

**PARTNERS IN PERINATAL HEALTH
CONFERENCE
MAY 18, 2010**

“Breastfeeding and the New Massachusetts WIC Food Packet”

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Breastfeeding and the New WIC Food Packages

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For Discussion

- Background – The WIC Program
- History of the WIC Food Packages
- Key elements – New WIC Food Packages
- Breastfeeding and the WIC Program
- Breastfeeding and the New WIC Food Package
- Breastfeeding Performance Improvement
- Additional Opportunities for Breastfeeding Promotion and Support in WIC

What is WIC?

- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children
- An intervention program to strengthen families
- Influences lifetime nutrition and health behaviors
- Is targeted to high-risk populations



WIC in 2010

- In 2009, more than 9 million women, infants and children received WIC nationwide
- In Massachusetts, nearly 218,000 individuals accessed WIC last year
- Approximately half of all babies born in the US participate in WIC during the first year of life; about 40% of babies in Massachusetts access the program

History of WIC Foods

Since 1980, the only significant change made in the WIC food packages occurred in 1992, when the set of foods provided for breastfeeding women was expanded.



Why Revise the WIC Food Packages?

Changes have occurred in the major health and nutrition risks faced by WIC's target population, including:

- diets lacking in whole grains and fruit and vegetables
- short duration of breastfeeding
- overweight and obesity



The changes to the WIC food packages hold potential for improving the nutrition and health of the nation's low-income pregnant women, new mothers, infants, and young children.

Institute of Medicine, 2005

Reinforce Nutrition Education Messages

- “Eat more fruits and vegetables”
- “Lower saturated fat”
- “Increase whole grains and fiber”
- “Drink less sweetened beverages and juice”
- “Babies are meant to be breastfed”



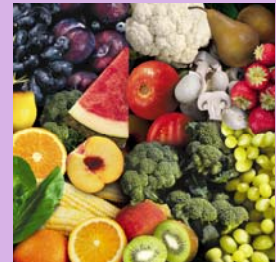
Add Foods to Appeal to Diverse Populations

- Tortillas
- Brown rice and other whole grains
- Soy beverage
- Tofu
- Wide choice of fruits and vegetables for ethnic variety
- Canned salmon, sardines, mackerel



Add Fruits and Vegetables

- Cash value-vouchers (\$6 or \$10) for fruits and vegetables for children and women
- Participants may choose from a wide variety of fruits and vegetables
- Fresh, frozen and canned allowed



Add Whole Grains

- Whole wheat or whole grain bread for children and women
- Whole grain options
 - Brown Rice
 - Soft Corn and Whole Grain Tortillas



Require Whole Grain Cereals

At least half of the cereals on a State agency's food list must be whole grain.



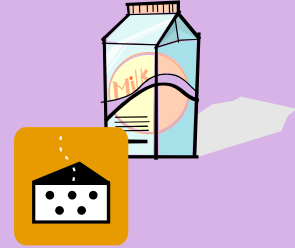
Reduce Juice Allowance for Children and Women

- Reduces quantities of juice for children and women
- Amounts align with the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics



Reduce Milk and Dairy Allowances

Reduces quantities of milk and cheese for children and women to align with 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.



Only Skim or Low-Fat Milk



Only skim or low-fat milk is authorized for women and children > 2 years of age.

Add New Milk and Dairy Alternatives

- Soy-based beverage*
- Tofu



*Medical documentation required for women and children to receive soy-based beverage and for children to receive tofu as alternatives to milk.

Reduce Quantities of Eggs

Reduces quantity of eggs to align with 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.



Add New Canned Fish for Fully Breastfeeding Women

- Continues to allow canned **light tuna** (no albacore)
- Allows other canned fish identified as lower in mercury
 - Salmon
 - Sardines
 - Mackerel



Other Changes...Legumes

- Adds legumes (beans or peanut butter) to food package for postpartum women to improve the intake of iron, folate, Vitamin E, and fiber.



- Allows canned beans to be substituted for dried beans for all children and women.

