WIC: BUILDING HEALTHIER, BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR OUR FAMILIES
Dear Elected Leader,

Moms are superheroes—they do everything they can to make sure their children grow up safe, healthy, and happy. But these are super challenging times even for a superhero! Just in the past few years moms around the country have faced a global pandemic, rising food costs, shortages of child care, and an unprecedented infant formula shortage.

It’s not surprising that many of us are feeling the stress! But one of the proven programs that has not only lifted the economy, but also been there for moms—and newborns and toddlers—is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

WIC is a short-term program shown to boost the economy, and improve health outcomes in babies, including improving birth weights and reducing infant mortality rates. WIC also helps moms get stronger health outcomes too, including with overall health and birthing recovery, managing weight in pregnancy, prolonging breastfeeding duration, and helping moms access breastfeeding support and pumping support as they return to work or school.

Extensive research has found WIC to be a cost-effective investment that strengthens both our local and national economy and improves the nutrition and health of low-income families — leading to healthier infants, more nutritious diets and better health care for children, and subsequently to higher academic achievement for students. Each month, WIC lifts up millions of pregnant and nursing moms, and children aged 0-5 with vital nutrition assistance and counseling, health and social service referrals, and breastfeeding support.

Simply put: WIC works!

Since 2020, WIC has experienced a 17% increase in child participation, and the program is expected to serve as many as 7 million pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and young children in fiscal year 2024. With rising food costs, and increased program participation levels, it is more critical than ever that we strengthen WIC to provide pregnant people, new moms, infants, and toddlers with the nutrition assistance, formula, and breastfeeding counseling they so desperately need.

Still, we are growing increasingly concerned! Unless our elected leaders in Congress take immediate action, WIC could experience a funding shortfall for the first time in decades. We need Congress to include a down payment in WIC funds in the next Continuing Resolution in November and fully fund the program so it can provide for its growing caseloads, extend the benefit bump for fruits and vegetables, and demonstrate support for the ongoing science-based review of WIC’s food packages.
For decades, there has been a bipartisan commitment in Congress to provide necessary funding to serve all eligible participants. Should Congress fail to increase its investment in WIC in FY24 to reflect growing caseloads, the program will be in danger of returning to waitlists for the first time since the late 1990s. This would not only hurt new moms and our families, but also our economy.

In this book you will hear the stories from moms across the country on how vital a program WIC is to them. Moms like Madison who writes:

“WIC has been vital for my child and I. I wouldn’t have been able to get the proper nutrition while being pregnant without the benefits they provide, along with the nutrition counselor’s help. Postpartum, the formula benefit is necessary, alongside with the rest of the benefits. I would be extremely underweight and not doing well—healthwise or financially— if it were not for this program.”

It is not overstating it to say that WIC is a lifesaver! We hope you will read the stories of these moms and then stand up to make sure our families have what they need to raise their children healthy and strong—including fully funding WIC!

Sincerely,

Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner, Executive Director / CEO & Co-Founder, MomsRising
Donna Norton, Executive Vice President, MomsRising
Elyssa Schmier, Vice President, Government Relations and National Budget, MomsRising
ALABAMA

I am pregnant and I have a 4 year old. I lost my job when I got pregnant since the company was only 11 employees I had no protections. My husband works, but like most people, one income is not enough to put food on the table and pay bills lately.

We don’t qualify for food stamps because of what little income we have but we do qualify for WIC. There have been several days where the fruits and vegetables and peanut butter sandwiches have been all we had to eat all day. I don’t know what we would have done without it!

– Katelyn, Geraldine, AL

WIC has literally saved us when we didn’t have groceries when I was put out on maternity leave early. It helped with eggs, milk, cheese, fruits, and veggies-- all kinds of things to get by. And now that my daughter is here that is the only way we can afford to get her formula while my wife works to barely pay our bills. It helps keep our family afloat!

– Stefanie, Anniston, AL

ALASKA

Military families on the enlisted side are basically always in poverty, as we were for years until my husband became an officer. Our three children depended on WIC and the supportive services of this marvelous program.

– Annie, Anchorage, AK

I was pregnant and my husband and I had very little money. I am thankful that I was able to get WIC which helped keep our family well nourished. My son later graduated with honors in theoretical physics from Cal Tech University. He now has an important job doing research in laser medical technology. I thank WIC for helping build this man’s amazing genius brain.

