

H600.6
W632

Poverty in America Texas

Social Issues

local communities occur. Look at the happen in a small Community group organized and

AMERICA'S OVERLOOKED POCKETS OF POVERTY

Poverty in rural areas n...
atches that of inner ci...

WOMEN

Table 42. Income in 1989 of Households, Families, and Persons: 1989
(Data based on sample and subject to sampling variability, see text. For definitions of terms and meanings of symbols, see text)

| State and District | Metropolitan Area | Nonmetropolitan Area | Total |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Alabama | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Alaska | 293,655 | 293,655 | 587,310 |
| Arizona | 4,953,007 | 4,953,007 | 9,906,014 |
| Arkansas | 2,015,352 | 2,015,352 | 4,030,704 |
| California | 8,079,341 | 8,079,341 | 16,158,682 |
| Colorado | 496,730 | 496,730 | 993,460 |
| Connecticut | 581,538 | 581,538 | 1,163,076 |
| Delaware | 263,012 | 263,012 | 526,024 |
| Florida | 2,937,655 | 2,937,655 | 5,875,310 |
| Georgia | 2,937,655 | 2,937,655 | 5,875,310 |
| Idaho | 2,015,352 | 2,015,352 | 4,030,704 |
| Illinois | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Indiana | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Iowa | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Kansas | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Kentucky | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Louisiana | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Maine | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Maryland | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Massachusetts | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Michigan | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Minnesota | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Mississippi | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Missouri | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Montana | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Nebraska | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Nevada | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| New Hampshire | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| New Jersey | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| New Mexico | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| New York | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| North Carolina | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| North Dakota | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Ohio | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Oklahoma | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Oregon | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Pennsylvania | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Rhode Island | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| South Carolina | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| South Dakota | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Tennessee | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Texas | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Utah | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Vermont | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Virginia | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Washington | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| West Virginia | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Wisconsin | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |
| Wyoming | 1,185,000 | 1,185,000 | 2,370,000 |

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children

September 1996
Volume 5, Number 7

ALL INCOME LEVELS IN 1989
Families
In owner-occupied housing unit
With related children under 18 years
With related children under 5 years

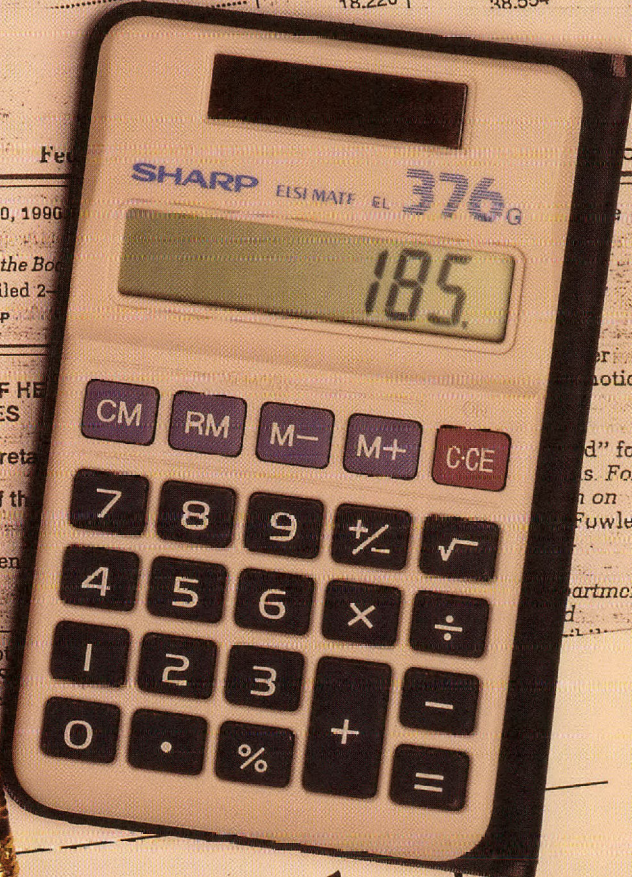
DECEMBER 4, 1996 Federal Register / Vol. 61, No. 53 / Monday, March 18, 1996 / Notices
10982 EFFECTIVE JULY 1996—JUNE 30, 1997—Continued

Depository
Dallas Public Library

| Annual poverty income guidelines (PIG) | Annual FCS income guidelines for reduced-price lunches (185% of PIG) |
|--|--|
| 12,980 | 24,013 |
| 15,600 | 28,860 |
| 18,220 | 33,707 |
| | 38,554 |

- 3 _____
 - 4 _____
 - 5 _____
 - 6 _____
 - 7 _____
 - 8 _____
- For each additional family member
- Alaska:
- 1 _____
 - 2 _____
 - 3 _____
 - 4 _____
 - 5 _____
 - 6 _____
 - 7 _____
 - 8 _____

Defining poverty in America



Living below federal poverty levels

insurance is very hard for these people for. Most are covered by

officials have addressed this problem in the past with little results. They have begun to turn to industry leaders for collaboration.

On the run

WIC mom keeps the Olympic spirit alive

By Callie Jones
Staff Writer

In a small way, the WIC program helped carry the Olympic flame through Texas on its way to Atlanta.

Kay Lyles, a foster mother who depends on WIC services to help her care for children with special medical needs, carried the 3.5-pound Olympic torch as she ran three-quarters of a mile through the Dallas suburb of DeSoto on May 20.

"The feeling was indescribable," Lyles says. "It was a wonderful experience to represent my country by carrying the flame."

Lyles was nominated through the United Way program. Her name was submitted by the Dallas Center for the Developmentally Disabled, which receives funding from United Way. The children Lyles cares for in her Seagoville home are developmentally delayed or handicapped.

Lyles has been a foster mother for 10 years and has participated in WIC for just as long. She and her husband, James, a Baptist preacher, have cared for 119 children. They adopted four of them to join their three biological children.

"We take the children who the other foster homes can't or won't take because of medical problems," she says. "I couldn't make it without WIC. I couldn't afford the formula without it."

Even though she's been participating in the WIC program for

10 years, she says she still learns new things. Aside from the financial aspects, Lyles says the most helpful benefit of WIC is the nutrition education, which she can pass on to the biological families of the children she keeps.

Because of her long-term involvement, Lyles has seen Texas WIC change from a "cold, military-based setting to a wonderful, family-type, more relaxed and personal environment," she says. She's also seen the program improve customer service by slashing waiting times. In fact, she says, her last visit was completed in "record-breaking time."

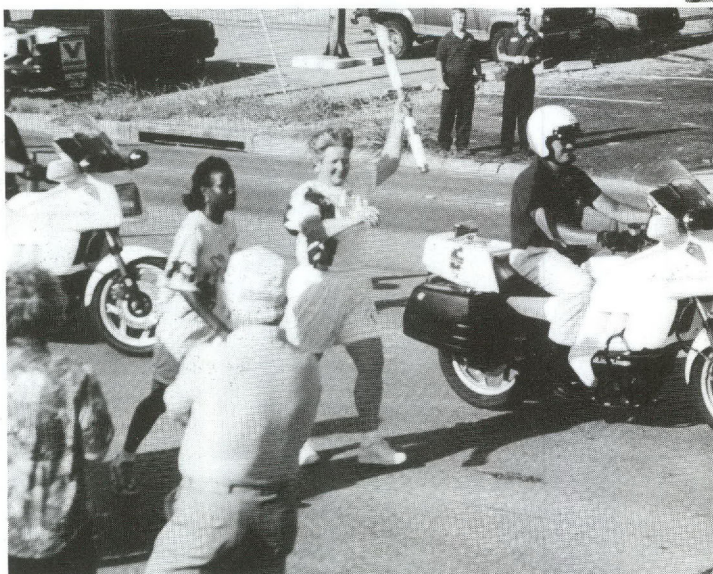
"I usually have to wait for two or three hours when I recertify my kids. But when I came in this last time, I went in at 3 p.m. and was out by 4 p.m.," she says. "Usually I call the nutritionist a couple of days before I come in so she can have my paperwork done ahead of time."