Continue to Serve Medically Fragile Participants

- Continues to provide exempt infant formula and medical foods
- Now authorizes medically fragile participants to receive other WIC supplemental foods



Revise Food Packages for Infants

- Formula amounts tied to feeding practice and age of infant
- Complementary foods delayed to 6 months
- Juice eliminated
- Baby food fruits and vegetables for infants
- Baby food meat for fully breastfed babies



Massachusetts WIC promotes Breastfeeding as the Optimal Method of infant feeding

Massachusetts WIC is dedicated to promoting optimal nutrition practices among its participants.

WIC Breastfeeding Promotion Policy

- All prenatal women must receive an unequivocal endorsement of breastfeeding as the ideal method of infant feeding, unless medically contraindicated
- Breastfeeding contacts are provided to all prenatal and breastfeeding women
- Each LP must have a designated Breastfeeding Coordinator

Why focus on breastfeeding?

Breastfeeding is the optimal source of nutrition for infants and plays a vital role in protecting both babies and their mothers from countless illnesses and poor health outcomes.

The American Academy of Pediatrics position statements and guidelines (as well as all other major medical organizations), cite exclusive breastfeeding as the goal and gold standard for infant nutrition.

Breastfeeding objectives are part of Healthy People 2010 and WIC participants lag behind the general population in progress toward meeting those objectives.

WIC has a legislative mandate to unequivocally endorse breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding, unless medically contraindicated.

Provide Breastfeeding Incentives and Support

New changes in the WIC food packages help WIC more actively promote and support breastfeeding through the food packages provided to participants.



Provide Breastfeeding Incentives and Support

- Fully breastfeeding mothers receive most variety and largest quantity of food.
- Fully breastfeeding infants > 6 months receive larger quantities of baby food fruits and vegetables; also baby food meat.



New Food Packages for Partially Breastfeeding Infants

- Compared to previous food packages, partially breastfed infants receive less infant formula to allow mothers to feed more breast milk to their infants.
- No routine issuance of formula in birth month to help mother build and maintain milk supply.

