

WIC News in Alabama

Promoting Healthy Women, Infants and Children in Alabama

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New Alabama State WIC Director



Carolyn Battle was named Alabama State WIC Director December 3, 2007. Carolyn brings 18 years of experience in WIC to the position. Her previous experience in WIC includes local Nutritionist for Tuscaloosa County, Area 5 Nutrition Director, and most recently Director of Nutrition Services at the State office.

Dr. Thomas Miller, Director of the Bureau of Family Health Services noted Carolyn's experience in WIC at all levels and her leadership skills in the appointment announcement. Congratulations Carolyn!

Carolyn stated that she is very honored for the opportunity to serve as the Alabama State WIC Director and look forward to working with such a great group of local, area, and state level staff who make the WIC Program such a success. She also stated that she recognizes how hard everyone is working to serve our record high numbers of mothers and children and is thankful for the quality services that are provided.

Retirement of Alabama State WIC Director

Wendy Blackmon retired August 1, 2007 as State WIC Director after over twenty-two years of service in WIC. Under Wendy's leadership, the Alabama WIC Program continued its role as a pacesetter among regional and national programs.

Wendy's priority was to always provide the best service possible to mothers and children in the state.

We thank Wendy for her many contributions and wish her happiness in her retirement.



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Nutrition Services

VENA/I CARE – New Stripes for WIC Providers!

October 1, 2007, providers (nutritionists and nurses) began using a new patient centered approach for collecting nutrition information from patients at WIC visits. USDA mandated that Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA) be implemented fiscal year 2008. Alabama WIC adopted the I CARE approach to VENA. I CARE stands for “I Collect with Respect and Empathy” and was coined by Jane Neill, RD, WIC Coordinator for Hale and Sumter Counties who is a member of the statewide VENA committee. Other members of the committee are Teresa Alexander, RD, WIC Coordinator for DeKalb County; Mandy Jones, RD, WIC Coordinator for Talledega, Sylacauga and Coosa County clinics; Reba Brannan, RD, MPH,

Nutrition Director Public Health Area 5; Dianne Lollar, RD, MPH, Nutrition Director Public Health Area 1; Cindy Templeton, RD, Nutrition Director Public Health Area 6; and state nutrition staff.

The State staff with the help of the committee members presented VENA/I CARE training in each public health area during August and September. A total of 259 nutritionists and nurses participated in the training. Along with I CARE, a zebra theme was chosen for training noting that the procedure for certification remains the same. We are only changing how we collect information; i.e., putting on new stripes!



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WIC Website
www.adph.org/wic

Data Management

As all of those who work in WIC can attest, in October 2007 we implemented new software and hardware at local clinics in order to capture electronic signatures for WIC food instrument and Farmers' Market benefit issuance. This was done in an effort to improve clinic efficiency by making daily, routine food instrument issuance an easier process. Paper food instrument receipts are no longer generated, thus they do not have to be reconciled daily to an "end of the day" report. The task of filing them and shipping them to the State WIC Office monthly has also been eliminated. In addition to streamlining clinic operations, it has also streamlined State WIC operations related to processing thousands of receipts and sending them to our banking contractor for imaging onto a DVD. In addition to making WIC processes easier, electronic signatures are also bringing us one step closer to our long term goal of implementing the USDA funded SAM (State Agency Model) WIC data system. Electronic signature capability is a requirement of the new data system which we will already have.

CIVIL RIGHTS

When is a complaint a civil rights complaint? Assume that three individuals enter your clinic at about the same time. We will call them A. B. C. because that is how they approached your work area. Let us assume that all of them are purple people and you are also a purple person. You take care of A with your usual cheerful and friendly manner, going out of your way to help her. When you are through with A you call up C, again being your cheerful and friendly self. After C leaves you wait a few minutes before calling B. Now you are not your usual cheerful and friendly self. Instead you kind of go out of your way to be just the opposite. When B asks you a question you tell her that you don't have time to get her an answer and you show her the door. B decides that she didn't care for your attitude and she wants to file a complaint. The choices on our Complaint Form are: **Participant Abuse, Vendor Abuse, Civil Rights, Discrimination Abuse, Proxy Abuse, Other.** *Which one should she choose?*

You are correct. It's other. As you know it cannot be a civil rights complaint because her civil rights were not violated. Did you treat her badly **because of her race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability?** You two are of the same race and color. You are also of the same national origin and sex. Age? Well there may be a few years difference in your ages but it was not a factor. Disability? She showed no outward signs of being disabled nor did she mention that she had a disability, and most importantly, she was not denied service.