Lyles is served at the Southeast Dallas WIC center on Lake June

Road. She says she now sees more flexibility in procedures than she did when she first started receiving WIC services.

"The staff works with you more now," she says. "For example, I was supposed to come in at 8 a.m. one day, but I had something come up the night before. I called to see if I could reschedule for later in the day, and they worked me in at 3 p.m. Before, they would have said that they couldn't get to me until the next month or later. They are really flexible now."

And it's that kind of customer service that really helps our clients who are on the run.



Kay Lyles steps off the shuttle bus before carrying the Olympic torch through DeSoto.

Kay Lyles runs beside her escorts to finish her leg of the Olympic Torch Relay.

Texas WIC News

Published monthly by the



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Texas

WIC NEWS

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children

Volume 5, Number 7

September 1996

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Cover: Income eligibility for WIC is based on the federal Office of Management and Budget poverty guidelines. Cover design by Christine Grether. Photograph by Jennifer VanGilder.

Project 12

South Texas supports World Breastfeeding Day celebration



More than 65 people attended Project 12's health fair to celebrate World Breastfeeding Day on Aug. 3 at Palmer Pavilion in McAllen.

Each of the 18 clinics in the local agency created a booth that could win prizes. Area businesses and restaurants donated gift certificates and other items for prizes.

The Donna Public Health Center clinic won first prize for its booth, which was decorated by the clinic's breastfeeding participants.

"They drew a picture of the world with examples of women of different nationalities breastfeeding," says Isabell Cordova, an administrative assistant for Project 12.

The McAllen Public Health Center clinic won second prize for its "Go for the Gold"-themed booth. Staff members awarded gold, silver, and bronze ribbons to mothers who have been breastfeeding the longest.

The Edinburg Public Health clinic won third place with its theme focusing on the family. Staff members portrayed a family with twins.

"Whatever the businesses donated, we divided so every member of the booth won something," Cordova says. "Prizes included jewelry, hair-care products, car washes, photo albums, and gift certificates from HEB, Golden Corral, Bonanza, and Luby's."

In addition to the prizes for the booth members, community businesses donated more than 50 door prizes, which were handed out throughout the day.

"We had a lot of community support," Cordova says. "It was a tremendous amount of work, but it was worth it. The breastfeeding moms who attended were thrilled to know that breastfeeding has such strong support in the community."

Some of the other community organizations that participated in Project 12's health fair included Knapp Medical Center, McAllen Medical Center, Mission Hospital, Edinburg General Hospital, Holy Family Birthing Center, La Leche League, Hidalgo Health Care Corp., DKFL Health Books, and Texas Health Steps (EPSDT) program representatives. "They were all handing out brochures and fliers," Cordova says. "We also had nurses there answering questions about breastfeeding, pregnancy, and other topics." Lactation consultant Ann Vacek offered her expertise, and Penny Sandoval helped with booth displays.

Cordova says this is the first year that Project 12 has staged such an event for World Breastfeeding Day.

"Before, we would have World Breastfeeding Day parties with piñatas and door prizes. But this time it was very organized. Every clinic was represented, and I think the turnout was better. This was the best year ever," Cordova says. "I think we should do it exactly the same next year, maybe with a little more organizing and planning."

The judges and winners of Project 12's World Breastfeeding Day celebration.

Judges

Gracie Moreno, R.N.; Esperanza Saenz, nutritionist; and Ana Singleterry, clerk II.

Donna booth winners

Lorena Gallegos, nutrition-education clerk; Esmeralda Guzman, immunizations clerk; Delia Lopez, computer clerk; Janie Pantoja, L.V.N., clinic manager; Diana Pelkey, clinic aide; Lydia Perez, computer clerk; Diana Reyes, immunizations L.V.N.; and Vangie Torres, clerk.

McAllen booth winners

Criselda De Leon, clinic aide; Aida Flores, clerk; Ester Gonzalez, clerk; Mary Hernandez, immunizations clerk; Clarissa Ramirez, nutritionist, clinic supervisor; Veronica Rodriguez, nutrition-education clerk; Maria Smith, computer clerk.

Edinburg booth winners

Mary Enriquez, computer clerk; Sofia Flores, immunizations clerk; Elisa Gonzalez, immunizations L.V.N.; Mel Gonzalez, clerk; John Guerra, clerk; Adelina Hernandez, L.V.N.; Elda Hernandez, clerk; Delia Jasso, nutrition-education clerk; Anabelle Ramirez, nutritionist, clinic supervisor; Mary Salas, clinic aide; Mary Lou Torres, computer clerk.

Project 12 gets mother-friendly

By Chan McDermott, M.P.A.

Breastfeeding Promotion Projects Specialist

Project 12 in Hidalgo County has become the first Texas WIC local agency to be designated by the Texas Department of Health as a mother-friendly workplace.

To be designated, director Norma Longoria and her staff developed a policy promoting breastfeeding among employees and provided a place where employees can pump breastmilk or breastfeed during the day.

Project 12 clinic sites can now display either framed certificates or window and door stickers bearing the logo of the Mother-Friendly Worksite Program.



The program is a part of the Breastfeeding in Public Places

law, signed last June by Gov. George W. Bush. The new law guarantees women the right to breastfeed their small children in public. It also mandates state agencies that administer maternal or child-health service programs to provide information encouraging breastfeeding to appropriate participants.

To become a partner in the Mother-Friendly Worksite Program, contact Chan McDermott in Texas WIC's breastfeeding-promotion section at (512) 406-0744.

Project 30

Breastfeeding reception raises awareness

More than 50 breastfeeding moms and moms-to-be attended Project 30's annual breastfeeding reception on May 8 in Port Arthur.

"The room was jam-packed, and we expect the crowd to grow next year," says nutritionist and breastfeeding coordinator Bernadine Crockett. In fact, participation has grown so much that Crockett is scouting larger locations for next year's event.

At the event, breastfeeding peer counselor Jacqueline Boyden highlighted the advantages of the breastfeeding peer-counselor program. She also showed *Giving You the Best that I Got, Baby*, a video starring jazz artist Anita Baker. Topics on the video include breastfeeding management, family support, bonding, and available resources.

In recognition of her efforts to encourage breastfeeding awareness, breastfeeding mom Lesa Davis won

a plant donated as a door prize by a local merchant.

Crockett has hosted the reception for the past three years. The event has previously included guest speakers who encouraged and supported breastfeeding mothers.

Project 30 has seen an increase in the number of younger mothers who breastfeed. Crockett relies on her 18 years of teaching experience to reach these moms.

"I can have a one-on-one connection with them. I can talk more with them and help them be better moms by breastfeeding," Crockett says. "I show them that breastfeeding allows them to spend more time with their child and helps them create a special bond."

Breastfeeding has yet another advantage, she adds. "Grandparents come in to thank me because they get their lives back instead of having their grandchildren dropped off with them."



WIC mom Lesa Davis, standing at left, receives a plant as a door prize, presented by nutritionist and breastfeeding coordinator Bernadine Crockett, standing at right, at Project 30's May breastfeeding reception.

