



Getting Your Message Out

Types of Outreach

Types of outreach include: **one-time**, **short-term**, or **ongoing**. All outreach efforts should focus on marketing the WIC Program, maintaining community awareness, maintaining participation, and addressing misconceptions and barriers to participation.

One-Time outreach activities are implemented in response to an immediate community need, request, invitation, or to target a specific group. Sometimes these events are so successful that they become annual or quarterly events.

Use one-time outreach strategies . . .

- 👏 to target large audiences
- 👏 when adequate resources are available
- 👏 when increasing caseload is critical
- 👏 when accompanied by other community based outreach strategies

Short-Term outreach activities may be implemented monthly, bimonthly, or once a year and may even become ongoing. Short-term outreach activities provide an opportunity for face-to-face interaction with potential participants or groups who serve them.

Use short-term outreach strategies . . .

- 👏 to make WIC's presence in the community known
- 👏 to let people know about your ongoing outreach activities
- 👏 to reach targeted segments of a community

Ongoing (Sustainable) outreach activities are repeated on a regular basis. Ongoing outreach activities especially help increase caseload during growth periods and help maintain participation rates when you reach maximum caseload. Ongoing activities also address barriers and myths that may keep potential WIC participants from participating.

Use ongoing outreach strategies . . .

- 👏 to help maintain caseload
- 👏 to increase caseload
- 👏 to make WIC's presence in the community known
- 👏 for hard-to-reach populations
- 👏 to bring in high priority participants

One-Time

Pros

- 👉 Reaches a large audience
- 👉 You can do it any time
- 👉 Easily tailored

Cons

- 👉 Can be expensive
- 👉 Provides limited information
- 👉 Provides limited exposure to message

Print and Broadcast Media

- Newspaper ads
- Newspaper articles
- Community newsletters
- Parenting magazines
- Informational campaigns -Information presented on billboards, public transportation (such as bus ads and ads on bus shelters), posters, and brochures.
- Radio public service announcements (PSAs)
- Radio –paid spots
- Television public service announcements (PSAs)
- Television shows
- Television –paid spots



See *the California WIC Local Marketing Kit for details on how to use print and broadcast media.*

Special Targeted Campaigns

- Direct Mail Campaigns -Contact utility companies or private companies that provide targeted mailings.
- Door Hanger Campaigns –Contact door hanger services that serve low-income zip code areas.
- Leaflet Campaigns –Have staff go door-to-door to leaflet neighborhoods, laundromats, grocery stores, factories, and other businesses in low-income areas.

Short-Term

Pros

- 👏 Targets a specific audience
- 👏 Relatively inexpensive
- 👏 Moderate amount of staff time required
- 👏 Face to face contact possible

Cons

- 👏 Limited audience
- 👏 Short term impact
- 👏 Dependent upon events
- 👏 Minimal success

Displays

Display eye-catching materials. Displays can be done in a variety of settings. Displays work best when they tie into a theme of an event. For example, display outreach materials at local libraries during National Nutrition Month, Breastfeeding Awareness Month, or National Public Health Week.

Booths at Community Events

Set up a WIC information booth at health fairs, school events, and flea markets. Booths provide printed materials and are usually staffed so that someone can answer questions and perhaps make appointments.

Person-to-Person Campaigns

- Hire community health outreach workers (CHOWs) (could be current or former WIC participants) to go door-to-door to leaflet neighborhoods, laundromats, grocery stores, factories, and other businesses in low-income areas.
- Host a “Bring a Friend to WIC” event. Offer prizes or entry into grand prize drawings to those who bring someone to WIC.

Presentations

Provide in-service presentations, brown bag lunch grand rounds, informational sessions, and training workshops. Presentations should provide information tailored to the needs of the audience. Include print materials with contact information.

Ongoing

Pros

- 👉 Long-term impact
- 👉 Helps maintain caseload
- 👉 Relatively inexpensive
- 👉 Establishes community partnerships
- 👉 Helps develop comprehensive services
- 👉 Maintains community awareness about WIC

Cons

- 👉 Requires long-term commitment
- 👉 Must be part of day-to-day operations
- 👉 May be difficult to establish partnerships
- 👉 Requires some staff time

Partnerships/Networks

Establish partnerships with health care providers, social service organizations, community-based organizations, schools, and food and energy assistance programs. These programs often serve the same population as WIC. Meet with their staff to develop mutual referral and information exchange systems.

Information Sharing/Education/Training

Provide annual or bi-annual informational sessions, inservice presentations, and/or brown bag lunch grand rounds to staff of service provider organizations.

Coalitions

Become a member of community coalitions such as breastfeeding, *First 5*, hunger and obesity prevention coalitions. Participating in these coalitions helps get the word out about WIC services.

Customer Service

- Make your WIC site welcoming and pleasant
- Offer office hours that meet participants' needs
- Offer walk-in appointments
- Evaluate clinic flow to shorten waiting times
- Welcome children by providing activities, toys, and books
- Mail food instruments for hardship cases (see WPM 380-10 for guidelines)
- Develop a system to collect continuous input from participants
- Provide ongoing customer service training for staff
- Provide learner-centered group and individual education

Retention of Participants

- Remind participants of appointments (call or send postcards)
- Reschedule missed appointments (call or send postcards)
- Send 1st Birthday cards to encourage families to keep their children on WIC
- Provide incentives
- Clarify eligibility guidelines with participants to maintain participation