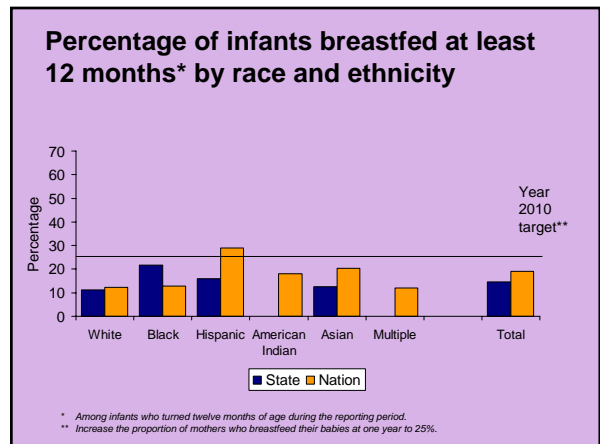
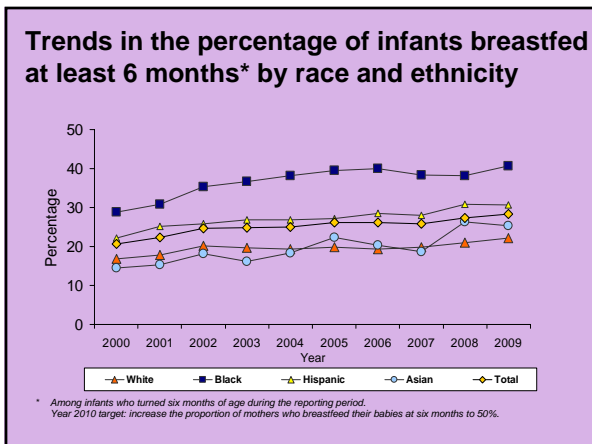
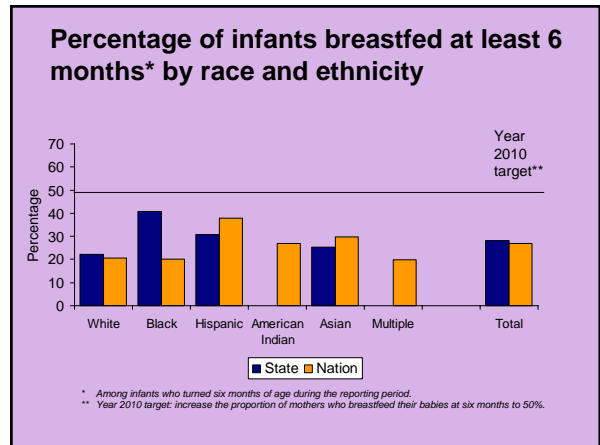
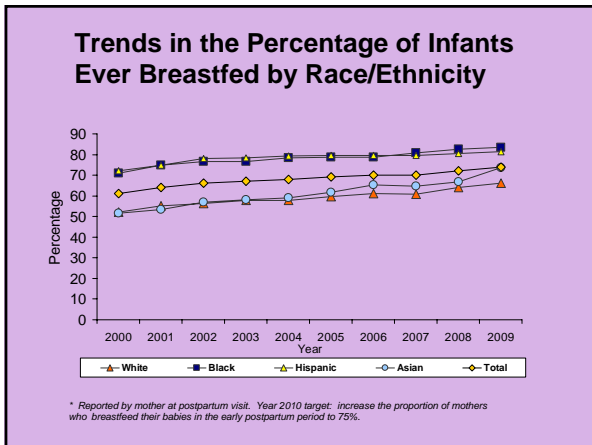
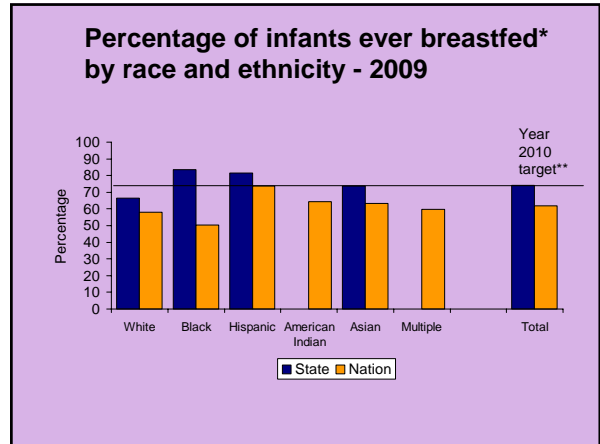
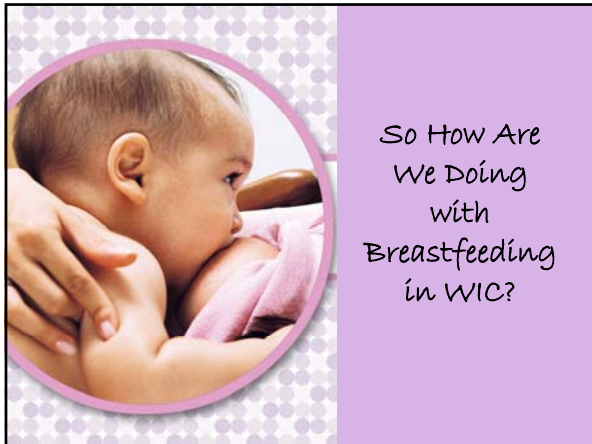
Moms and Babies Tied Together

- Limiting of formula supplements for breastfed babies to ½ of the maximum formula issuance by age group; mothers requesting this amount or less are eligible for WIC checks for 12 months postpartum
- Breastfeeding mothers requesting more than ½ of the maximum formula will only be eligible for non-breastfeeding women's food packages and will only receive WIC checks for the first 6 months postpartum

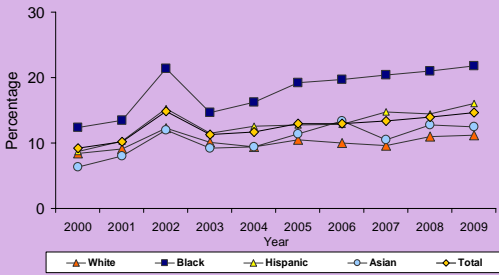


Breastfeeding Resources for WIC Families

- Prenatal and Postpartum Breastfeeding Counseling/Education/Assessment
- Mother-to-Mother Peer Counselor Program
- Local Program Breastfeeding Coordinators
- Infant Feeding Groups/Breastfeeding Classes/Support Groups
- Breast Pump Loan Programs
- Print Materials in Multiple Languages
- Connections with Community Breastfeeding Resources (www.massbfc.org)