– Rosemary, Anchorage, AK

ARIZONA

It helps a lot! We’re a one income family because I’m a stay at home mom. Whether we’re making $15 or $23 an hour it’s not enough to provide for our family of 4. With how much formula is and how much groceries have gone up it’s very, very hard. We live pay check to pay check and we struggle to provide the necessities for our toddler
and infant. But WIC helps by making sure they at least have something to drink and eat even though it’s not a lot but at least it helps us feed them.

– Kandra, Glendale, AZ

When I was pregnant and struggling financially, WIC allowed me to supplement my groceries and when my baby was born, I was able to get baby formula for her. Since then I have earned a master’s degree and become a professional and want my tax dollars to help keep this program available to whoever needs it in the future. It is the right thing to do.

– Shirley, Chandler, AZ

ARKANSAS

WIC keeps me healthy during my pregnancy. Sometimes it was the only food I could put in my fridge. My baby will be born in November and I’m a first time mom so I would love to breastfeed. And they have lactation specialists there. No one in my family breastfed so I need someone to show me how. And if for some reason I can’t I will need the assistance with formula.

– Brittany, Hot Springs National Park, AR

WIC has provided a rainbow of fresh fruits and veggies for myself and my beautiful toddlers. It has been such a blessing to know that no matter how hard our month might be financially, we can roast some potatoes and carrots and eat strawberries for dessert because of WIC.

– Emma, Siloam Springs, AR

CALIFORNIA

I am a full-time teacher with a Master’s degree, but because our country does not support paid maternity leave, I was left with little to no income during the months after both of my children were born. WIC literally saved our family by making sure that we had enough healthy food during an essential time in my children’s development. After I did go back to work from my maternity leave, WIC’s support was extremely important as we figured out how to balance the cost of quality childcare with all of our other expenses.

My children are now 13 and 15 healthy and happy. We have enough income to support ourselves and we help others when we can, because we know what it is like to try supporting a family when there are impossible choices for parents. Rather than relying on charity, WIC makes sure that our nation’s future begins with healthy children and families. It seems like the easiest thing we can do as a society – protect and support the children.

– Toni, East Palo Alto, CA

As a single mother who survived domestic violence WIC was my best help for my children, they taught me recipes and would check on my children’s health also helped with guidance if I needed other help. I am thankful that WIC was there for me and believe it is only fair to continue to reach out for others that need this help as well.

– Maria, Pasadena, CA

WIC helps me and my 9 week old daughter get the nourishment we need. My husband’s career in the US Navy means we moved to San Diego where he is stationed. San Diego has a very high cost of living and child care costs (if you can find child care), so I became a stay at home mom. We have two kids. Our son is 6 years old and our daughter is 9 weeks old. With yet another

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– Toni, East Palo Alto, CA
government shut down looming, I have to wonder if the commissary will be open, will my husband be paid, and now I also have to wonder if my WIC benefits will cease.

Military families often qualify for WIC benefits due to our relatively low incomes and duty stations’ high cost of living. One of the most shameful realities of our nation is that the families of our brave military members have to rely upon food drives and charities to survive. The least that could be done is to ensure WIC and programs like it are supported and funded in perpetuity.

– Charlie, San Diego, CA

COLORADO

WIC has been vital for my child and I. I wouldn’t have been able to get the proper nutrition while being pregnant without the benefits they provided along with the nutrition counselors help.

Postpartum, the formula benefit is necessary, along side with the rest of the benefits. I would be extremely underweight and not doing well if it were not for this program.

– Madison, Colorado Springs, CO

WIC has helped me out tremendously with my latest baby. He was born with CHD which meant I had to spend months in the hospital with him. I’ve lost my job because of it. And just helps me make sure he has what he needs to grow and be healthy and thrive.

– Sadie, Loveland, CO

CONNECTICUT

My daughter was born at 25 weeks, a micro preemie, and needed a special formula to survive once she came home (after 5 months in the hospital). Without WIC we wouldn’t have been able to afford the formula she needed. WIC is an extremely important program to help mothers, children and families get the help they need in these first few years of life!!

