent families.
- Working families make up 85 percent of WIC participants (63 percent have one or both working full-time, and 22 percent working part-time).
- Fifty-nine percent receive SNAP (food stamps), and 80 percent participate in Medicaid.



WIC participant 2013 survey comments

"We love our WIC program The staff is always very friendly and give great advice about breastfeeding and feeding my picky toddler"

"WIC was very helpful and I am so thankful for everything it has provided me."

"Thank you for your help!"

"I love my WIC!"

How WIC Improves the Health of North Dakota Families

WIC mothers are more likely to get early prenatal care and to breastfeed. Healthy habits support healthy pregnancies, prevent low-birth weight infants and prevent chronic conditions like obesity, diabetes and heart disease. WIC also:

- Reduces premature births.
- Lowers infant mortality.
- Prevents childhood anemia.
- Improves cognitive development.

WIC promotes and supports breastfeeding. Infants who are not breastfed are more likely to experience infections and chronic conditions like allergies, asthma and diabetes later in life. Studies show that babies who are not breastfed are more likely to require doctor visits, hospital stays and prescriptions compared to babies who breastfeed. Breastfed children are less likely to be affected by childhood obesity, and breastfeeding strengthens the bond between mothers and their babies.

Nutrition Education and Referral Are Key to WIC Services

Mothers and children enrolled in WIC receive:

- Education about nutrition and the importance of physical activity.
- Breastfeeding education and support.
- Pregnancy and early childhood growth and health screening.
- Referrals to prenatal care, preventative health care and other services.



WIC is designed to provide families with the knowledge and resources to make healthy choices about what they eat. It is this focus on good nutrition and the important role it plays in preventing lifelong health and developmental problems that defines WIC's mission.

WIC Foods Promote a Healthy Lifestyle

WIC provides checks to buy specific healthy foods that:

- Are high in the nutrients missing from diets of lower-income families, like calcium, iron, protein, folic acid, and vitamins A,C, and D.
- Meet the individual participant's health needs.
- Meet the federal nutrition requirements set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Influence healthy eating habits to help improve quality of life and prevent chronic diseases like diabetes, cancer and childhood obesity.



WIC Foods:

- **For Infants (Birth - 12 months)** - WIC strongly encourages breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding. Bottle-fed infants receive the WIC contract brand of iron-fortified infant formula. Beginning at 6 months of age, infants may also receive iron-fortified infant cereal, baby food fruits, vegetables, and meats (for exclusively breastfed babies only.)

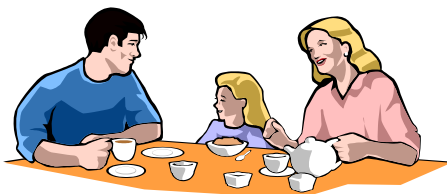
- **For Women and Children** - Women and children receive milk, cheese, eggs, cereals high in iron and low in sugar, peanut butter, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grain products (bread, tortillas, or brown rice), dry/canned beans or peas, and fruit or vegetable juices. Women who exclusively breastfeed their babies may also receive canned tuna or salmon.



Participant Input:

Every year ND WIC staff invite WIC families to let us know how we are doing and suggest areas that may need to be improved. The annual survey helps staff with program planning and gives us some insight into whether what we are doing is effective. This past year participants told us a number of things like:

- * 92% said staff are always happy to see them and another 87% said staff discuss the participant's needs.
- * 78% said that WIC has helped their family eat more fruits and 71% eat more vegetables.
- * 80% said they use their entire amount of fresh fruit and vegetables offered and 90% of the milk.
- * 72% said they like the monthly newsletter, the *PickWIC Paper*.
- * When asked to rank the program 83% said the everything is great and another 15% said it is good (that adds up to a 98% approval rating)!

