



National WIC Association
WIC for a Healthier America



Six Steps to Achieve Breastfeeding Goals for WIC Clinics

Feed them well.
Love them lots!
Your child has you.
And you have WIC!

NWA'S MISSION

NWA provides its members with tools and leadership to expand and sustain effective nutrition services for mothers and young children.

NWA recognizes the ongoing commitment of WIC staff to improve and sustain breastfeeding rates. The *Six Steps to Achieve Breastfeeding Goals for WIC Clinics* is an integral part of the NWA Breastfeeding Strategic Plan to assist agencies to achieve these goals.

Goals

- ➔ To offer practical suggestions to increase exclusive breastfeeding initiation and duration among WIC participants.
- ➔ To promote and create internal and external environments that support exclusive breastfeeding.

STEP 1

PRESENT EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING AS THE NORM FOR ALL MOTHERS AND BABIES.

- ➔ Recognize and encourage the use of human milk as the perfect food for all infants.
- ➔ Support mothers in setting and reaching their exclusive breastfeeding goals.
- ➔ Develop staff training programs to deliver consistent educational messages for mothers.
- ➔ Encourage breastfeeding at all nutrition contacts, beginning with prenatal enrollment.
- ➔ Promote the food package incentives for women who breastfeed exclusively.
- ➔ Collaborate with community partners to promote exclusive breastfeeding as the norm.

STEP 2

PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE BREASTFEEDING-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT.

- ➔ Become a breastfeeding-friendly WIC clinic by striving to meet the *International Code of the Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes* (WHO Code; for more information, visit www.who.int/nutrition/publications/code_english.pdf).
- ➔ Train staff in how to assemble, clean, and issue breastfeeding equipment appropriately.

As the nation's premier public health nutrition program, WIC provides the competitive edge that will give our nation's future leaders a fair start in life.

- ➔ Provide breastfeeding equipment, as available, following appropriate assessment by trained and qualified staff.
- ➔ Encourage mothers to breastfeed anywhere in the clinic. Provide a private area only upon the mother's request.
- ➔ Facilitate breastfeeding support groups at WIC clinic sites.
- ➔ Provide consistent breastfeeding education, educational materials, and hands-on help—both prenatally and during the postpartum period.
- ➔ Ensure that management fully promotes, encourages, and supports staff in their personal efforts to breastfeed.

STEP 3

ENSURE ACCESS TO COMPETENTLY TRAINED BREASTFEEDING STAFF AT EACH WIC CLINIC SITE.

- ➔ Train competent professional authorities (CPAs) to provide a thorough assessment and appropriate support of the mother's breastfeeding plans and educational needs throughout the prenatal and postpartum periods.
- ➔ Encourage and support breastfeeding education and training for staff to pursue advanced credentials in breastfeeding.

STEP 4

DEVELOP PROCEDURES TO ACCOMMODATE BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS AND BABIES.

- ➔ Allow adequate time for assessment, evaluation, and assistance to resolve breastfeeding problems.
- ➔ Address all breastfeeding concerns in a timely manner.

- ➔ Explore collaborative efforts to provide a breastfeeding warm line, with competently trained staff who respond to questions in a timely manner.
- ➔ Support breastfeeding mothers and respond to breastfeeding questions outside of formal nutrition education sessions.

STEP 5

MENTOR AND TRAIN ALL STAFF TO BECOME COMPETENT BREASTFEEDING ADVOCATES AND/OR COUNSELORS.

- ➔ Provide lactation management education, including ongoing continuing education.
- ➔ Allow adequate clinic time for hands-on mentoring.
- ➔ Train all staff in the necessary skills to assess a breastfeeding dyad.

STEP 6

SUPPORT EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING THROUGH ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND ASSISTANCE.

- ➔ Provide staff with access to at least one specialist who has received International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) credentials, for referral and mentorship.
- ➔ Maximize utilization of trained Breastfeeding Peer Counselors.
- ➔ Ensure that competently trained breastfeeding staff provide breastfeeding classes and/or one-on-one education for all pregnant and breastfeeding women.