McLennan County children choose their materials for making necklaces at the Waco Family Fun Day. At far right is Project 22 breastfeeding coordinator Julie Helleck.



Project 22

WIC plants seeds of support for McLennan County families

At Waco's annual Family Fun Day, Project 22 staff members helped area children make yarn necklaces with flower-seed packets as pendants.

Outreach coordinator Mary Boyd says this is the first time the local agency has participated in the annual Family Fun Day, which attracted more than 1,000 families on April 20.

"We got a really good response, and we're trying to participate in more events like this," Boyd says. "We chose this event because of its size and because of its focus on families."

In addition to helping children make necklaces, Project 22 staff members handed out nearly 500 WIC calendars and brochures.

"We also put bunny stickers on everyone we could," Boyd says.

Richland Mall in Waco donated the marigold and zinnia flower-seed packets, which were stamped with contact information for the local agency. Children visiting the booth chose precut strings of yarn and a seed packet to create their own necklaces.

"We even had parents come by to request flower-seed packets," Boyd says.

Weeding out misinformation

Boyd says the public's perception is the main challenge she faces in the McLennan County area.

"People think of WIC services as being for the poor or for people on Medicaid," she says. "We're trying to get the message out that we help people in different income brackets and in different family situations."

To get the message out, Boyd has created fliers to advertise the local agency's clinics in the McLennan County area and the services each provides.

"I've coordinated with the schools in the county to send out our fliers with their information on the free-lunch program," she says. "We've hit 95 percent of the schools. We also let the schools know that we have nutritionists and R.N.s who can come out to the schools and do nutrition-education classes for the students."

Boyd also is working on placing breastfeeding peer counselors in Providence Hospital, which has recently expanded its focus on cardiac care to include a new pediatrics unit. "They have a staff of about 1,400, and we were allowed to stuff our fliers in their paychecks to educate them about our services so they can refer us to their patients," she says.



Breastfeeding coordinator Julie Helleck, standing at right, and WIC director Carolyn Scott, sitting, help McLennan County residents make necklaces at the Waco Family Fun Day.

Project 56

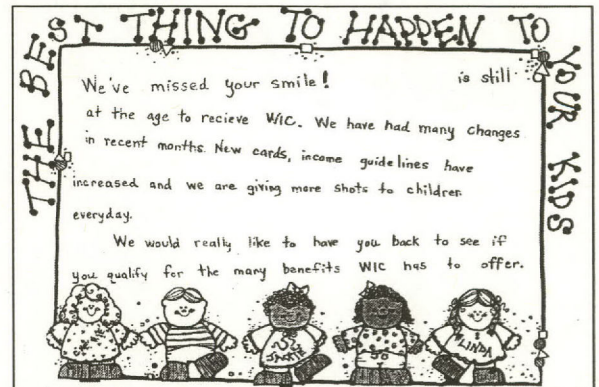
Shots records provide outreach leads

Staff members at Project 56 are using immunizations records to find children who are still eligible to receive WIC services but who are no longer active in the program.

"When we took over the Eden and Robert Lee sites earlier this year, we found that, according to their last shots records, a lot of kids who used to be on WIC weren't anymore," says ChéRié Barker, L.V.N.

Barker and immunization clerk Jackie Hallmark developed a mail-out package that includes a news story on the importance of immunizations, a motivational poem, a current calendar listing the local agency's planned events and deadlines, recipes, and a handwritten note to invite the child and his or her parents back to WIC.

Office manager Linda Comstock and Jo Miller, L.V.N. and competent professional authority, help Barker and Hallmark with the project.



"We mailed about 50 of these packages at the end of July," Barker says.

The local agency also had plans to visit Head Start centers in Winters and Coleman as well as to participate in the Ballinger Memorial Hospital Health Fair on Aug. 24. Staff members will be giving shots to WIC children and will be conducting hematocrit screenings, Barker says.

"This sort of just fell in our lap," Barker says. "The community leaders are giving more health fairs now, and they are calling us more often than they used to. We do what we can, but there are only four of us here."

*People need to be thanked
for their loyalty and patronage.*



*From the video
The Seven Deadly Sins
of Customer Service*

Project 37

Seadrift community rolls out the red carpet for new WIC clinic

Project 37 opened a new clinic in the Seadrift Civic Center on June 4 to serve its clients who were having difficulties reaching the Port Lavaca clinic, which is open two days a week.

Staff members will offer full services to participants at the Seadrift location once a month.

WIC director Patricia Patterson says it was refreshing to work with Seadrift city officials in launching the



new WIC site.

"I've been working with WIC for 20 years, and what we normally have to do is beg to use space," she says. "When I went to see the Seadrift city secretary, I walked in and told her who I was, and she was so excited that we wanted to open a clinic in the city."

The city secretary put Patterson and the WIC program at the top of the agenda for the next city-council meeting.

"The mayor read our agenda item first; and before he even recognized us, he said, 'This is a wonderful program, and I think we should allow it,'" Patterson says. "I almost fell out of my chair. They were all so nice."

Patterson says that, when Project 37 staff members work at the Seadrift clinic, city officials visit and offer them soft drinks or coffee.

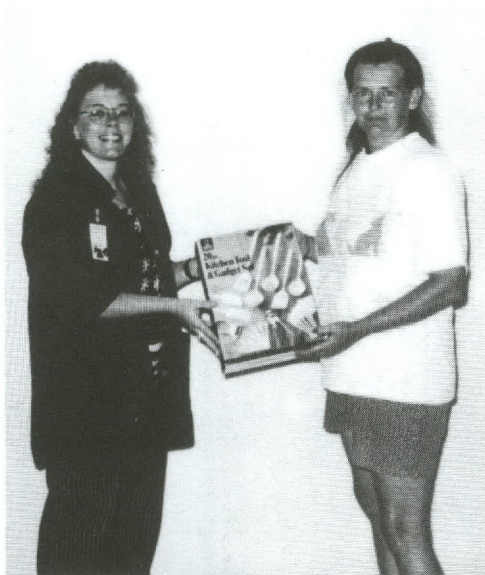
"They always come over to see us, to see if we are comfortable," she says. "We've never

been treated like this before. Normally we have to beg and say please, please, please. This is so refreshing."

Patterson says clients are responding the same way.

"They are so excited we are here," she says. "It was well worth the effort to set up this site."

Brenda Green was the first new client to be certified at the Seadrift location, and she won a 20-piece kitchen utensil set as a result.



WIC team leader Belva Harrison, left, presents WIC mom Brenda Green with a 20-piece kitchen utensil set.

Children are very nice observers, and will often perceive your slightest defects.



*Francois Fenelon
French clergyman and writer
1651-1715*



Three Bacon brothers and their sister rest comfortably on a homemade quilt.

Project 23

Walker County WIC welcomes 'Bacon Bits'

The Bacon quadruplets were the first to be born into Walker County WIC, Project 23 clerk Doris Eddins says. "We've had triplets transfer in before, but these quads are a first for us," she says.

Mark and Sally Bacon of Huntsville were planning on a June 16 due date, but Kathryn, Samuel, Chase, and Taylor arrived 10 weeks earlier, on April 7. The hospital staff nicknamed the fraternal quadruplets, one girl and three boys, "the Bacon Bits."

Taylor weighed in the heaviest at 3 pounds, 7 ounces. Samuel followed at 2 pounds, 15 ounces; Kathryn at 2 pounds, 7 ounces; and Chase at 2 pounds, 6 ounces. Chase was the first released from the hospital on May 17. Kathryn and Samuel came home on May 24, and Taylor was released on May 30.