In order for a civil rights complaint to be filed, it must meet the requirements of either being denied service or treated differently because of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. If you had been an orange person and she was purple, and you treated A and C differently because they were also orange, then yes, it would or could be a civil rights complaint. If you, A, and C were of one national origin, and B has roots in a different part of the hemisphere, then she could file a civil rights complaint. The one thread that runs through these examples is that you, A and C are different from B. Of course you may file a civil rights complaint against a participant or proxy but it must meet the same criteria as one filed by a participant or proxy. A participant or proxy may file a civil rights complaint against a vendor if they felt like they were treated differently than customers who were of a different race, color, national origin or did not have a disability.

All civil rights complaints are serious and must be sent to USDA in Washington D.C. with a copy to our Regional Office in Atlanta Ga. along with a copy to the State WIC Office. If you have questions, please call your Nutrition Director or Jim Koenig (334 206-2919).

I know that we all strive to treat everyone the same and if we keep in the back of our minds that everyone, no matter what race, color, or national origin, sex, age or disability they profess or have, must be treated equally. Remember, if it ain't civil, it ain't right.

THE ALABAMA WIC FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

In FY 2008, thirty-four WIC clinics in 25 counties were selected by the Alabama Farmers Market Authority to issue FMNP check booklets to eligible WIC participants. The FMNP check booklets are redeemed by participants for locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables sold by certified farmers only at sites authorized by the Farmers Market Authority.

Note: The Alabama WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program is now being coordinated by Jim Koenig of the Data Management Branch.

Nutrition Education

NEW! 2008 WIC NUTRITION EDUCATION SESSIONS ON THE WEB

Now WIC participants can earn nutrition education (SNE) credit for completing sessions on the web. Participants can click on any one of the categories below and choose the session they want to complete.

- Before You Deliver
- After You Deliver
- Babies
- Toddlers
- Preschoolers

There are 11 sessions in all. Go to adph.org/wic and click on WIC Nutrition to view the session topics.

NUTRITION EDUCATION BY COMPUTER KIOSK

Also new in 2008, 15 clinics statewide are piloting touch screen computer kiosks for delivering SNE contacts. Four different sessions are currently available on the kiosks including sessions on feeding your baby, healthy snacking, food pyramid, and breastfeeding. More sessions will be developed!

TRAINING

WIC Comprehensive training continues to be provided on an ongoing basis at the Eastbrook WIC Training Center. Those recommended for training by their Area Nutrition Director work primarily in the WIC Program. Training includes PHALCON, classroom and hands-

on training in the clinic. Topics discussed include certification procedures, income assessment, food delivery, nutrition assessment/education, outreach, civil rights, vendor management, breastfeeding and other specific topics related to WIC policies and procedures.

BREASTFEEDING

The Alabama Department of Public Health and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) celebrated August as Breastfeeding Awareness Month. The theme chosen by the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action was "Breastfeeding: The 1st Hour - Save ONE million babies!" Initiation of breastfeeding within the first hour of birth is the first step toward lowering the high neonatal mortality rate worldwide. Timely initiation of breastfeeding is beneficial for both baby and the mother. Evidence-based practices such as immediate skin-to-skin contact and a quiet environment can help babies softly move toward the breast. Initiating breastfeeding during the first hour makes use of the baby's sucking reflex (which is strongest during the first hour) to establish proper latching.

The 2008 Alabama Breastfeeding Resource Guide is available at <http://adph.org/wic>. This guide provides information regarding breastfeeding supplies, lactation consultants, classes and breastfeeding contacts for WIC clinics and hospitals.

