

Healthy Habits for Life California Campaign

The Opportunity

The National WIC Association (NWA) is establishing a partnership with Sesame Workshop for a national nutrition education campaign using the Sesame Workshop *Healthy Habits for Life* initiative. NWA and Sesame Workshop will co-brand *Healthy Habits for Life* materials for use in WIC agencies, healthcare offices, grocery stores and other venues where families visit or receive services. This is an exciting opportunity to associate WIC—the nation's premiere nutrition program—with Sesame Workshop—the respected leader in initiatives for young children and their families. California WIC plans to adopt *Healthy Habits for Life* as a statewide campaign for the implementation of the new WIC foods.

The Campaign Components

Components of the California Campaign will include staff training, participant education, partnership with healthcare providers and other partners and a retail/vendor component. Topics to be addressed in the campaign include:

- “Eat the rainbow” of fruits and vegetables
- “Anytime and Sometime” foods
 - Increase whole grains
 - Choose low fat or nonfat milk
 - Eat more fruits and vegetables
 - Decrease sweetened beverages and juice
 - Decrease high fat foods
- Breastfeeding and infant feeding
- How to shop for healthy choices with the new WIC checks

The campaign will include the distribution of the Sesame Workshop kit, *The Get Healthy Now Show*, to WIC staff and families, and use of *Healthy Habits for Life* posters and other collateral materials in WIC sites, grocery stores, healthcare offices and other locations.

The Process

In July 2008, local agency and State WIC staff formed a Campaign Team to jointly plan the campaign. The campaign team is adapting items from the *Healthy Habits for Life* child care resource kit and other sources to address the components and topics listed above, starting with staff training materials. The new WIC foods will be incorporated into the materials and resources. The campaign kick-off and first train-the-trainer session will occur at the California Fall Management Conference in October 2008. Subsequent training sessions and distribution of campaign materials will follow throughout 2009.

Local WIC agencies will begin to train staff in October 2008 about eating healthier and assessing their own readiness to make changes in the choices they and their families make. The training will also increase their awareness of the new WIC foods. By implementing an “employee wellness” training program including taste testing of new foods, “healthy potlucks”, recipe contests and other fun activities, frontline WIC employees will be motivated to improve their habits and be better prepared to help WIC families to establish healthy habits.

In early 2009, the rollout of the statewide *Healthy Habits for Life* participant education campaign will begin, starting with the distribution of *The Get Healthy Now Show* kit to all families and discussion of the Healthy Habits principles. Additional “tool kits” for educating families on the different campaign topics will follow. All local agencies will receive the required materials, tools and training needed to conduct the participant education campaign over a period of approximately 12 months—through roll-out of the new food checks.

Campaign materials for grocery stores, healthcare offices and other locations will be developed and distributed during the participant education campaign.

Who’s Involved

Nutrition education and training staff from the State WIC Office along with 4-6 local agency staff and staff from the California WIC Association form the Campaign Team to develop the campaign resources. The team will actively solicit input from local WIC agencies throughout the process.

All local agencies/staff will implement the campaign at all WIC sites statewide.

Partner programs and organizations, including the Network for a Healthy California, California First 5 Association, California Department of Education, California chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics and retail grocery associations will be included as appropriate in the planning and implementation.

Who Pays?

The State WIC Office intends to purchase *The Get Healthy Now Show* kits, Healthy Habits for Life posters and collateral materials for use in WIC agencies and will also produce all tool kit materials for local agencies. The State WIC Office will pursue cost sharing alternatives for materials used in grocery stores, healthcare offices and other venues.

Keeping Everyone Informed

Information about the campaign will be shared through:

- Regular communication with local WIC directors
- WIC 2008 Fall Management and 2009 Spring Annual Conferences
- Communication with partner organizations and stakeholders
- Campaign updates posted on the WIC website