The quads were 4 months old in August and were beginning to "coo and carry on, just like normal babies," Eddins says. "Taylor is now almost 14 pounds."

Eddins says that the babies' mom keeps all four on a schedule.

"She says they get their bottle or cereal at noon and then sleep for four hours. Three of them are even sleeping through the night. They are exceptionally good babies," Eddins says. "The first time I went out to that house, I thought, 'How can she manage?' But she is so calm and collected. It doesn't bother her in the least."

Eddins says Bacon has the help of her mother, mother-in-law, and a sitter. With four of everything, a few extra sets of hands is always helpful.

"They have four bassinets, four cribs, four strollers, four everything," Eddins says. "We laugh because even though they have a van, once you put four car seats, four strollers and four babies in there, there's hardly room for anything else."

Project 39

Kiosk streamlines information

WIC participants in Smith County can use a computerized kiosk located in the Broadway Square Mall Food Court as a resource for health information.

The Info/Texas Inc. kiosk provides employment, training, and health information to area residents. A Spanish version is available.

The system offers advice on breast-feeding, nutrition, immunizations, and checkups for pregnant women, infants, pre-school and school-age

children, and teenagers.

The touch-screen system is not hard to use, according to D.E. Sciarrini, director of the Smith County Public Health District.

"In fact, I saw a 6-year-old showing her mother how to use the kiosk," Sciarrini says. "This is a good opportunity for the family to find out some information on health issues and to spend some time together."

Cassi Boucher, WIC director for Project 39, says the automated system can prove helpful to WIC clients seeking information on health issues.

The Smith County kiosk is one of 68 in the state.

Photo by Jennifer VanGilder



Electronic kiosks give much-needed information to Texas families.

TRANSITIONS TRANSITIONS TRANSITIONS

Project 11

On Aug. 21, the Ball High School WIC clinic opened at 4115 Avenue O in Galveston. It serves clients on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Its phone number is (409) 765-2502, and its mailing address is:

Theresa Bette, WIC Program Manager
Galveston County Health District
1207 Oak St.
La Marque, Texas 77568.

Project 12

The Edinburg WIC Clinic No. 2 at 113 Dawson in Edinburg opened Sept 2. It serves clients Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. One night each week, the clinic stays open until 8 p.m. Its phone number is (210) 316-1434, and its mailing address is:

WIC Administrative Office
1422 E. University Drive
Edinburg, Texas 78539.

Project 25

The Campus Clinic opened Sept. 3 at 2500 Circle Drive in Fort Worth. On Tuesdays, it's open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; on other weekdays, its hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Its phone number is (817) 871-7218, and its mailing address is:

Louella J. Williams, WIC Director
Fort Worth Department of Public Health
1800 University Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76107.

Project 36

The Dripping Springs WIC/St. Martin de Porras clinic opened May 28 in Dripping Springs. It's open on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Its phone number is (800) 324-4098, and its mailing address is:

Eddie Ortega
City of San Marcos WIC Program
630 E. Hopkins
San Marcos, Texas 78666.

Project 56

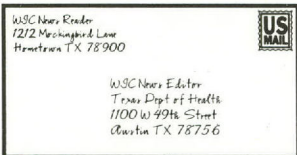
WIC services started being offered Sept. 3 at the Goodfellow Air Force Base Pediatric Clinic in San Angelo. WIC clients are served from 1 to 4 p.m. on the first and fourth Tuesdays of each month. The site's phone number is (915) 657-4396, and its mailing address is:

San Angelo-Tom Green County
Health Department
72 W. College
San Angelo, Texas 76903.

Project 91

On July 14, WIC services began at the Pediatric Health Center in Dallas. The clinic is open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays. Its phone number is (214) 345-4204. Its mailing address is the same as its location:

Pediatric Health Center
8210 Walnut Hill
Dallas, Texas 75231.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A million thanks

Amanda Soto, a former WIC mom in El Paso, sent the letter below to Project 33 director Donna Seward this spring.

Dear Ms. Seward,

With this letter, I would like to congratulate all of the WIC staff who work at the Lee Trevino clinic for the excellent attention, caring treatment, and patience they have with each one of us clients.

Also, I congratulate you for the excellent programs and instructive classes that you offer to guide and teach us how to improve our eating habits and personal care for the well-being of our children and ourselves.

And I would like to thank the Texas Department of Health WIC Program. In the hardest moments of my life, your assistance helped me and my children. You have allowed me to go forward and be able to give my children healthy food and medical attention which, without your support, I would not have been able to give them.

A million thanks for everything. This is just a simple letter, but you must know that I thank each of you with all of my heart. You'll never know how much I appreciate your program. God bless you and this country for all that you have given us single mothers and other people with various problems.

Sincerely,

Amanda Soto
El Paso

Mercis

Gracias

THANKS

Gracias

Gracias

Federal poverty guidelines define only the poorest of the poor

By Valerie Wolfe, Supervisor
Information & Response Management

Who was Mollie Orshansky and what does she have to do with WIC?

Quite a bit, actually.

Orshansky was the Social Security Administration economist who, in response to the War on Poverty, developed the first official government definition of poverty in 1965. Sometimes called the Orshansky Index, the government's poverty line was originally set at three times the cost of a minimally adequate diet. This figure was based on a survey showing that families usually spent about one-third of their income on food.

In their book *The Forgotten Americans*, John Schwarz and Thomas Volgy described Orshansky as a "little-noticed research analyst" whose deep concern for the poor was based on her own working-poor family roots.

Early in her career, she started with the Department of Agriculture, where she worked with statistics to determine the least amount of money needed to purchase a diet that would meet minimum nutritional requirements. These same statistics helped her determine the original official poverty line.

Poverty line not changing with the times

This poverty line is updated every year to take inflation into account. However, there may be some major flaws in the theory behind the guidelines:

- ◆ The one-third spent by a family for food was based on an average family, not an average poor family.
- ◆ The formal adoption of a guideline based on a one-third percentage freezes the poverty-line definition by not taking into account changes in spending habits and what are considered acceptable living standards.

For example, in 1980, "average" Americans were spending about one-fifth of their incomes on food, but the government's figures continued to use one-third to calculate the poverty line.

The fraction chosen for use is significant because it affects the number of people considered to be living in poverty. In 1980, if the poverty line had been set based on a one-fifth amount, the limit for a family of four would have been about \$13,000. However, the official amount was \$8,414. In 1990, figures showed that families were spending even less — about one-sixth — of their budgets on food.

Another major limitation of the yearly poverty scales is the inability to see the movement of individual families in and out of poverty.

A misconception is that people in poverty are the same people year after year. In fact, a major study by the University of Michigan showed otherwise.

The university's Panel Study of Income Dynamics has followed the

economic status of 5,000 families each year since 1968. The first 10 years of data showed that most people slip into poverty and remain poor for a year or two. In any one year, the persistently poor (in poverty for eight consecutive years or more) is around 60 percent of the poor population.

The study also showed that half of the people who are poor become poor through loss of a job or pay cut and that most poor people of working age are working or are looking for work.

WIC clients and the poverty line

What does all of this mean for WIC? It means we have a dynamically changing population of people who are not only eligible for benefits but also who may be even more in need than our poverty guidelines seem to indicate.

Often, people seem surprised when they find out that WIC serves families with incomes at 185 percent of the poverty level. However, as we can see from the data above, families currently at 185 percent of the poverty level would be at a much lower rate if the formula had been updated over the years to change with the times.

