

Utah

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Loving Support: Building Breastfeeding Competencies for Local WIC Staff

Key Partners & Stakeholders

USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), USDA Mountain Plains Region, Every Mother, Inc., Utah State WIC Program Staff, 12 Local Agency Health Department, WIC Programs.

Background

The importance of breastfeeding is well documented in the scientific literature as being vital to optimal health for infants, children and mothers. WIC's authorizing legislation (Section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act) emphasizes the importance of breastfeeding promotion and support in the WIC Program and Federal WIC Regulations require staff training.

Project Goals

To offer standardized training to all Utah WIC Staff that addresses the skill sets needed to provide successful breastfeeding promotion and support to WIC participants.

Methods

FNS contracted with Every Mother, Inc. to develop a competency-based breastfeeding training guide. Utah WIC State Staff attended a "Train the Trainer" event and wrote a grant for the authors to provide four 2-day regional training sessions offered in the months July through August 2010 to Local WIC Agencies. Additional training materials were purchased to supplement the curriculum. The curriculum content was also formatted into a self-paced electronic curriculum for supplemental training needs (i.e. new staff).

Results

A significant percentage (85%) of approximately 300 of local WIC staff attended the training sessions. The electronic materials have also been well utilized. Preliminary findings show evaluations were exceptionally positive and pre and post surveys (rating their knowledge, application, critical thinking skills and comfort level) showed improvement. The Data Resources Program is currently conducting a formal analysis of these training sessions.

Summary/Discussion

Sponsoring a statewide training was effective in providing information to all Local Agency WIC Staff on delivering breastfeeding promotion and support to WIC participants.