

## Growing Up Healthy With WIC

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## Children's HealthWatch

Formerly Children's Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program (C-SNAP)

Pediatric and public health researchers who monitor the impact of economic conditions & public policy on health of young children.

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## Children's HealthWatch



Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington DC,  
 Little Rock, Minneapolis, Los Angeles

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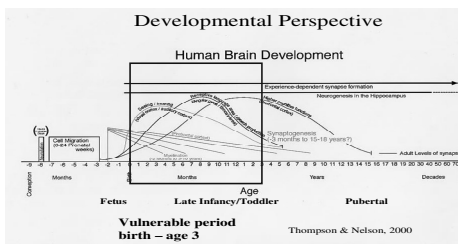
## Children's HealthWatch

- Children < 3 years of age.
- Urban medical centers in low-income communities
- Emergency Departments and primary health care clinics
- English/Spanish (Somali in MN)
- State resident
- Over 32,000 children
- Limit to children with no private health insurance

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## Why focus on children under age 3?

Developmental Perspective



**Vulnerable period birth - age 3**  
Thompson & Nelson, 2000

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## Children's HealthWatch

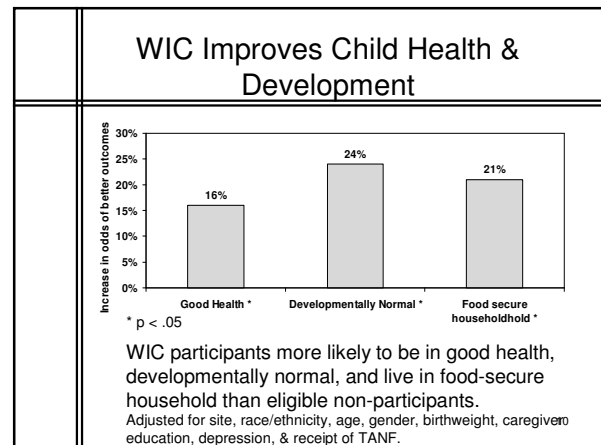
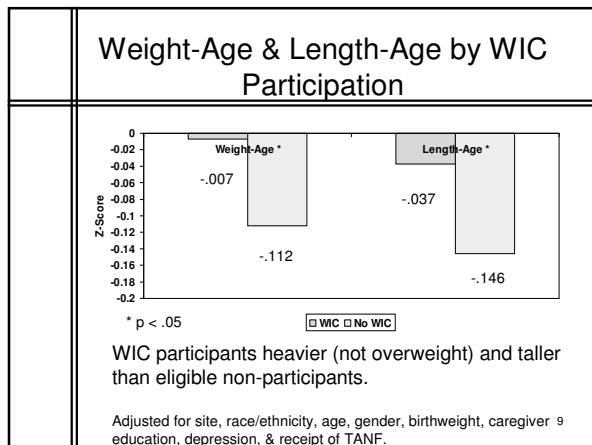
- Weigh and measure children.
- Caregiver demographics
- Food security: USDA Food Security Scale
- Child's perceived health: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor
- Child's development: Parent Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS)

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Demographics by WIC Participation		
	WIC (21,383)	No WIC (2,442)
Child Age *	11.0 mos	15.6 mos
Mother US Born *	64%	72%
Mother Married *	35%	31%
Mother High School	62%	62%
Mother Employed *	38%	40%
Mother Depressed *	33%	38%
Child LBW	14%	14%
Child Breastfed *	54%	51%
TANF *	29%	25%

\*p < .05


Reasons Eligible Women Do Not Receive WIC	
Hours	
Transportation	
Lack of permanent address	





- ### Summary of WIC Benefits
- Better growth (weigh and length within normal)
  - More likely to be in good health
  - More likely to be developmentally within normal limits
  - More likely to be in food secure household

- ### Policy Recommendations
- Provide full complement of WIC foods recommended by Institute of Medicine
    - Food packages ¾ recommended fruits/vegetables
    - Food packages 4/5 recommended food for women
  - Coordination between local WIC and hospitals with maternity services
    - Enroll new mothers early
    - Ensure breastfeeding support
  - Accommodate working mothers
    - Extend office house
    - Some education electronically