As it stands now, most of our WIC families are at or below 150 percent of poverty.

What is it like living at that level of income?

Living in poverty

According to the Department of Labor's estimates, a low-income family's budget is consumed by expenses for food, housing, transportation, medical, clothing, personal incidentals, and taxes. Theoretically, the family can never eat out or go to a movie, concert, ball game, or any other public outing that has an admission fee because there is no room in their budget for entertainment expenses.

They can't take a vacation or a holiday that involves a motel or hotel, can't afford child care, can't give an allowance to their children, and can't buy books or toys for their children (except small gifts at birthdays or Christmas). They can't pay for haircuts, can't buy magazines, can't have cable television, and can't hire a babysitter.

The Department of Agriculture's low-economy budget model allows no money for absence from work or for emergency expenses such as helping ill or elderly parents. Nothing is included in the low-economy budget to buy life insurance, pay interest on loans except for car financing, or put away any savings for college or retirement.

Of course, we know poor families choose to buy some of these things, try to save for college, or have to take care of aging parents. And, like many of us, to do so they must figure out a way to pay less for something else.

Doing without

Unfortunately, when the entire family budget is needed to pay for basic necessities, the shortfall can be made up only by skimping on the basic requirements for existence and well-being. For a family at 150 percent of poverty, or even 185 percent

of poverty, it can mean doing without basic medical and dental care, letting children go to bed hungry or feeding them nutritionally inadequate meals, or living in sub-standard housing.

This information, coupled with our knowledge of how the poverty guidelines are set, can motivate all

of us to continue to strive to reach every eligible person and to realize that the education and foods we provide are even more crucial to those families than we realized. **WICNEWS**

References for this article included 'The Forgotten Americans' by John Schwarz and Thomas Volgy and 'Poverty in America: Trends and New Patterns' by William O'Hare.

Here's how today's poverty guidelines measure up to those from 1965.

| 1965 Poverty Thresholds 100% of poverty guidelines | | 1996 Poverty Thresholds 100% of poverty guidelines | |
|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Number of Household Members | Gross Yearly Household Income | Number of Household Members | Gross Yearly Household Income |
| 1 | \$0 up to \$1,582 | 1 | \$0 up to \$ 7,740 |
| 2 | \$0 up to \$2,048 | 2 | \$0 up to \$10,360 |
| 3 | \$0 up to \$2,514 | 3 | \$0 up to \$12,980 |
| 4 | \$0 up to \$3,223 | 4 | \$0 up to \$15,600 |
| 5 | \$0 up to \$3,797 | 5 | \$0 up to \$18,220 |
| 6 | \$0 up to \$4,264 | 6 | \$0 up to \$20,840 |

| 1996 WIC Income Guidelines Based on 185% of the poverty guidelines | | |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Number of Household Members* | Gross Monthly Household Income | Gross Yearly Household Income |
| 1 | \$0 up to \$1,194 | \$0 up to \$14,319 |
| 2 | \$0 up to \$1,598 | \$0 up to \$19,166 |
| 3 | \$0 up to \$2,002 | \$0 up to \$24,013 |
| 4 | \$0 up to \$2,405 | \$0 up to \$28,860 |
| 5 | \$0 up to \$2,809 | \$0 up to \$33,707 |
| 6 | \$0 up to \$3,213 | \$0 up to \$38,554 |

*One pregnant woman counts as a household of two.

The listings for household members stop at 6 since these charts are for comparison purposes only. The 1996 WIC income guidelines shown here do not reflect those for Alaska or Hawaii.

Oklahoma calls on Texan's peer-counselor experience

By Callie Jones
Staff Writer

A former Texas WIC breastfeeding peer counselor played an important role in a mandatory Oklahoma Health Department in-service this summer.

Carol Dolman, who served as a breastfeeding peer counselor for three years at Project 1 in Travis County, was part of a seminar that was broadcast live to Oklahoma Health Department personnel throughout the state on July 19.

She was invited to participate in the in-service panel by Oklahoma WIC coordinator Hitesh Bakshi, who is interested in starting a breastfeeding peer counselor program in Oklahoma.

Dolman joined a pediatrician, a lactation consultant, and a registered nurse for the in-service seminar that educated clinic staff about breastfeeding promotion.

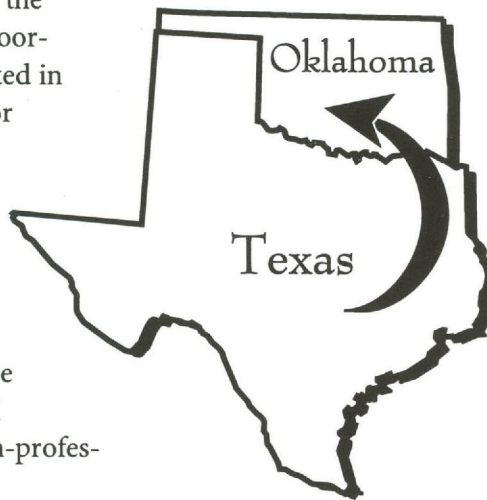
"The other panel members gave the professionals' view," Dolman says. "I brought views and ideas from the non-professional side of things."

Dolman shared techniques that have worked for her as a breastfeeding peer counselor. The ideas she presented to the audience included:

- ◆ using diet counseling to introduce the benefits of breastfeeding to pregnant women.
- ◆ establishing a program for mothers to check out informational videos to view at home.
- ◆ establishing support groups for breastfeeding mothers.
- ◆ getting fathers involved.
- ◆ emphasizing the importance of breastfeeding classes.
- ◆ staying in touch with breastfeeding mothers by phone on a regular basis.
- ◆ mailing letters of congratulations on the baby's birth as well as certificates of merit for breastfeeding.
- ◆ creating bulletin boards for displaying baby photos and updated information.

"Even the tiniest efforts can make a difference," Dolman says.

Bakshi says she is getting positive response from clinic personnel about the in-service.



*The finest inheritance
you can give to a child
is to allow it to make
its own way,
completely
on its own feet.*



*Isadora Duncan
U.S. dancer
1878-1927*

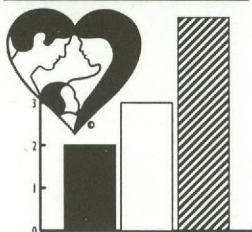
Breastfeeding Statistics

State-agency staff promoted breastfeeding in FY96

By Chan McDermott, M.P.A.

Breastfeeding Promotion Projects Specialist

Breastfeeding Stats



Statistics cover Oct. 1, 1995, to June 30, 1996.

Breastfeeding education and promotion

- ◆ Intensive Course in Breastfeeding:
 - Seven Phase I workshops trained 572 people (407 R.N.s/L.V.N.s, 10 M.D.s/physician's assistants, 26 R.D.s/dietetic technicians, 129 others).
 - Ten Phase II workshops trained 93 people (29 R.N.s/L.V.N.s, one physician's assistant, 13 R.D.s/dietetic technicians, 50 others).
- ◆ Five Physicians' Workshops trained 43 people (30 M.D.s, 13 non-M.D.s).
- ◆ About 600 people attended the LLL/WIC Breastfeeding Conference, "A FamiLLy Reunion," in June 1996.
- ◆ More than 166 people attended the NE/BF Summer Workshop in June 1996.
- ◆ Twenty-seven students were trained in six breastfeeding classes at TDH (for staff and relatives).
- ◆ Sixteen students were trained in two breastfeeding classes requested by the General Services Commission.
- ◆ Twelve certificates have been awarded for promotion and support of breastfeeding.