– Jamie, Kent, CT

If it wasn’t for WIC I would have not be eating the amount I should be as I can not afford to buy food each week. I’m so thankful for WIC! There’s too many people out there in the same financial situation where we cannot afford these high priced groceries. WIC is very helpful to have!

– Nadyaliz, Waterbury, CT

FLORIDA

My family and I benefit greatly from WIC and it helps us feed our family nutritious food. It helps us out with being able to afford fruits and vegetables as well as milk, eggs, cereals, and whole wheat bread, pastas and/or tortillas. We utilize all of our WIC benefits to the fullest and will continue to do so until we’re not able to anymore.

– Ginamarie, Crescent City, FL

WIC is so beneficial and helpful as a struggling single mother of 2 young children (1 of whom is still nursing). I’m not sure I’d be getting by if it weren’t for the WIC program.

We use at least one of the supplied WIC items on a daily basis whether it be eggs peanut butter, or milk. The supplied items allows me to make different meals for both children and myself, while keeping nutrition in mind.

WIC was a savior with my first son, because I was assisted at the WIC office with breastfeeding, and participated in the classes to educate me on doing so. I would have failed my breastfeeding journey had I not been able to receive WIC. The program also allowed me to receive a hospital grade pump that I used for several months and then eventually gave me my own personal pump to keep.

I am forever grateful for WIC and the assistance they provide to children and mothers/caregivers

– Angelica, Jacksonville, FL

GEORGIA

WIC is extremely helpful to my family. I have had it since I became pregnant. My favorite aspect is cash towards fruits and vegetables, fresh, canned, and frozen. It helps me keep fruits and veggies at every meal to show
my child what a balanced diet looks like. WIC is very easy to use and allows me to budget for bills and other important things for baby.

– Amy, Hiram, GA

As a newly retired soldier, I was still very sick after having my daughter prematurely; WIC helped me to maintain my strength and supplement fresh veggies and nutrients for her. My husband was in the firefighter academy with half pay until graduation, a year out. I'm not sure what I would have done.

– Chriscilia, Ludowici, GA

HAWAII

Back when my husband and I had our first child, we didn't have a lot of money, in spite of the fact that I had already obtained my bachelor's degree and he was working as a retail supervisor. The cost of living in Hawaii is quite high, and given our financial situation, it made more sense for me to stay home with our son than to pay someone else to watch him. Infant care is incredibly expensive, and any job I could've gotten with my undergraduate education would've just gone to paying for his care.

Given our financial situation we qualified for WIC, which helped us tremendously. We never had to worry about being low on the essentials: milk, fish, legumes, and fresh fruits and vegetables. WIC provided nutritional stability to our family when we needed it most, and helped us to raise a happy, healthy child.

– Julie, Honolulu, HI

The WIC program helped me out in my hour of need. My husband was in a bad car accident and took months to recover. It resulted in our business failing, and I had to take a low-paying secretarial job to make ends meet. My children were 4 months 2 years, and 4 years old at that time.

The WIC program helped to pay for milk, healthy cereal and eggs at a crucial time in our lives. Since then we have gone on to be quite successful, but I will never forget how WIC helped me and our family.

– Carolyn, Honolulu, HI

IDAHO

There were times where I fell back on my finances and WIC was there to save my child from going hungry. This helps a lot of single mothers who don’t ask to be single mother’s to be able to provide for their kids. Also as a mother who struggles to breastfeed due to medical conditions, I would not be able to feed my infant what she needs and supplement for the loss.

– Samantha, Pocatello, ID
As a foster family, WIC allows us the opportunity to provide formula and healthy food for the infants and children in our care. We have seen first hand that WIC helps provide a road to reunification for struggling families. WIC is an essential program for many families in the US.

– Tricia, Nampa, ID

ILLINOIS

WIC was there for me when I very unexpectedly needed formula to feed my child. I had planned to breastfeed but unfortunately after trying and trying I was unable to. There is no way I would have been able to afford to feed my child without WIC.

– Kelsey, Machesney Park, IL

I’m currently pregnant and WIC is the only reason I actually get some kind of groceries. I make too much money for the state EBT and too little money to cover all my bills and afford healthy foods for my growing child.

