



HOW DO BABIES COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR CAREGIVERS?

"I'm hungry", "I'm sleepy", "I want to be near you", "I need something to be different!"

Research on baby behavior conducted by Dr. Jane Heinig and colleagues at UC Davis has documented that when parents understand their infants' cues, they can meet the babies' needs appropriately, resulting in:

- an increase in exclusive breastfeeding
- a decrease in
 - formula feeding
 - overfeeding

Dr. Heinig and her staff have been providing training on baby behavior to WIC agency staff throughout the state for the past two years. As a follow-up, the California WIC Program is developing a statewide campaign

to assist WIC agencies in providing baby behavior education to WIC parents in a consistent, effective and sustainable manner.

The campaign will kick off in 2011 and will involve all WIC agencies. It will include:

- staff training
- participant education curricula using a variety of media
- environmental reinforcers

Baby behavior messaging will continue thereafter as a core component of WIC prenatal and infant education. Other key education messages (on breastfeeding, starting solid foods, etc.) will not be replaced but rather enhanced by baby behavior messaging.

Through this campaign, WIC parents will understand normal infant behavior, resulting in longer breastfeeding duration and less overfeeding as demonstrated in Dr. Heinig's research. This will have a positive impact on child health and obesity prevention.



For further information about baby behavior:

http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/gallery/FitWICBaby.htm