Peer-counselor program

- ◆ Texas WIC has 350 active breastfeeding peer counselors.
- ◆ Of Texas WIC's 85 local agencies, 43 have breastfeeding peer-counselor programs.
- ◆ Thirty-three Texas hospitals use WIC peer counselors.

- ◆ Two Train the Trainer sessions trained 29 people (13 local-agency staff, four state-agency staff, three nurses, one student, two teen-parent educators, two lactation consultants, four WIC staff from other states).

Mom's Place

(a pump room at TDH in Austin)

- ◆ Main Campus: About seven women per month use this room.
- ◆ Exchange Building: This site opened June 1, 1996. So far, one woman per month has been using it.

Materials developed and distributed

- ◆ World Breastfeeding Day 1996 materials: "Breastfeeding Promotion: A Community Responsibility," in English and Spanish. Poster, buttons, memo pad, and child's coloring placemat.
- ◆ Staff-training lesson: *Solids? Wait Until I'm Ready!*
- ◆ Mother-Friendly Worksite Program application form, pamphlet, mini-poster, order form, list of Texas businesses, and sheet on the estimated cost of a lactation room. Initial information packet mailed to 48,500 Texas worksites employing 20 or more workers.
- ◆ Breastfeeding and family-planning pamphlet, *Family Planning and Breastfeeding: A Powerful Way to Protect your Family.*
- ◆ *My Baby*, an informational keepsake book.
- ◆ Teen materials including bookmarks, *Tips for Teens* booklet, posters, and *Let's Talk about Teen Moms and Breastfeeding* brochure.
- ◆ Bilingual flier: *Tips for Caring for the Breastfed Baby in Day Care.*

Good prenatal nutrition can last a lifetime

By Elaine Goodson, M.S., R.D., L.D.
Nutrition Education Specialist

Nutritionists are learning of new research that shows prenatal nutrition being more important than previously thought. It may influence a child's health throughout life.

For several years, researchers in England have been studying the effects of birthweight on the incidence of heart disease and diabetes in adulthood. Their results may show the importance of prenatal nutrition to long-term health.

The group looked at the medical records of men born from 1911 to 1930 to compare birthweights and first-year growth to later development of cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

The data on heart disease shows that men who had fetal growth retardation showed more cardiovascular disease in later life.

Hypertension and higher levels of cholesterol in adulthood are among the problems noted in men who had experienced either fetal growth retardation or stunting at the age of 1. A correlation was also shown between low birthweight and the tendency to develop maturity-onset diabetes.

Although this work has not yet been duplicated, it bears watching to see if other groups can show the same relationship between prenatal and infant nutrition and subsequent health in adulthood.

The above is a brief sketch of the results of this research. More information is available in the many articles written by the research group, which include:

1. "Thinness at Birth and Insulin Resistance in Adult Life," by D.I. Phillips, D.P.J. Barker, C.N. Hales, S. Hirst, and C. Osmond. Published in *Diabetologia* 1994, Vol. 37, pages 150-154.
2. "Relation of Infant Feeding to Adult Serum Cholesterol Concentration and Death from Ischaemic Heart Disease," by C.H.D. Fall, D.P.J. Barker, C. Osmond, P.D. Winter, P.M.S. Clark, and C.N. Hales. Published in *The British Medical Journal* 1992, Vol. 304, pages 801-805.
3. "Fetal and Placental Size and Risk of Hypertension in Adult Life," by D.P.J. Barker, A.R. Bull, C. Osmond, and S.J. Simmonds. Published in *The British Medical Journal* 1990, Vol. 301, pages 259-262.

Staff-training videos added to TDH library

By Judith Cayton Devin
Training Specialist

Here's a fresh new way to meet your annual requirements for civil-rights training and to help your staffers deal with angry clients or co-workers: Use videos!

The TDH Audiovisual Library has three new staff-training videos. Two are cultural-diversity videos complete with a trainer's manual and a review of WIC civil-rights policy. Both include exercises and discussion outlines. A third video deals with hostility.

- ◆ *The Cost of Intolerance* (20 minutes) shows the price that organizations pay for intolerance toward customers from diverse backgrounds. A series of vignettes illustrates how these customers get the message that they are not valued.

The vignettes examine the subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle biases

and stereotypes that affect behaviors. The lost opportunities that result from intolerant behaviors are highlighted effectively.

- ◆ *A Winning Balance* (17 minutes) is an interactive training video with discussion and activities guided by a facilitator.

It begins with a discussion of the changing workforce and the effects those changes have on today's workplace. It helps trainees to identify their personal attitudes and behaviors toward differences and to recognize how those attitudes influence their interactions with others.

This video and the accompanying exercises may generate heated discussions. To be effective, the training should be led by someone comfortable in the role of a neutral facilitator.

◆ *Defusing Hostility* (45 minutes) is designed to increase your ability to understand and assert yourself in angry exchanges and to respond helpfully and effectively to hostile individuals.

The video and discussion guide show examples of angry people in a variety of situations and levels of intensity. The discussion guide gives three major stopping points in the video as well as questions to stimulate discussion during these breaks. A training session using this video would probably take about an hour and a half.

All three videos can be borrowed from the TDH Audio-visual Library. They are available only to Texas WIC field staffers. The library can be reached at (512) 458-7260.

If you have questions or concerns about any of these videos, please contact Victoria Cummings or Judith Cayton at (512) 406-0740.

You have to respect your customer's time and make the most of it.



From the video The Seven Deadly Sins of Customer Service

Spring cleaning comes early

Nutrition educators at Texas WIC are planning a December "spring cleaning." Before old materials are tossed out, we urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to get what you need from the selection of *WIC For You* back issues below.

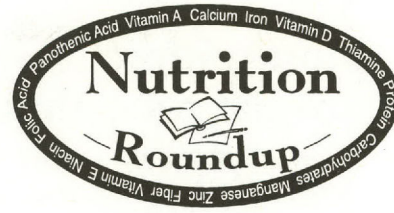
Back issues of *WIC for You* can be used to reinforce an individual nutrition counseling session, handed out at a community-based nutrition-education event, or given to your participants who want more

information on a specific topic.



WIC for You brochures that are available include:

- ◆ "Weaning" (1,500 copies).
- ◆ "Where There's Smoke..." (2,000 copies).
- ◆ "Put the Chill on Germs" (1,000 copies).
- ◆ "Water Your Thirst" (1,000 copies).
- ◆ "Thinking About Having a Baby?" (2,000 copies).
- ◆ Diet and Cancer (18,000 copies).

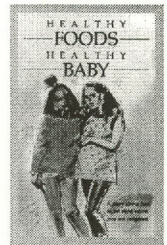


By Lynn Silverman, M.A., R.D.
Nutrition Education Specialist

USDA materials available

If you have new nutrition educators on your staff, you may want to order a copy of the USDA's

Infant Feeding and Nutrition guide for them to review. The state office has 100 copies. In addition to the infant manual for your staff, you also can order USDA pamphlets such as *Healthy Foods*, *Healthy Baby* (designed for pregnant teen-agers) and *Stop Smoking*.



Food-guide pyramid in foreign languages

The California Milk Advisory Board produced a brochure called *The Shape of Eating Good* in each of the following languages: Vietnamese, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Pilipino. The brochure shows the food-guide pyramid on one side with information about it on the other. You can order separate camera-ready copies from the state office.