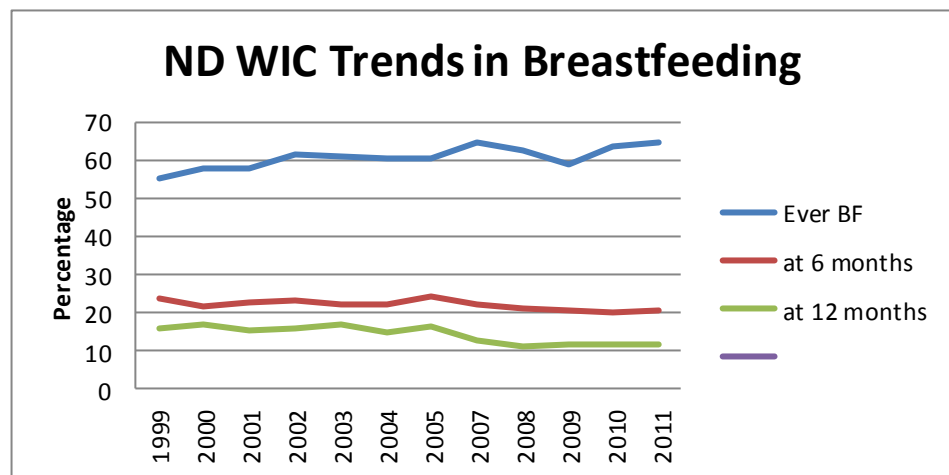


WIC Breastfeeding Rates. Breastfeeding is one of the most powerful and cost-effective ways to protect the health of infants and children. North Dakota WIC actively promotes breastfeeding as the optimal method of infant feeding. Breastfeeding is on the increase for the WIC population and is fast approaching the overall state rate (66%).

ND is proud to have **breastfeeding peer counseling programs** at three of our local agencies. Peer counselors are generally women in the community with personal breastfeeding experience who provide information and support to WIC mothers. They help prevent and manage common breastfeeding concerns and become a valuable source of support and encouragement to mothers. They also form important connections to other health services in their community. Research shows that peer counselors influence breastfeeding initiation and duration rates in the WIC population. Peer counselors complement and reinforce the breastfeeding information and support provided by other WIC staff.

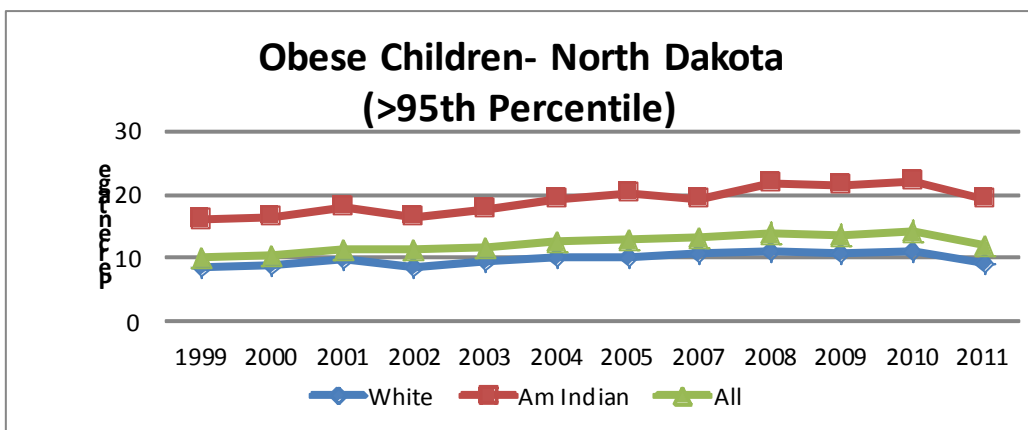
“I was not going to breastfeed until I talked to the WIC PC and my mother. They helped me continue when I as ready to give up in the first weeks. Now I’m happy I choose to breastfeed”

Comment from a WIC mom working with a Peer Counselor



Obesity in Children. Obese children are those whose weight-for-length is greater than the 95th percentile on growth charts. Only about 5 percent of children are expected to fall into this range. As you can see in the chart below, the percentage of obese children in North Dakota is more than twice the expected amount, which is also part of a national trend. High weight-for-height is a significant concern for American Indian children. On an encouraging note, beginning in 2010 we see a slight decline in the rate of obesity for ND WIC children. North Dakota WIC is working to help families

eat better and get active. WIC staff discuss a variety of ways to support a healthy weight so parents can choose what works for *their* family.



North Dakota WIC Participants and Food Dollars. There are 25 local WIC administering agencies providing services across the state, identified by different color areas on the map below. The administering agencies include single- and multi-county public health units, community hospitals, and tribes. Below are monthly averages for participation by county (or parts) and the monthly average of food dollars spent by the administering agency by county (where data is available). The star designates the location of the main office of the WIC administering agency.