Vendor Management

We wish to welcome Brenda Mooney, who joined Vendor Management in October 2007, and to Susan Ward, who joined Vendor Management in December 2007.

We extend our best wishes to Tesa Brown

who accepted a promotion in the Bureau of Financial Services, and to Evelyn Peterson who accepted a promotion at the Department of Industrial Relations.



AREA 1

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We welcome new staff members Blake Stone, MS, RD, LD in Colbert County and Leigh Ann Colvin, RD, LD in Walker County. Blake Stone is a recent graduate of the University of Alabama and begins

her career with the WIC Program. Ann Colvin worked as Nutrition Services Director at Walker Baptist Medical Center in Jasper before joining the WIC Program.

RETIREMENT OF AREA II NUTRITION DIRECTOR PAT WINN, R.D., L.D.

The Area 2 WIC family lost one of its most dedicated members this past December with the retirement of Area Nutrition Director Pat Winn, R.D., L.D. Pat's 20-year career with the Alabama Department of Public Health began in Jackson County with a position as a part-time nutritionist. Her work later expanded to full-time with the addition of Marshall County patients. Department needs shifted, and eventually Pat made the move to Madison County as WIC Coordinator. "I have always loved my work," Pat says, "and that's not something that a lot of people can say." In about 1996 Pat was promoted to Area 2 Nutrition Director. One of her proudest accomplishments during her tenure was the establishment of the WIC program within the mother-baby unit at Huntsville Hospital in 1998.

These same WIC services have since been extended through Huntsville's Crestwood

Hospital as well. "The mother-baby unit has been very successful and allows us to see babies that sometimes weren't being seen until they were five weeks old, if at all," Pat said. Pat has served Area II with wisdom and heartfelt commitment that will be sorely missed by her coworkers and the ADPH.

WIC PARTICIPANT BABY SHOWER

Limestone County prenatal WIC participants were the guests of honor at a baby shower on August 30, 2007 at the Limestone County Health Department. Spearheading the day's festivities were WIC coordinator Eileen King, RN, Office Manager Melinda Adams and Kristie Romero, ASA II. The twenty-five moms-to be were greeted by the entire medical staff, and listened while guest speaker Stacy Ramirez, RN of the La Leche League spoke about the benefits of breastfeeding for mom and baby. The moms participated in a lively question and answer session, after which everyone enjoyed a beautifully decorated cake and other refreshments. Thanks to the generosity of the Limestone County Health Department Staff and local merchants, each mom was presented

with a festively wrapped gift for their new baby. Additionally two lucky shower attendees' names were drawn for door prizes. Goody bags with small tokens and literature (both in English and Spanish) encouraging breastfeeding were also distributed. Limestone County's bilingual staff members served as interpreters for our Hispanic patients so that everyone was included in the



From l to r: Amy Beth Pressnell, RN, Amelia Halbrooks, RN, Amy Shehorn, RN, Donna Shelton, Nurse Practitioner, LeAnn Barron, Nutritionist, Felecia Love, Social Worker, Eileen King, RN (WIC Coordinator), Amy Watson, ASA II

(Below) Limestone County WIC Baby Shower



AREA 2



Area 2 Farmers Market Barn Poster



Kashera Sims Area 2 Farmers Market Tasting Table



Debbie Blanchard - Ruff, RD, LD read to children.
(Below) Madison County Celebrated National Breastfeeding Month



morning's event. Every clinic staff member contributed to making this event a tremendous success through their gifts of time, talent and treasure (monetary donations!) and deserves special thanks. What a wonderful way to recognize the people that make our efforts in the clinic so worthwhile--our patients!

Madison Co WIC did a great job of promoting the FMNP. As usual, Dr. Robey helped with printing the barn posters which the Nutritionist cut out and pasted on board. They also had a tasting table for all to try with fruit, smoothies, crackers, and spinach dip. Debbie Blanchard-Ruff, RD, LD led a story hour in the lobby, promoting fruit and vegetables. The children really responded.

