



*Healthy Families...Strong Communities...Bright Futures!*

**October 2, 2009**

**CONGRATULATIONS!** WIC employees across California made history yesterday, as they issued the first checks for healthier new foods! After years of complex policymaking, collaborative planning, and intensive training, frontline staff are now busy showing participants how to use their new green checks to buy fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and soy products, as well as the more familiar items! CWA salutes the WIC community and our many valued partners for this achievement. Despite the long wait, fiscal crisis, furloughs, and other challenges, you have achieved a new nutrition milestone, smoothly implementing a change that is sure to result in dramatic improvements in the public's health. Read fun local stories and see pix of your colleagues from around the state celebrating WIC's Big Day on the [CWA Facebook Page](#). Hear Laurie and Linnea spin the story on the radio at [The California Report](#), [Marketplace](#) and [LA Times](#).

**WIC APPROPS & REAUTHORIZATION:** Late on Wednesday, conferees from the House and Senate resolved differences in the FY 2010 Agriculture Appropriations bills, funding WIC at a level of \$7.252 billion, \$398 million above the 2009 non-emergency enacted level, with a target national caseload of 9.6 million participants. A thirty-day technical extension for WIC and Child Nutrition Programs, set to expire at midnight on September 30, was also added, with a longer (one-year) extension in the works. The bill is supposed to go for a final vote next week. The summary and text of the bill can be found [here](#).

**WIC APPROPS DETAILS:** There is lots of great news in this funding bill. The conferees added \$162 M for "WIC program improvements." These include increasing fruit and vegetable vouchers by \$2.00 for all women (but not children) which will bring their value up to \$10 for pregnant and postpartum women, and \$12 for fully breastfeeding women (YAY!). There is also \$14 million for infrastructure, \$60 M for management information systems, \$80 M for breastfeeding peer counselors "and related activities," quadrupling the program (YAY!); \$15 M for evaluating program performance (YES!). CWA is especially thrilled and proud to see a modest but extremely important provision that provides \$5 M for WIC breastfeeding performance bonus awards to State agencies that demonstrate the highest proportion of breastfed infants, as compared to other State agencies participating in the program; or the greatest improvement in proportion of breastfed infants, as compared to other State agencies participating in the program. (YAY!!)

**HAVE YOU ASKED GOV TO SIGN OUR BILLS?** We are still waiting for the Governor's signature on [AB 513](#) and [SB 257](#). He has until October 11 to decide. We want to stuff his bill binders with your letters! **ACTION: If you have not done so already, please, please send 2**

**letters addressed Governor Schwarzenegger requesting that he sign AB 513 and SB 257 into law.** Sample letters can be found [here](#).

**H1N1 & WIC:** Healthy pregnant women can get really sick from the 2009 H1N1 flu ("swine flu"); with more hospitalizations and some deaths reported. CDC advises doctors to provide H1N1 immunizations to pregnant women who have symptoms of flu. Please consult the recent PWPC letter, PEPB 09-22-09-084, for strategies to consider when H1N1 has been confirmed in your service area. Keep up with H1N1 at the CDC [website](#) or call the CDPH Hotline at 1-888-865-0564, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

**SHARP POVERTY INCREASE:** The Census Bureau estimates that number of people in poverty increased by 1.1 million, to 39.1 million in 2008 - and that was before the Great Recession hit bottom. Click [here](#) for a chart detailing state rates. Click [here](#) for the Census Bureau's 2008 American Community Survey highlights. So it's not surprising that [a new 50-state survey](#) finds increased utilization of state Medicaid programs like California's Medi-Cal. Kaiser Family Foundation says strained state budgets are forcing cuts despite increased federal help. Meanwhile, the U.S. economy lost 263,000 jobs in September; and the jobless rate has risen to 9.8% from 9.7% in August (see the [DOL website](#)).

**EARLY CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION:** Last week Nemours, a key funder of Sesame Workshop's Healthy Habits for Life, brought together child health and early education experts and government officials to examine the link between early childhood care and development of later obesity, and to identify promising strategies for healthy eating and physical activity in early childhood settings. Check out the [conference blog](#) for some great policy ideas.