Korean version of the brochure

If you would like to order any of the materials listed in this month's "Nutrition Roundup," call Delores Preece at (512) 458-7440. Please place orders by Dec. 15. Allow six weeks for delivery.



Non-contract formulas require special procedures

By Valerie Wolfe, Supervisor
Information & Response Management



Q: What is the purpose of the Medicaid/WIC Formula Referral Form?

A: If WIC is not able to issue a particular formula to a client or cannot issue the amount of formula requested by the client, this form should be completed and provided to the client. Medicaid then may be able to provide the formula.

A new Medicaid policy requires clients to first try to obtain the formula they need from WIC. Clients then take the form to an authorized Medicaid vendor, not to the Medicaid office. Vendors have been informed of this procedure and should then be able to apply the Medicaid rules in combination with the WIC denial form to determine if they can supply the formula.

Q: When WIC has to order special non-contract formula from Ross, Scientific Hospital, or Medco for a client to be drop-shipped by the vendor, how does the vendor get paid?

A: A voucher must be issued to pay the vendor. The voucher price must match the invoice amount.

1. If special non-contract formula is ordered from Ross or Scientific Hospital to be drop-shipped to the clinic, issue a voucher exactly as you would for any other formula. The voucher is then mailed to staff at the state agency who will ensure that the vendor receives payment. Do not give the voucher to the

delivery service. Your clinic supervisor or WIC director has the instructions for mailing the vouchers to the state-agency staff for payment.

2. If formula is ordered from Medco, your local agency will mail the voucher to Medco for payment. Your supervisor or WIC director has full instructions on how to do this. Again, don't give the voucher to the delivery service bringing the formula to your clinic.

Contact Mona Russell at the WIC state office at (512) 406-0777 if you have any questions or need assistance with drop-shipped, special-ordered formula.

Q: The new "Issuance of Non-Contract Formulas and Medical Nutritional Products" policy (FD: 24.2) states that some formulas can be issued for a maximum period equal to one certification period. If an infant is certified for longer than six months, does this mean the formula could be authorized for longer than six months?

A: Yes. For infants with a certification period longer than six months, the maximum length of issuance for some formulas could be longer than six months at the discretion of the local agency's competent professional authority.

upcoming conferences


Video seminars offer training on immunizations

The Immunizations Division at the Texas Department of Health, along with the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will sponsor several live, interactive video-conference seminars in December.

- ◆ *Surveillance of Vaccine Preventable Diseases* will be broadcast Dec. 5 from noon to 2:30 p.m. The registration fee is \$25.
- ◆ *EPIVAC LIVE - Dallas* will be broadcast Dec. 12 and Dec. 13 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The registration fee is \$50.
- ◆ *EPIVAC LIVE - Houston* will be broadcast Dec. 16 and Dec. 17 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The registration fee is \$50.

For registration and conference information, call Candy Cates at (512) 458-7284 or (800) 252-9152.

*When speaking to a stranger
on the telephone,
our perception of the person
is determined solely
by what we hear
through the earpiece.*


*From the video
The Seven Deadly Sins
of Customer Service*

WICalendar

September

Sept. 17-19 — Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Training workshop, Austin. Attendees will learn to train breastfeeding peer counselors and to plan a peer-counselor program. For more information, call Jewell Stremmer or Missy Hammer at (512) 406-0744.

Sept. 17-19 — Competent Professional Authority (CPA) orientation, Austin. For more information, call Dawn Everett at (512) 406-0740.

Sept. 19-21 — 23rd annual training conference, Texas State Foster Parents Inc., "Their Future in Our Hands," Wyndham Hotel, San Antonio. Credit available in continuing-education units. Call the hotel at (210) 691-8888 to reserve rooms. For registration information, call Susie Long at (713) 992-4560.

October

Oct. 4-6 — Annual meeting of the Texas Pediatric Society, Westin Galleria Hotel, Dallas. Workshops, exhibits, round-table discussions, plenary sessions, and committee meetings celebrating the TPS's 75th anniversary. For information on registration, call Mary Greene at (512) 370-1506.

Oct. 9-11 — Intensive Course in Breastfeeding, Phase II, Austin. A week of in-depth training following up on concepts introduced in three-day Phase I session. For more information, contact Jeanne Fisher at (512) 406-0744.

Oct. 14-17 — Covey Seven Habits of Highly Effective People seminar, San Antonio, at the Southwest Branch Clinic, 9011 Poteet-Jourdanton Highway. For more information, call Dawn Everett at (512) 406-0740.

Oct. 23-25 — Fourth Biennial University of Texas System Texas-Mexico Border Health Symposium, South Padre Island Convention Center. Registration fee is \$55 before Sept. 20, \$75 after that. Student rates are \$25 with a valid student ID. For more information, call (210) 381-3687.

Oct. 28-30 — First statewide immunization conference, "Immunize Texasize," Marriott Bayfront Hotel (renamed Omni Bayfront as of Sept. 1), Corpus Christi. For registration information, call Candy Cates at (800) 252-9152 or (512) 458-7284.

Oct. 28-30 — Conference on cardiovascular disease, "Mobilizing for Community Impact: Physical Activity & Worksite Cardiovascular Disease Prevention," Green Oaks Inn, Fort Worth. For information, call Rick Danko, Barry Sharp, or Jennifer Smith at (512) 458-7534.

November

Nov. 6-8 — Intensive Course in Breastfeeding, Phase II, Austin. An in-depth week of training following up on concepts introduced in three-day Phase I session. For more information, contact Jeanne Fisher at (512) 406-0744.

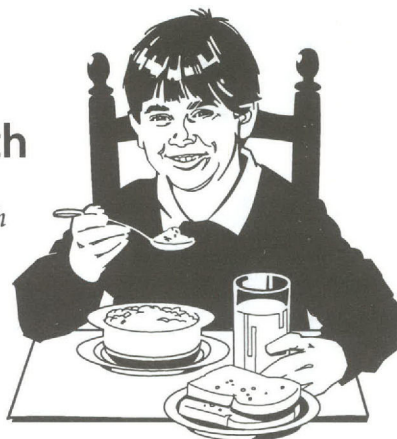
Nov. 12-14 — Competent Professional Authority (CPA) orientation, Austin. For information, call Dawn Everett at (512) 406-0740.

*If you know of an event you'd like to include in this calendar,
call Shelly Ogle at (512) 458-7444.*

Breakfast starts more than just kids' day

American Dietetics Association launches campaign for child health

The importance of breakfast is the center of a child-health campaign designed by the American Dietetics Association. This multi-year campaign puts the spotlight squarely on the WIC food package, which contains key components of a healthy morning meal.



Skipping breakfast makes it difficult to meet the recommendations of the food-guide pyramid, according to the American Dietetics Association.

"Breakfast skippers have a hard time getting adequate fiber and some vitamins and minerals," states the ADA in its campaign literature. "Typical breakfast foods like cereal, fruit, juice, dairy products, and breads are excellent sources of low-fat calories, carbohydrates, and protein. Children's nutrition profoundly affects their ability to learn, develop, and stay healthy. It must be taken seriously by parents, teachers, and other caregivers."

Children who get adequate nutrients are more likely to perform better in school and are less likely to develop chronic diseases in adulthood, according to the nation's largest organization of health and nutrition professionals.

Scientific evidence indicates that skipping breakfast changes the way the brain works, according to the ADA. Lack of breakfast could lower brain function, especially in children who already are poorly nourished, the ADA warns.