Madison County celebrated national breastfeeding month with a WIC prenatal and breastfeeding baby shower honoring expectant and breastfeeding moms on August 24th. Pat Winn, Area 2 Nutrition Director, provided a warm and cordial welcome to participants. The guest speakers were Toni Betts, LeLeche League leader, and Sane Mitchell, RN, IBCLC from Crestwood Hospital. The WIC staff received positive responses from the WIC participants who attended. Each participant received door prizes and breastfeeding incentive items. Light refreshments were served.

This year's theme seeks the world's attention to save one million babies beginning with one action: initiating breastfeeding within the first hour of birth. To

help support the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding, WIC can provide breastfeeding mothers with breast pumps, breast shells, breast pads, or nursing supplementers.



Madison County National Breastfeeding Month



Madison County National Breastfeeding Month

AREA 3

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Lee Ann Wagner, Breastfeeding Coordinator



5-A Day WIC table

During our Breastfeeding Awareness month in August, our Breastfeeding Coordinator, Lee Ann Wagner, of Tuscaloosa, answers questions regarding breastfeeding with our patients. Area 3 had two students from the University of Alabama to attend a local school with Renee Cole, Area Nutrition Director on Nov 29th to teach a lesson on healthy eating and healthy behaviors to 60 first grade students.

The CEO of Medela Group of Switzerland, Renate Schreiber, visited the Breastfeeding Education and Support Team (BEST) Meeting in Birmingham, Alabama, to meet the IBCLC members from local hospitals and the WIC agencies from Area 4 and 5. The people shown are Cindy Wagner, Medela Sales Consultant, Renate, Marguerite Gorman, the Jefferson County Peer Counselor Coordinator. Not shown but also attending were Reba Brannan and Bonnie Hudgins, Area Nutrition Directors from Area 5 and 4.

HEALTH FAIR BIRMINGHAM ZOO OCTOBER 26, 2007

Anne Hentz, Senior Nutrition Consultant, Birmingham Central Health Center WIC Clinic, and Marguerite Gorman, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator for Jefferson County, represented WIC at the UAB Early Head Start Program Health Fair Day at the Birmingham Zoo. This annual fair took place on October 26, with over fifty families attending. Various community programs provided services which included health screenings, educational literature, referral networks, and other resources as well. Families enjoyed visiting each station and receiving free gifts and healthy snacks. WIC

partnered with UAB play activity staff to provide physical activities, nutrition education, and educational handouts. Marguerite Gorman introduced the new WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program. Numerous participants were excited about this wonderful resource for expectant and new moms. Some of the comments included: "I will definitely use the breastfeeding peer counselor service, as I do plan to have more children." "There was nothing like this available when I was pregnant, and it would have been so helpful." "I will tell all my friends and relatives who are expecting that there is help to learn

(Below) From l to r: Cindy Wagner, Renate Schreiber, Marguerite Gorman



AREA 4

about breastfeeding.” At the end of the day Kim Dees, Health Coordinator for UAB Early Head Start, said it was one of the best health fairs ever! The cool and crisp fall day was a perfect backdrop for the warm interaction between families and children at play.



From l to r: Renate Schreiber, LED of Medela Group of Switzerland, Bonnie Hudging, Area Nutrition Director, Jefferson County

The Jefferson County Department of Health WIC Division has initiated the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program. Thirteen peer counselors have been trained and provide education and telephone support to expectant mothers enrolled in the WIC Program. At this time, the program will be implemented for the Northern, Western, and Chris McNair Health Centers. The peer counselors will counsel mothers throughout pregnancy, during the critical days when breastfeeding is being established, and as needed throughout the breastfeeding period. The counselors have a referral network if a problem is outside their area of training. Breastfeeding rates are disparaging low in this region, and Peer Counselor Programs have been shown to increase breastfeeding, which result in optimal

health for our babies and mothers. The new peer counselors and the JCDH WIC staff are very enthusiastic about the new program! The team of Jefferson County WIC Peer Counselors will be coordinated by Marguerite Gorman RD, IBCLC. Starting at back row, right to left are: Margaret Masny, Tamotha Clark, Alisha Dunklin, Angela Wells, Rachel Gunderman, Vatrece Gray, Charva Williams, Cassie Hooks RD (former State Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator), Marguerite Gorman RD, IBCLC, Wylissa Graham, Janetha Shearer, Deiria Thomas, Martha Shearer, Dominique Glenn, and TeAundra Wright.