– Vanessa, Sycamore, IL

INDIANA

We live on one income. Having WIC helps us. It’s important because it allows me to get the nutrients I need to breastfeed my baby. When she turned 6 months I was so thankful I didn’t have to worry about getting baby food and cereals since WIC provides them. In the past I’ve used WIC because my son used formula. If not for the program I don’t think we could have afforded the formula we needed. The benefit of having nurse check ins is awesome too being able to have a weight check done and hemoglobin level checked is peace of mind for me as a mom.

– Julie, Clinton, IN

WIC helps make sure that my child is on the right track. They always give the best for nutrition and they are just full of encouragement, advice, knowledge, and help. The app gives little “classes” to help parents learn what milestones a child should hit. It helps me know what to look out for because my daughter is healthy, thanks in part to WIC. They are so vital to many in my community.

– Moira, Gary, IN

IOWA

They help me put food on the table when I was on unpaid maternity leave from work with each of my kids and continue to help, giving me comfort knowing my kids will be fed. They also share ideas on what to make with the available WIC approved food items that way I have healthy meals for my family. They care for my family by having educational classes during and after my pregnancies.

They keep regular appointments to make sure I am doing healthy and the kids are healthy nutritional wise like testing our iron. They also point us in the right direction of more resources that can help like the Nest Program, breastfeeding counselors, and more! I absolutely love the WIC program and all they do for us parents and kids to have a healthy lifestyle!

– Rachel, Davenport, IA

With the way prices of everyday products and necessities are my family relies on WIC to supplement additional healthy foods. I have been able to use WIC since my first child was in the NICU. It is so beneficial to have access to WIC services as well. They provide so much vital support in other areas besides just food. When I was having
trouble breastfeeding I was able to speak to someone and attend a support meeting.

They also provide sanitary products and other essential items. That has also been helpful when after paying bills I had nothing left over for toothpaste/toothbrush.

– Tiffany, Des Moines, IA

KANSAS

WIC helps me so much with formula and food without them I don’t know what we would do to feed our baby or even ourselves. I’m so blessed for the help including baby classes — they helped so much.

– Mariah, Salina, KS

As a service member in the US Army when I started my family we were not paid enough to adequately feed our young children. I’ve depended on government programs like WIC to make ends meet even now it makes it easier to feed healthier foods to my children.

– Nicole, Junction City, KS

KENTUCKY

I don’t know how I would have made it without WIC. Pre-birth benefits made sure that I and baby in utero ate. Post-birth, the formula helps due to it being $17+ per can depending on what your baby needs. When they get older, the produce helped me plan healthy meals!

My daughter, when she was younger, simply refused to drink regular milk so they added soy milk and she LOVED it! I have 2 kids, one nearly in double digits and the second being half a year old. WIC saved my skin!

– Jun, Lexington, KY

Without WIC I would have seriously struggled to keep my entire family fed. My daughter is a champion eater so her growing appetite and her love of foods that are expensive (hello, berries!) are big hits to our income. I’m incredibly grateful for WIC because I can worry less.

– Caitlin, Sabattus, ME

LOUISIANA

I had gotten WIC for the first year my son was born. He had to be on a special kind of formula. All formula is expensive but the particular one he needed was even more expensive.

If it weren’t for this program I, being a single first time mother, would’ve never been able to feed him. I am very thankful and forever grateful for WIC!

– Kayla, Morgan City, LA

When I had my first child, it was a blessing to receive WIC vouchers. It allowed us to have nutrients to eat and save on groceries. When I was breastfeeding it allowed me to have nourishment.

– Ebony, Alexandria, LA

MAINE

When my husband was starting out as a high school science teacher, we depended on the WIC program for milk, cheese, and cereal for our three children. The wellness checks were very important in keeping them healthy and giving us good parenting advice.

– Janet, Gorham, ME
MARYLAND

WIC was how we were able to afford fresh fruits and veggies, it was often the only milk we were able to purchase. Having WIC saved us many months when we couldn’t make ends meet. I can’t imagine raising a baby or toddler now with the price of food without the help of WIC.

– Cristina, Crisfield, MD

When I had my oldest son, my husband was a Corporal in the Army and we could not afford formula for our son as I could not breastfeed. It was only because of WIC that we were able to survive.

– Carin, Gaithersburg, MD

MASSACHUSETTS

WIC helps me with my formula for my baby and get fresh fruits and vegetables into my kids on a daily basis! Also the milk and eggs that WIC give is a BIG HELP!! Some of us don’t make a lot of money and not a lot of food stamps so WIC helps fills those gaps, for families and single parents alike!

