

The Colorado Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (CO WIC Program) is federally funded and provides low-income pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants and children younger than 5 years with:

- Nutrition education.
- Healthy foods.
- Breastfeeding support.
- Referrals to health care and critical social services.

Local agency WIC staff work with families to promote healthy, active lifestyles by providing nutrition education and individualized counseling on a variety of topics such as:

- Meal planning.
- Maintaining a healthy weight.
- Managing a picky eater.
- Infant feeding.
- Working and breastfeeding.
- Shopping on a budget.

WIC staff provide referrals to other community services such as:

- Health and dental care.
- Well-child clinics.
- Immunization.
- Other food assistance programs.

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**EXTENSIVE RESEARCH HAS FOUND WIC TO BE A COST-EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT THAT IMPROVES THE NUTRITION AND HEALTH OF FAMILIES - LEADING TO HEALTHIER INFANTS, MORE NUTRITIOUS DIETS AND BETTER HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN.**

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## BACKGROUND

The U.S. Congress created the WIC Program in the early 1970s to address the detrimental long term effects of malnutrition to poverty-stricken families. Today, WIC serves more than 8 million women, infants and children nationwide. For a family to be eligible, it must have an annual gross income of no more than 185% of the federal poverty level (\$38,443 for a family of three) or participate in SNAP (food stamps), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) or Health First Colorado (Medicaid).

## OUTCOMES



- Women who participate in WIC give birth to **HEALTHIER BABIES** who are more likely to survive infancy.



- Colorado WIC has the highest breastfeeding initiation rate in the country at **82% WIC INFANTS BREASTFED.**



- WIC participants now buy and eat more **FRUITS, VEGETABLES, WHOLE GRAINS AND LOW-FAT DAIRY** products.



- Improvements made to WIC food packages have contributed to **HEALTHIER FOOD AVAILABLE**, enhancing access to fruits, vegetables and whole grains for all consumers regardless of whether they participate in WIC.



- Children participating in WIC are **IMMUNIZED** and more likely to receive **PREVENTATIVE MEDICAL CARE.**



- Preschool-aged children have **BETTER QUALITY DIETS** and are **LESS LIKELY TO BE OBESE** when they have participated in WIC.



- Overweight and obese rates for children ages 2 - 4 enrolled in Colorado WIC dropped from 21.2% in 2015 to **20.7% in 2018.**

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**THEY HAVE ALWAYS ASSISTED ME WITH ANY BREASTFEEDING PROBLEMS. ALSO, A BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELOR CALLED ME SOON AFTER MY SON WAS BORN TO SEE HOW BREASTFEEDING WAS GOING.**

WIC PARTICIPANT, COLORADO

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**NEW TO WIC**

**eWIC card**

- Looks like a debit card and is easy for families to use while shopping at their local grocery stores.
- Swipe and go - less stigma and confusion.
- Greater flexibility and less waste. Participants get what they want when they want it.
- Easy to store in wallet.
- Better security through use of a PIN.

**WICShopper App**

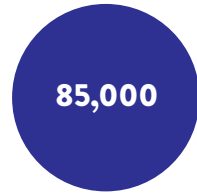
- View current WIC benefit balance from a smartphone, allowing families to know what they can purchase.
- Scan a product bar code/UPC while shopping to see if the product is WIC eligible for the family.
- Locate WIC-authorized stores nearby.

**On-line education.**

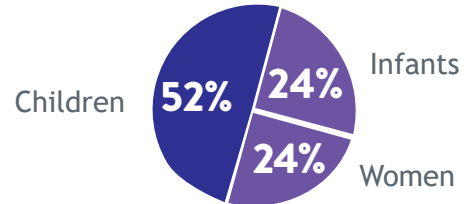
- Families can receive some nutrition education by phone, online or video chat, without having to come into the WIC office.
- These convenient options make it easier for families who have challenges with transportation or schedules.

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**COLORADO WIC  
IMPACT REPORT**



Colorado women, infants and children served monthly in FY 2018.



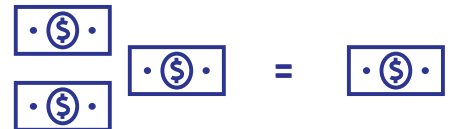
Average monthly food benefit value per person.



WIC authorized retailers.

**• \$ • \$54 MILLION**

Total spent on WIC food in FY 2017.



**\$3 saved for every \$1 spent**

In medical costs for infants in their first two months.

CDPHE acknowledges that social, economic, and environmental inequities result in adverse health outcomes and have a greater impact than individual choices. Reducing health disparities through systems change can help improve opportunities for all Coloradans.