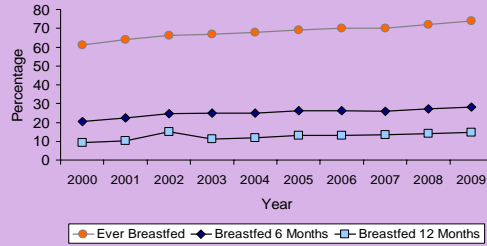


Trends in the percentage of infants breastfed at least 12 months* by race and ethnicity



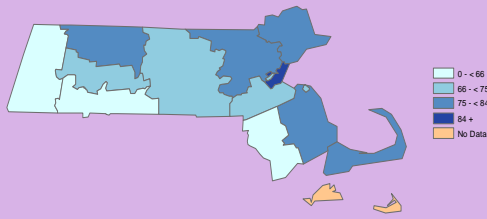
* Among infants who turned twelve months of age during the reporting period.
Year 2010 target: increase the proportion of mothers who breastfed their babies at one year to 25%.

Trends in the percentage of infants ever breastfed, and breastfed at least 6 and 12 months



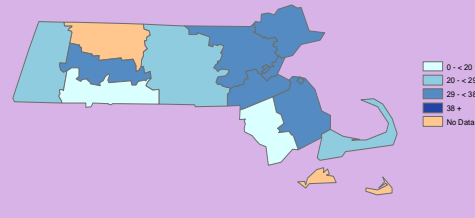
Year 2010 targets: increase the proportion of mothers who breastfed their babies a) in the early postpartum period to 75%, b) at six months to 50%, and c) at one year to 25%.

Percentage of infants ever breastfed* by county



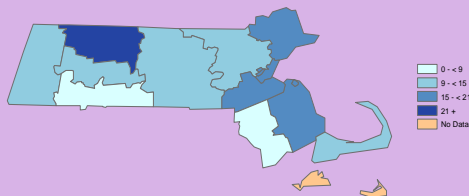
* Among infants born during the reporting period.
Year 2010 target: increase the proportion of mothers who breastfed their babies in the early postpartum period to 75%.
2009 MA PedNSS Table 7B

Percentage of infants breastfed at least 6 months*, by county



* Among infants who turned six months of age during the reporting period.
Year 2010 target: increase the proportion of mothers who breastfed their babies at six months to 50%.
2009 MA PedNSS Table 7B

Percentage of infants breastfed at least 12 months*, by county



* Among infants who turned twelve months of age during the reporting period.
Year 2010 target: increase the proportion of mothers who breastfed their babies at one year to 25%.
2009 MA PedNSS Table 7B

Current Massachusetts WIC Breastfeeding Projects

- Breastfeeding Promotion Task Force
- Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program Expansion
- Breastfeeding Performance Improvement Project
- Breastfeeding Social Marketing Project
- Peer Counselor Program Evaluation
- Breastfeeding Outcomes Data Analysis
- All-Staff Breastfeeding Competency Training
- Advanced Breastfeeding Training
- Collaboration with Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition
- Collaboration with community medical providers and birth hospitals

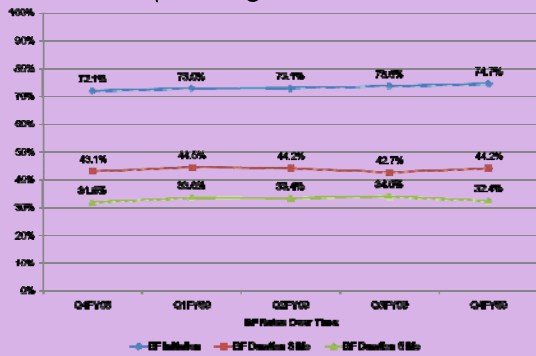
WIC Breastfeeding Performance Improvement Project



Project Description

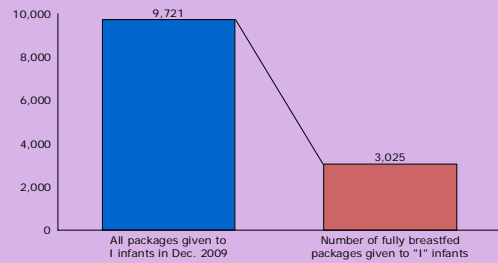
- Multi-year action planning and implementation process to improve breastfeeding rates among WIC participants
- Led by local program breastfeeding coordinators and peer counselors from each local WIC agency; facilitated by State Office staff and The Ripples Group