– Janisian, Belchertown, MA

When your baby has intolerance to milk and soy, the choices for formula nutrition becomes a narrow field. Thanks to WIC.. a formula that was more suitable and tolerant allowed my baby to flourish.

– Linda, Roxbury, MA

MICHIGAN

We would not be able to buy groceries besides basics without WIC. Even with WIC, our grocery bill is still about $300 a month for basics. My kids wouldn’t have as much fruit or vegetables as we do right now because of the prices.

– Angelica, Port Huron, MI

MINNESOTA

As a public health nurse, I know that WIC is an essential resource for so many women and their young children. It helps to pay for nutritious food for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and for infant formula, which is so essential and expensive. Our children should be our most important priority. They are our future.

– Deb, St Paul, MN

When my children were 3 and 4 years old, my working hard husband got laid off every winter. We got unemployment but this was half of his salary. We barely survived. The WIC assistance was a life saver! My husband and I could cut back on food but the kids were growing and needed good nutrition. WIC saved us. When he got called back in the spring we no longer needed the help.

– Catherine, Minneapolis, MN

“WIC helps me with my formula for my baby and get fresh fruits and vegetables into my kids on a daily basis... Some of us don't make a lot of money and not a lot of food stamps so WIC helps fills those gaps, for families and single parents alike!”

– Janisian, Belchertown, MA
MISSISSIPPI

WIC helps me buy fresh fruits and vegetables and it also helps with formula for my baby because the formula my baby is on is $40 a can!

– Tiyanna, Water Valley, MS

MISSOURI

It helped me when I was pregnant and homeless, without WIC, I would of had nothing to eat or to keep my kids alive. I’m a single mother, and came out of an abusive relationship, so WIC can help you get you back on your feet. Also, formula is really expensive and helped pay for that as well. I’m sad that the program even ends when the kids turn 5 years old, because what changes when they are 5? Kids still need healthy food and nourishment to grow beyond 5. Also, it helps breast feeding moms too get the nutrients they need to feed their babies too.

– Aleisha, Wentzville, MO

I work in WIC as a dietitian and know first hand how the program helps families to stay healthy. My clients tell me how much they appreciate the bump in the dollar amount for vegetables and fruits. Without that bump they would not eat as much of these foods which are detrimental for proper growth and health. Nutrition program such as WIC saves us money by keeping prenatals and growing young children healthy preventing expensive medical costs.

– Caroline, Saint Louis, MO

MONTANA

I had my first child when I was 16 years old. Without WIC I don’t know how I would be able to feed me or my son. I had 2 more children and we used it up until my kids were 5. I had problems breasts feeding and they helped me. I don’t know where I would be without WIC.

– Sally, Helena, MT

CHILDREN WHOSE MOTHERS PARTICIPATE IN WIC DURING THE PRENATAL PERIOD ARE LESS LIKELY TO REPEAT A GRADE LATER IN CHILDHOOD COMPARED TO THEIR NON-WIC-SIBLINGS

SOURCE: FRAC

In 2012, when I had my first child, we were already living on a ramen and egg only diet. I found out I was pregnant and had no idea what to do. I could barely take care of myself as it was. Without WIC I surely would not have been able to give my baby proper nutrients while pregnant or lactating after. This program is important for women who now also have to follow through with an unwanted pregnancy.

– Lorna, Vancleave, MS
When our son was born, my husband stayed home with our two younger children to save $1600/mo on daycare. The help we received from WIC was the only way we survived during that time, as we didn’t qualify for other help. I was nervous to use the program, but even the cashiers at the store said it was “the best program out there.” WIC supports families.

– Bethany, Bozeman, MT

NEBRASKA

WIC as been the biggest blessing. I have three children. When my youngest was born we were fortunate enough to be on WIC. I was on maternity leave and my husband lost his job due to COVID. Without WIC, there are weeks we would have been without essential groceries. Last year we went through two more similar situations. In July, a close family member passed away and when we returned from the funeral my husband lost his job shortly after. He was out of work for nearly three months. Having WIC available for my young children helped me to have one less thing to worry over. I knew because of this wonderful program they would have nutritious fruits and veggies, eggs, milk, etc.