**HEALTH DISPARITIES:** DHHS Secretary Katherine Sebelius released a [new report](#) that finds that despite consistent increases in spending, health disparities among demographic groups persist. Low-income Americans and racial and ethnic minorities experience disproportionately higher rates of disease, fewer treatment options, and reduced access to care. The recession will only exacerbate these disparities. To help reduce disparities in perinatal outcomes like infant deaths, low birthweight, and preterm births, the National Healthy Start Association has produced a [toolkit](#) for local practitioners.

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT RESOURCES:** An [electronic newsletter](#) providing ideas for families, child care centers and preschools might be useful for engaging WIC families as well.

**LOCAL WIC STARS HONORED:** Janelle Webb and Nora Garza from Clinica Sierra Vista were honored by Assemblymember Tony Mendoza, D-Artesia, for their efforts in working with WIC-authorized vendors as LVLS, doing a fantastic job educating and assisting them as they implemented the food changes. Thanks to the efforts of Nora, Janelle and other LVLs across the state, who have worked tirelessly with grocers in their communities to make the rollout go as smoothly as possible for both WIC shoppers and WIC grocery cashiers!

**WIC BEST PRACTICES AWARDS:** Every spring the Best Practices Awards acknowledges WIC local agencies and staff for excellence in service to WIC participants. The 2010 Best Practices nominations are due a little earlier this year. Start thinking about who you'd like to

nominate, because the deadline for nominations is November 13. A PWPC will be released soon with details regarding nominations and participation on the awards committee. For more information, please contact Scott Stevens (call 916-928-8774 or [e-mail](#)).

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

*Note: We invite readers to submit information about training announcements that promote a range of issues supporting healthy living environments.*

- **School Wellness Conference:** California Department of Education. California Department of Public Health. California School Boards Association. October 6-7, 2009 | Anaheim Marriott. Visit [website](#) for details. For more information or to be included on the student wellness mailing list, please contact Dia Moua (call 916.371.4691 or [e-mail](#)).
- **Breastfeeding Current Issues:** Obesity, Baby Friendly, WIC Changes & H1N1. Wendy Slusser, MD, MS; Kiran Saluja, MPH, RD. Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles. Valley Care Olive View - UCLA Medical Center. October 14  
Information/questions: (213) 596-5776 or [website](#).
- **[Diversity Matters: Changing the culture of change.](#)** Environmental & Social Change Leadership Series in San Francisco - San Francisco. October 15-16 and November 16-17, 2009.
- **Improving Breastfeeding Outcomes: Exclusivity Made Easier.** Sonoma County Breastfeeding Coalition. This professional conference will focus on clinical presentation of Ankyloglossia and the influence of infant/mother behaviors on feeding patterns. Thursday, Oct. 29, Santa Rosa, California. For student scholarship & other information, contact Chris Moses (call 707-576-4857 or [e-mail](#)).
- **A Day With Catherine Watson Genna and Diane Wiessinger.** Lactation Advocates of Northern California, Nov. 6. Chico, CA. Early bird registration rates end on October 5. For more information, or to [register online](#), call Dena Cissna at 530-876-2500 x2801.
- **Building Your Breastfeeding Community: Communication, Assessment and Resources.** Denise Altman RN, IBCLC, LCCE. Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles. San Gabriel Valley Medical Center's Community Health and Education Center. Nov. 17. Information/questions: (213) 596-5776 or [website](#).
- **UCSD Extension Lactation Educator & Consultant Courses:** A variety of lactation educator, counselor and consultant courses are scheduled through the rest of 2009. Attendees commit to multi-day trainings, offered in various locations across the state. For more information or to enroll, call (858) 964-1010 or [e-mail](#).
- **Seventh Annual Hacia Una Vida Digna y Sana Promotores and Community Health Worker Conference.** December 4-5, 2009 in Los Angeles. For more information, please contact Isalia Zumaya (call 213-202-5359 or [e-mail](#)).
- **Save the Date! Managing A Multi-Generational Workplace.** Barbara Phillips, MEd. Vice President of Learning Dynamics. January 8, South San Francisco Conference Center.

Please *DO NOT* reply to this e-mail. You can contact CWA staff directly: [Laurie True](#), [Nancy O'Conner](#), [Lena Workman](#), [Karen Farley](#), [Robbie Gonzalez-Dow](#) or [Kinkini Banerjee](#). To be added to the Flash mailing list, send e-mail to [Kinkini Banerjee](#)