	<b>Policy Recommendations</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund WIC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Support eligible women, infants, and children</li> <li>– Support implementation of IOM recommendations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increase funding for nutrition services and administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Current funding insufficient for Nutrition Education</li> <li>– Nutrition Education central to mission</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Decrease barriers to application and reapplication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Outreach to women regarding requirements</li> <li>– Translation services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	 <p>“There is no finer investment for any community than putting milk into babies.”</p> <p>Winston Churchill</p>
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	<p><b>WIC: A Wise Investment That Promotes Early Health &amp; Development</b></p>  <p>Age: 3m 7m 1yr 2 yr 3 yr 4 yr 5yr</p> <p>Funding for Children’s HealthWatch WK Kellogg Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, many other foundations and private donors</p>
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	<p>CHILDREN’S HealthWatch 88 E. Newton Street   Vose Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor   Boston, MA 02118   617.414.6366</p> <p><b>Thank You!</b></p> 
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	<b>INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE: WIC FOOD PACKAGE REVISIONS</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of inadequate &amp; excessive nutrient intake</li> <li>• Adherence to Dietary Guidelines</li> <li>• Promotion of breastfeeding</li> <li>• Inclusion of available and affordable foods</li> <li>• Culturally acceptable foods</li> <li>• Consider impact on vendors</li> </ul>
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	<b>Maryland Food Preferences Study</b>
	 <p>rural and small towns, 2 suburbs, and an urban site</p>
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METHODS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval from Institutional Review Boards State DHMH and University of Maryland</li> <li>• Participants signed informed consent &amp; received \$10 gift card</li> <li>• All materials written in English and Spanish</li> <li>• Bilingual interviewers</li> </ul>
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FRUITS AND VEGETABLES	
	<p>Pleased that 100% juice partially replaced by vouchers for fruits and vegetables</p> <p>Hispanic participants prefer fresh F&amp;V</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recommendations</b> <b>Introduce vouchers for F&amp;V</b> <b>Need for choices in food packages</b></p>
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FRUIT AND VEGETABLES							
	<p>Eaten daily, especially fresh fruits &amp; vegetables</p> <p>Baby foods eaten frequently</p> <p>Apples, bananas, carrots, sweet potatoes, peas</p> <p>Focus group findings</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Cost and taste</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Fresh - healthiest</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dislike of "canned taste"</td> <td>Convenience</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Enthusiastic about opportunity to purchase more F&amp;V</td> </tr> </table>	Cost and taste	Fresh - healthiest	Dislike of "canned taste"	Convenience	Enthusiastic about opportunity to purchase more F&V	
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	21						



COMMERCIAL BABY FOODS	
	<p>Consumed by most infants</p> <p>Baby food fruit, vegetables, and meats are culturally acceptable and readily available</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recommendations:</b> <b>Provide commercial baby food fruits and vegetables</b></p>
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REDUCED FAT OPTIONS	
	<p>Not preferred by participants</p> <p>Perceptions that reduced fat</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Tastes "watered down"</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Signifies being on a diet</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recommendations</b> <b>Education on merits &amp; "meaning" of reduced fat</b> <b>Taste tests</b></p>
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WHOLE GRAINS	
	<p>Participants prefer white and potato bread</p> <p>Agreed to try whole wheat if WIC provides</p> <p>Confusion over labeling</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recommendations</b> <b>Taste tests</b> <b>Advocate for clear labeling</b></p>
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CANNED FISH	
	<p>Breastfeeding women would eat canned fish</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p><b>Education about merits of fish for mother and baby</b></p> <p><b>Increase variety (ensure safety)</b></p> <p>25</p>

CONCLUSIONS	
	<p>Home environment: essential in establishing dietary behavior</p> <p>WIC participants enthusiastic regarding changes to food packages</p> <p>Healthier dietary options and education, likely to reduce the risk of obesity among women, infants, and children</p> <p>26</p>

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