This program is so helpful to the families that need it and it would be a crime for it to be cut. We are still struggling and having WIC available provides a stability for our family.

– Miranda, Hastings, NE

And while I found a stable job when our youngest was 15 months I continued to breast feed him until he was 22 months. While I had planned on nursing him until he was 2 years old, I feel that the WIC program and support from the lactation consultants and team members who worked in the office helped us eat healthy and gave us the support of “family” when we had moved so far from our own.

– Amy, Bellevue, NE

NEVADA

As a previous WIC participant, I learned many helpful tools that helped guide me to provide the best nutrition for my babies. The program even offered me a job to help other mothers with breastfeeding as a peer counselor.

Eight years later I am now a breastfeeding program coordinator at a local agency and am so very proud WIC gave me an opportunity to show me how to nourish my children and our future.

– Semaj, Las Vegas, NV

I am a WIC participant and I was given more information I could use to help my newborn with special needs than my doctors did. They took the time to explain the different options I had for my son so I can consult with his doctor and find what works best for my son. I also received breastfeeding support to help alleviate most of the issues I was experiencing with him.

– Rebecca, Las Vegas, NV

NEW HAMPSHIRE

I was a single mom with an infant and a three year old and could not work enough to support ourselves and did not get money from their dad and WIC helped us survive! We were so grateful for those monthly deliveries of good caloric nutritious food for two years until the judge forced my ex to help pay.

– Anne, Enfield, NH
If WIC wasn’t around, I would have an extremely hard time feeding my son who is only 4 months old. I’m a single mother, not by choice. I have no help, no “village” as people would call it. It’s me, myself, and I providing for my son.”

– Laura, Staatsburg, NY

NEW JERSEY

WIC supported my children and I when I lost my job and went bankrupt shortly after. It is such a helpful program that I don’t know how we would have made it without it. The fact that the food is so nutritious and available at many farmers markets, makes it a viable option for low-income families.

– Takesha, Elizabeth, NJ

I am a pediatrician who has recommended WIC to families who struggle in this economy to provide healthy, nutritious meals to their children. It has helped many families stave off hunger and it is necessary to continue!

– Katherine, Dunellen, NJ

NEW MEXICO

Literally is a life saver. It would be 100x harder to feed my family without WIC. We love the fruit and veggies, also the milk and beans! Everything gets used.

– Heather, Ruidoso Downs, NM

I started receiving WIC when I was a few weeks pregnant with my first baby in 2022. I remember I was nervous and even a bit embarrassed to make that initial call because I have never received or applied for any type of support programs but I had just started a new job, had just found out I was pregnant and needed the support. Not only has WIC helped me financially through their food benefits, I have also benefitted a lot from the info and support the staff provide. Here are a few ways that WIC has helped me as a new mom:

1. The monthly stipend for fruits/veggies encouraged me to eat more fruits and veggies.

2. When I had my baby and was sent home from the hospital I was having a lot of trouble breast feeding. My baby was crying and fussy because she was hungry and I called the lactation consultant at WIC. She was on the phone with me for about 30 minutes to be sure she shared tools that would help me and they did, instantly! She also texted me all of the info right after and followed up with a call.

3. Once I realized I could not produce enough milk no matter what I did WIC included formula into my benefits. I save about $250 a month in just formula!

– Karina, Albuquerque, NM

NEW YORK

WIC has been a godsend for me and my family. After I had our daughter, my husband had a heart attack 2 months later. With both of us out of work we were able to provide for our daughter and ourselves. My daughter did not breast feed and having WIC was so important to us as it helped us get her formula. I truly do not know what parents would do without this service available to them. It’s wonderful and needs to stay protected as a service for all.

– Kelly, Schenectady, NY

If WIC wasn’t around, I would have an extremely hard time feeding my son who is only 4 months old. I’m a single mother, not by choice. I have no help, no “village” as people would call it. It’s me, myself, and I providing for my son. Formula can be extremely expensive, and if I could I would of breast fed. But I’m on medication for Crohn’s disease that would affect my son, and my breast milk. You cut WIC, you’re taking food out of my sons mouth.

– Laura, Staatsburg, NY
We have had WIC since my son was an infant. When he was a baby, we were temporarily homeless and whatever money we had was spent paying for our rental room at the time. WIC provided us with baby food when he was little.