Separate research studies published in the October 1995 ADA *Journal* indicate that:

- ◆ Breakfast improves test performance of undernourished children, especially in working memory and verbal fluency.

- ◆ School breakfast programs in the United States increase school attendance.
- ◆ American children are not getting enough dietary fiber to promote health and to prevent disease.

The Child Nutrition and Health Campaign, launched by the ADA in March, emphasizes the importance of breakfast and physical exercise for children. The campaign also encourages adults to serve as role models in nutrition and exercise.

The ADA focuses on breakfast because the meal is a vulnerable spot in children's diets. Setting the goal of eating a good breakfast every morning is a good thing for WIC nutritionists to encourage.

"That early morning meal is a window of opportunity for parents who want to nurture their child's development," says ADA president Doris Derelian. "Breakfast is emerging as the new family mealtime. Parents who are looking for ways to regain control of their family life can claim breakfast as a time to be together with their children."

This article is based on information published in the April 1996 'Nutrition Notes,' a newsletter produced by the WIC Bureau of the Mississippi State Department of Health.



Chewing gum offers relief for heartburn during pregnancy

By Marie Garland, R.N.
WIC Immunization Coordinator

Evidence indicates that 36 percent of otherwise healthy Americans suffer from heartburn at least once a month. Seven percent experience heartburn as often as once a day. However, the rate is much higher for pregnant women; 80 percent suffer heartburn during pregnancy.

Taking care of the problem can be as safe and as simple as chewing gum.

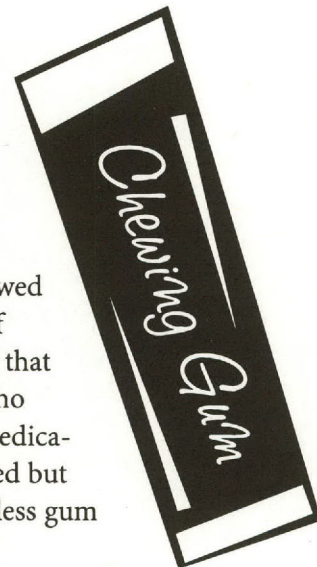
Pain from heartburn occurs when acid from the stomach washes back into the esophagus, the tube leading down to the stomach.

Recent studies at the University of Alabama in Birmingham have focused on pregnancy heartburn. Researchers found that pregnant women who chewed gum had less frequent and less severe heartburn, and consumed significantly fewer antacid tablets.

The study found that acid does not remain in the esophagus nearly as long when a person chews gum. An increase in saliva seems to be the key. Chewing gum is a safe, simple, effective way of increasing the amount of saliva, which contains naturally occurring bicarbonate that neutralizes the acid.

Men and women tested in other studies showed that seven out of 10 decreased the symptoms of heartburn by chewing gum. Researchers found that this is a safe alternative for pregnant women who don't want to expose their unborn babies to medication. Physicians say any type of gum can be used but recommend that pregnant women avoid sugarless gum because of its additives.

Researchers and physicians are quick to point out that chewing gum is not a cure-all for heartburn. Lifestyle modification also can help reduce the problem in the general population. Frequent heartburn sufferers should consult a physician.



THE SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE

Covey Leadership Center®

Article 7 in a series

Habit Three: Put first things first

By John-Paul Morgante, P.H.R.
Training Specialist

If you were to do one thing that you know would have a significant, positive effect in your professional or personal life, what would that one thing be?

Now, perhaps, a more practical question: When are you going to do it?

Setting priorities is a personal time-management technique that focuses energy on important activities rather

than those that are merely urgent.

Important activities are those that we personally find meaningful. They are those activities that contribute to our mission, values, and high-priority goals. Urgent activities are those that we find require immediate attention, those that say "now."

Giving priority to important activities and organizing a schedule according to priorities can produce personal effectiveness.

Traditional time management focuses on time with a view to the clock: How do we efficiently use the time we have? Putting first things first focuses more on the compass, or the direction, of our activities.

The compass we use, as described in last month's column on Stephen R. Covey's effectiveness training, is our personal mission statement. In it, we define the direction we want our life to take. Now, as we put first things first, we begin to organize and execute around those important first things. Where we are going becomes more important than how fast we are getting there.

Putting first things first can change not only how we manage our time but also how we look at it.

As Covey says, "The greatest value of the process is not what it does to your schedule, but what it does to your head."

Getting to where you're going

This six-step process can help you put first things first and keep what is important at the forefront.

1. **Connect to mission.** Review your mission statement and use it as a standard to set priorities for your intended activities.
2. **Review roles.** Look at your chosen roles to ensure that each is in harmony with your mission.
3. **Identify goals.** Set goals for each role that you can accomplish during the week.
4. **Organize weekly.** Using your roles and goals as a guide, schedule the week around those things that are important to you.
5. **Prioritize daily.** Look at the day in context of those things you have already placed in your schedule first. Exercise integrity in your choices of how you use your time each day.
6. **Evaluate.** This is your chance to learn from living. This step establishes a process of continuous improvement. We fix the faults now rather than after a lifetime of neglect.



By John Koloen
Staff Writer

Consumer agency staffs hotline for unsafe products


The Consumer Product Safety Commission was established to "protect the public against unreasonable risks of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products." These products include those that pose safety or health risks to infants, toddlers, and young children.

CPSC has a toll-free hotline to report an unsafe consumer product or a product-related injury, or to find out if a product has been recalled. The hotline, staffed with both English and Spanish speakers, can be reached at (800) 638-2772. The hotline for hearing-impaired and speech-impaired individuals is (800) 638-8270.

To receive a free copy of CPSC's catalog listing product-safety alerts for children, write to:

U.S. Consumer Product Safety
Commission
Washington, D.C. 20207.

*To be able
under all circumstances
to practice five things
constitutes perfect virtue.
These five things are gravity,
generosity of soul,
sincerity, earnestness,
and kindness.*


Confucius
Chinese philosopher
551-479 B.C.

Iron works better with juice

Older infants and toddlers absorb supplemental iron better when it is served with juice, according to a study at the USDA's Children's Nutrition Research Center.

"The vitamin C found in juice appears to complement iron absorption much better than cow's milk," says Steven Abrams, an associate professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. The Children's Nutrition Research Center is located at Baylor University.

"In the first six months of life, most breastfed babies do not require supplementation," Abrams says.

Breastfed babies develop iron stores from their mother's milk, and iron-fortified formula provides iron that formula-fed babies require.

To prevent anemia, formula-fed infants should receive iron-fortified formula until their first birthday.

For best results, Abrams recommends that parents serve iron supplements with juice. He also encourages parents to consult a pediatrician before administering any iron supplement.

Mother's obesity doubles risk of birth defects

Obese women are twice as likely to have children with neural-tube defects, such as spina bifida, than are women who are not significantly overweight, according to two new research studies.

In one study, the California Birth Defects Monitoring Program compared 538 women who had a pregnancy involving neural-tube defects with 539 women who delivered a baby without neural-tube defects.

The study found that women with a body-mass index of 29 have 1.9 times the risk for having a baby with neural-tube defects compared with their less overweight counterparts. The body-mass index is one method that doctors use to determine if an individual is at a healthy weight.

A second study, by the Boston University School of Public Health, followed 1,200 women in Boston, Philadelphia, and southeast Ontario. It found that the risk of neural-tube defects increased with greater pregnancy weight, independent of the effects of folate intake.

Before a woman becomes pregnant, she should consume either folate pills or a diet high in folate. Pre-maternal folate intake can help prevent neural-tube defects in infants.

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