Anne Hentz, Sr. Nut., Jefferson Central, Marguerite Gorman

State Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator Cassie Hooks, RD and Jefferson County WIC Peer Counselors



(Below) Marguerite Gorman, Anne Hentz



AREA 4

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Northern Health Center -
During September 5, 2007,
Northern Health Center WIC staff, with the assistance of UAB intern Kelly Drawdy, organized a one day event on for clients and employees to sample fruits and vegetables as part of "Fruits and Veggies – More Matters" promotion.

Fall colors were emphasized by serving bright color veggies, fruits and juices (carrots, red and green grapes, and orange, mango and pineapple juices) to the participants, including children, parents and employees. Beach balls, stickers and 5 A Day pamphlets were made available for all those who were interested. Children seemed to enjoy creating their own artwork with a 5 A Day coloring sheets and crayons.

Thanks to Northern Health Center Administration for providing funds to purchase fruits, vegetables and juices for this promotional event. Thanks to Ms. Kelly Drawdy, the UAB Intern for her help in setting up the table and getting children and parents to try some of the food items served.

During August, the Breastfeeding Awareness Month, a bulletin board with "Many Gifts of Breastfeeding" was highlighted for all WIC (Prenatal, Breastfeeders and Postpartum) clients. Breastfeeding art pictures are being displayed in many area of the clinic to increase awareness and encourage moms to breastfeed as part of our ongoing efforts to promote breastfeeding incidence in the community.

Participant Enjoying 5 A Day Coloring Sheets and Crayons



Barbara Green, NA and Suman Madan, Sr. Nutritionist Consultant



Barbara Green, NA and Kelly Drawdy, UAB Intern and participants



"Many Gifts of Breastfeeding" Bulletin Board



Tameeka Parker, WIC Clerk and 5 A Day Bulletin Board

(Below) Kelly Drawdy, UAB Intern and 5 A Day Bulletin Board



AREA 4

WIC Website
www.adph.org/wic



Darlene Wallace, NA

Cherokee County had their October Fall Fest/Open House on Halloween day, '07. They had games, face painting, drawings (with one from WIC, that had a basket with dried beans, canned tomatoes, spices, pasta, Bean Cookbook, and various eating healthy brochures, and recipe pamphlets). WIC also had

pamphlets promoting physical activity. Other health department service reps were there. We all dressed in costumes. Fun day!

The April nutrition staff meeting was more of a retreat as we met with the Clinic Nurse Supervisors and Clinic Clerical Supervisors at Debbie Thompson's (Tallapoosa Co Nursing Supervisor) Cabin on the Creek near Dadeville. On this gorgeous spring day, we were able to eat lunch outside and conduct our afternoon sessions on

(First Table) From l to r: Jenny Adams, Cathryn Bates, Jenny Knox, and Anna Keith



the front porch with the creek in the background. Candy Harkins and Mandy Jones also worked in a little play time on the seesaw.

Mandy Jones, RD, Sylacauga clinic nutritionist, represented Area 6 and the local clinics on the VENA committee. She also participated in the pilot of the

Candy Harkins, Tallapoosa and Mandy Jones, Sylacauga



new forms and training. We appreciate her work on this project.

Cindy Templeton participated in the Cleburne Co Family Fitness Festival in October. Families were encouraged to participate in activities such as hoola hoops, "javelin" throw, 3 mile fun walk and many more. WIC and nutrition information was provided to

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those participating. Healthy lunches consisting of Subway sandwiches, apple and baked chips were offered.

Oakwood intern, Natalie Pugh, completed her WIC rotation in Area 6. She spent time observing with several nutritionists in the area and presented an in-service on food safety to area Nursing Supervisors and Clerical Supervisors.

Karla Lanford, Nutrition Associate, began her dietetic internship in August 2007. She continues to provide WIC services as a contract nutrition associate.

The stork has been busy in Area 6. Amy Minish, RD, had a baby girl, Annie, born in September and Jenny Knox, RD, had a baby boy, Sam, in December.