It was so amazing to be able to fill a shelf up for him. The local food shelf gave us canned goods, but hardly provided healthy nutrients. The nutritionist has given us tips and tricks specific to my son that have been extremely beneficial.

As he got older they covered his Lactose free milk which is painfully expensive. If not for WIC, we would have gone without. We cherish every cent of the $47 of fresh fruits and vegetables allotment. That part of WIC funding is the most important. My son needs healthy food to grow.

– Mary, Hilton, NY

NORTH CAROLINA

WIC has helped me tremendously with my first son. He is currently 4 months and WIC provides his formula. There has been a couple of changes to his milk because of his stomach but the WIC nutritionists are very helpful and helps put my mind at ease when speaking to them.

I drank milk the whole time pregnant with him so I love the milk and cereal they offer. Also love the veggies, something tasteful and quick to make now that he’s here. I honestly wouldn’t know what to do without this program, it’s a life saver!!

– Shelly, Thomasville, NC

WIC rescued me at a moment when I was at my lowest. My daughter’s father suddenly became abusive when we found out I was having a girl.

When I gave birth, he changed the locks on our home, rendering me essentially homeless with a newborn, also forcing me to quit my job and reply solely on my little savings. WIC kept my daughter and I afloat until things got better.

– Ana, Goldsboro, NC

We are foster parents, so our foster children up to age 5 are WIC-eligible. With biological 7- and 4-year-olds and a 3-year-old foster son, every little bit helps. When our foster son hopefully returns to his mom she will then be able to use the WIC benefits—and with a little less financial stress, have a better chance at keeping him with her.

We need to expand WIC not limit or eliminate it. The benefits, though helpful, do not last anywhere near a month. Kids living in poverty have just as much right to eat as any other child.

– Rosalyn, Winston-Salem, NC

WIC PROVIDES SEVEN FOOD PACKAGES

They are designed to meet the nutritional needs of different categories of participants. All packages include foods that are high in nutrients determined by nutritional research to be lacking in the WIC target population.

SOURCE: USDA
NORTH DAKOTA

WIC is a very good program. It helps a lot when my kids need milk or other food and it helps other families for their kids.
– Heather, Minot, ND

I had premature twins (9 1/2 weeks early). One of them couldn’t keep my breast milk down. He ended up having emergency surgery and had a very bad infection in his intestines. After his surgery he had to have a special formula. It’s very expensive and I had just quit my job to care for my premie babies. No daycare would accept them and I wouldn’t have sent him any way. Thank God for WIC, who helped me with the much needed formula!
– Jamie, Williston, ND

OHIO

It helps me be able to provide formula and some food for my kids. Having a new baby is hard, especially when you don’t have the ends to provide formula when they need it and milk for your other kids. WIC has been a true, real life saver to me, especially when I don’t get food stamps right now! I’ve been able to get my family things and food that we need from WIC and I’m grateful for this program.
– Lisa, Columbus, OH

My family of 4 has been on WIC for a year. Due to medical complications with our preemie baby, I was not able to return to work. My husband is the sole provider of our family and works hard for us. With the rising costs of groceries, WIC saved us. I am certain that without WIC we would have gone without essential foods needed for healthy development in babies and mom. Thank you for continuing this program.
– Jay, Dayton, OH

OKLAHOMA

It helps me feed my kids and myself while breastfeeding.
– Erica, Oklahoma City, OK

Without WIC, there’s no way that I could have afforded formula for my children. This resource helps me with hundreds of dollars that are able to help me focus on the other things my house needs.

Even with WIC, I spend close to $200 extra on infant formula, snacks, and water monthly. Not counting diapers, wipes, formula, clothes, and medication.
– Sera, Kellyville, OK

OREGON

Two weeks before my daughter was born, after being promoted, the company announced they would be moving back to Iowa. I was laid off. WIC really made a difference in our young families’ life.
– Mike, Saint Helens, OR

I worked for the program as part of the DHS in Oregon. I saw how hardworking and caring the employees were to their clients in every part of the state. I mentioned what a well ran program it is! I coordinated the formula shipment statewide and got to know the Managers of the local programs.