Breastfeeding Rates - Phase 1



"I" Infants Receiving Exclusive BF Packages

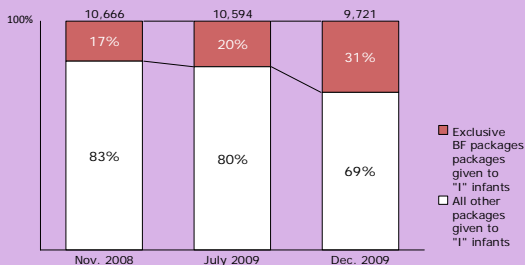
Almost one third of food packages issued to "I" infants are exclusively breastfeeding.



Source: MA WIC WICP601T report on food package state totals for checks issued in Dec. 2009. Note: Includes package 699A for infants 0-6 months and package 688A for infants 6-11.9 months.

"I" Infants Receiving Exclusive BF Packages - Over Time

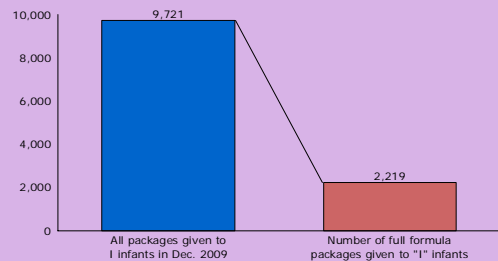
The % of exclusively breastfeeding packages given to "I" infants continues to increase, up 14% since Nov. 08.



Source: MA WIC WICP601T report on food package state totals for checks issued in Nov. 2008, July 2009, and Dec. 2009. Note: Nov and July include exclusive BF packages 001A, 002A, 005A. Dec. includes packages 699A and 688A.

"I" Infants Receiving Full Formula Packages

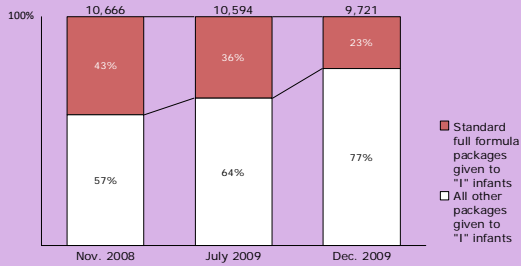
Less than one quarter of food packages issued to "I" infants are now full formula packages.



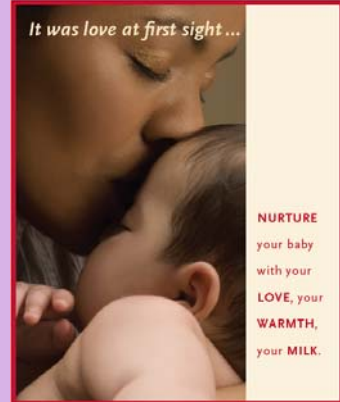
Source: MA WIC WICP601T report on food package state totals for checks issued in Dec. 2009. Note: Includes packages 6D1A, 6D2A, 6D3A for infants 0-3 mo; 6E4A, 6E5A, 6E6A for infants 4-5 mo; 6F7A, 6F8A, 6F9A packages for infants 6-11.9 mo.

"I" Infants Receiving Full Formula Packages – Over Time

WIC has achieved great success in significantly tailoring back full formula package issuance in the last year.



Source: MA WIC WICP01T report on food package state totals for checks issued in Nov 2008, July 2009, and Dec. 2009.



How can health care providers help WIC promote breastfeeding & support the New WIC Food Package?

- Strongly promote breastfeeding as the ideal method of infant nutrition
- Actively encourage all pregnant and breastfeeding women to avoid unnecessary formula supplementation
- Partner with lactation professionals and become familiar with breastfeeding support resources in your community. Encourage families to access breastfeeding care early and often, as needed. Refer mothers to WIC, when eligible, for their breastfeeding needs.

For More Information...

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www.mass.gov/WIC