Back Row: l to r: Becky Pawson, Cindy Templeton, Mandy Jones,
Front Row l to r: Cathryn Bates, Jenny Adams, Candy Harkins, Jenny Knox, Anna Keith



"Go Red For Women" Bulletin Board, Cleburne County

AREA 6

Dallas County-The Dallas County Health Department has recently hired 3 breastfeeding peer counselors. Leimomi Holmes, Carmel Gray and Michelli Pettway began training on November 15, 2007 and will begin working with pregnant mothers after the first of the year. Rebecca Stewart, RD, WIC Coordinator, is excited about the addition of the breastfeeding peer counselors. "We (DCHD) feel that these women will help our WIC mothers to have a positive breastfeeding experience. Additional breastfeeding support is something that we need in Dallas County". Cassie Hooks, RD, State Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Coordinator provided the training.

(Below) From l to r: Leimomi Holmes, Carmel Gray, Michelli Pettway



Bullock County-On Friday, October 26, 2007, the Bullock County Health Department provided a WIC booth for the annual community wide Health Fair co-sponsored by Southern Springs Health and Rehab and Alabama State University. The health fair was held on the Southern Springs Health and Rehab campus Union Springs, Alabama. Bullock County's Health Department social worker, Ms. Aleasha Manuel, represented the health department at the fair. WIC provided many nutritional/ breastfeeding and program information pamphlets. In addition, many give-aways

were provided, such as: book markers, emery boards, ink pens, key rings, cook books, magazines, stickers, crayons, coloring booklets, and dental tip cards. Ms. Manuel reported that the crowd was huge and as usual had a great time, and the health fair was a success.

Autauga & Elmore Counties-The health department provided booths at the Healthy Lifestyle Health Fair and the 2007 Member Appreciation Day and annual meeting sponsored by the Central Alabama Electric Co-op, August 10, 2007. Rashanda Gaddis and others promoted

WIC and healthy eating. They handed out the new "Fit Families" pamphlets, "Healthy Eating" magazines, the new food pyramid for children, "Healthy Thrifty Meals" cook book, WIC pens, WIC bags, 5 a Day book marks, and weight control for women pamphlets. Also, they displayed the new one-handed breast pump along with breastfeeding information. Additionally, they displayed the plaque in the artery model.

Lee County-Lee County is excited to announce the beginning of The Loving Support through Peer Counseling Program. (continued on next page)

(Below) Russel County Annual Outreach



(Below) Sarah McCurry, RD, LD at Russell County's Annual Outreach Event



AREA 8

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Three breastfeeding peer counselors have been hired: Brandy Klapp, Michelle Kloeti, and Tracey Jordan (pictured from left to right). Alexis Thompson, R.D., will be coordinating their activities. They completed training on February 22, 2008 and have begun contacting our prenatal moms to encourage breastfeeding. The peer counselors have also attended local prenatal classes to promote the program and to share the benefits

provided by WIC for breastfeeding moms. Currently, they are working with the lactation consultant of East Alabama Prenatal Clinic to provide awareness about the Peer Counseling Program. Our hope is that by providing this service and outreach we will see our breastfeeding rates in Lee County continue to rise.



From l to r: Brandy Klapp, Michelle Kloeti, and Tracey Jordan



Area 8 Government Day Table

In December 2007, the Conecuh County Health Department in Evergreen moved into a well-deserved, brand new building. The clinic staff is excited about the move and is looking forward to having their SNE classes in their new clinic. During October and November 2007, all of the counties in

Area 9 participated in drive-through flu clinics. It was a great opportunity to do WIC outreach in the community setting! When completing the vendor training this past September, the County WIC Coordinators had a Public Health Emergency Preparedness colleague come in and talk briefly to the vendors

about the importance of emergency preparedness and preparing for a flu pandemic. The WIC vendors were very receptive to learning about the changes in the WIC food packages. Samples of hand sanitizers and packets of information on influenza were given to the vendors.

AREA 9



Bulletin Board by Penny Graddy, NA, Houston County Health Department



Gift Bags by Pam Newman, NA., Dale County, Health Department

Dale County staff moved into their new health department in October. Pam Newman, Nutrition Associate gives gift bags to all 5 year olds that “graduate” from WIC. Pam purchases these bags and uses health department items and other “goodies” for these bags. Houston County Health Department was the host site for the 2nd Breastfeeding Workshop for hospital staff, health department employees and

doctor’s office staff. Area 10 suffered a terrible loss with the unexpected and sudden death of Henry County Office Manager Elaine Grimsley. Elaine was an avid supporter of WIC. Area 10 wished the best of luck to Tatum Cooper, RD who has left WIC to return to school to become a chiropractor.



Mobile County Peer Counselors l to r: Rhonda Westerfield, Sabrina Miles, Crystal Workman

Rachel Myers, Nutrition Associate, attended a Health Fair sponsored by Springhill College Nursing Students. Ms. Myers focused on healthy eating and exercise tips. Also, Ms. Myers attended a health fair at Woodcock Elementary School Parent’s day where she discussed the importance of eating five servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Angelia Cunningham, spoke to the Hispanic Prenatals with the Guadeloupe Center in regards to breastfeeding and prenatal nutrition. In August, the local WIC clinic staff and peer counselors hosted an annual breastfeeding reception in the auditorium of the Teen Center. The reception was attended by approximately thirty-five prenatal and breastfeeding moms who brought family members and friends with them. A speaker from a

local hospital talked to the attendees about breastfeeding. Display booths provided the mothers with breastfeeding information and incentive items. The Mobile County Health Department WIC Program has seen a positive change in the attitude of prenatal and newly delivered moms since implementing the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program. Mobile County employs five Breastfeeding Peer Counselors at the Teen Center who counsel prenatal and breastfeeding mothers on the benefits of breastfeeding and common concerns. Peer Counselors have played an important role in increasing the

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breastfeeding initiation rate at this clinic. The Peer Counselors encourage and support mothers in their decision to breastfeed their baby. According to Angelia K. Cunningham, LPN, IBCLC, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator for the Teen Center, "Peer Counselors are sharing how they

were able to breastfeed successfully sometimes without family support, how they were able to fit breastfeeding into returning to work and/or school, and addressing myths regarding breastfeeding. The Peer Counselors are available to provide support at a very important time."

*This will be your
first gift to him.*

Quitline

1-800-QUIT-NOW
1-800-784-8669

Moms and moms-to-be who want to quit using tobacco can find free help with the Alabama Department of Public Health's Tobacco Quitline. The toll-free, telephone-based tobacco cessation service is available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Messages left on the weekend or after hours will be returned the following business day. After calling 1-800-Quit-Now and answering questions about tobacco habits and health issues, callers make an appointment to talk to master's level counselors who can answer their questions about the cessation process and help them develop an effective plan for quitting. Callers will receive several counseling sessions. If medically eligible, callers can receive up to four weeks of free nicotine patches.

To receive the nicotine patch, callers must enroll in counseling sessions, be 18 years or older, smoke more than 10 cigarettes a day or be a daily user of chewing tobacco. If the caller has medical contraindications, a doctor's approval is required for the nicotine patches. The Quitline has an expanded protocol for pregnant callers.

All Quitline services -- the call, counseling and nicotine patches, if eligible -- are available free to any Alabama resident. Call 1-800-Quit-Now (1-800-784-8669) for help quitting tobacco.

In addition, WIC nutritionists and social workers can be trained in the AARP (Ask, Advise, Refer, Prescribe) protocol for their clients who use tobacco.

Continuing education credit is given for those who attend the training given by tobacco area coordinators in each public health area. Call Susan Altman at 334-206-2776 for more information about AARP training.

WIC nutritionists and social workers can refer their clients to the Quitline through the fax referral system. The form is found on the ADPH Quitline website (www.adph.org/tobacco) or is available at all county health departments. Faxing the referral form allows the Quitline to contact the caller at a convenient time. With the client's permission, progress reports are sent to the referring provider.

For more information about the Quitline, contact Julie Hare, 334-206-3830.