They went out of their way to show their support for families and breastfeeding moms having trouble in the beginning. We also gave out farmers market coupons for produce.
– Jeanne, Portland, OR

PENNSYLVANIA

The WIC program has been a life saver for my family providing me with not only the supplemental benefits but also information. While breastfeeding WIC provided me with nutritious foods to aid in my journey and the information I needed to make good food choices.

Now my child is three and it is because of WIC that we are able to provide fresh fruits and vegetables, milk, and other nutritious foods for my daughter.
– Kristine, Reading, PA
There are times during the month it would be nearly impossible after bills are paid to buy the basics that keep my son healthy. If I didn’t have WIC things like milk, bread, and eggs specifically would be scarce at times. I was working a job that was 8 hours a week.

Being with this salary put me very behind on bills and now that I am working full time it is time to play catch up and it will take some time before I am fully caught up again. WIC has saved me since I was pregnant. I would be lost without those ladies sometimes.

– Rebecca, Lewistown, PA

**RHODE ISLAND**

When my son was first born, I was barely scraping by on my salary and it took several months for child support to get set up. Because of WIC, I was able to obtain for my child an expensive specialty formula, Nutramigen.

It was an amazingly challenging time, even after I went back to work as I made too much to qualify for help with childcare. Payments from my son’s father were never regular because he was a real estate agent – the only income that was garnished. WIC was certainly a lifesaver!

– Crystal, Pawtucket, RI

I received WIC when I was pregnant with my oldest son. Not only did I get fresh fruit, veggies, milk and other nutritious foods when I was pregnant, I got a breast pump after he was born. WIC is very pro-breastfeeding.

My son was born with a tongue-tie and had trouble latching on until he was 3 months old. I used that pump exclusively for those 3 months and for rest of our breastfeeding relationship and it allowed me to go back to work part time. I also used it when my second son was born.

– Melissa, Chepachet, RI

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

WIC has been an amazing tool to not only feed my family, but to teach me healthier habits! Through WIC education I have learned ways to get my picky kids to eat! It is also a great tool to help me purchase healthy foods for my family. WIC has been a lifesaver for me.

– Rayne, Lancaster, SC

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

I am a mother of 3 boys and one on the way, WIC has helped me so much and it makes a big deal. WIC is such a big help to my family, because my boys can get healthy benefits that would help them make healthy lifestyle choices in the future.

I am a low-income family, possibly fall below the low income family guide line and WIC does make a huge difference because the cost of food. It also helps because of the cost of baby formula is so high and I can’t afford it on my own.

I believe WIC should stay a permanent program because it is life changing and helps greatly especially for those like me in the same situation. There are some women who are single mothers and I know this helps them so much. So please keep this program going to help me and the other unfortunate families who greatly appreciate the help.

– Taylor, Eagle Butte, SD
TENNESSEE

If I did not have WIC I would not have been able to afford baby formula for my baby. As a single mother who receives absolutely no resources or help from anyone or the other parent…. This was a life saver. I work full time and do not qualify for other assistance programs but WIC. To take WIC from a mother who needs it would be detrimental to mothers and children. The cost of living is rising and single mothers, especially those who do not receive child support, are already struggling with WIC.

– Elizabeth, Maryville, TN

If it had not been for WIC when my first child was born, I don’t know how I would have possibly been able to afford to feed her. Being a single mother at the time and working barely above minimum wage, there wasn’t money leftover after rent and utilities were paid. My circumstances thankfully changed after a couple of years and I didn’t have to use WIC when my second child was born.

– Robi, Ashland City, TN

TEXAS

WIC has been a vital part of early life with my son as well as my brand new daughter. Not only the food support has been helpful to keep things on hand for them, but the educational and material support in combination with the connection with the staff there when we visit has been such a blessing. You cannot take this away. Too many young families would be in a bad way without them.

– Corina, Denton, TX

We have too much income for food stamps, despite me being a stay at home mom who is a full time student and my husband being a disabled veteran, so WIC bridges that gap for us and allows us to be able to feed our kids! A lot of families “make too much” for SNAP, but can qualify for WIC. I believe it is an invaluable asset for low income families across the U.S.

– Jessica, Beaumont, TX

My 1 year old gets the lactose free milk his sensitive tummy needs and I’m able to send some with him to daycare without worrying about not having enough for the month thanks to WIC.

I can also get him his favorite fruits and veggies, such as avocados which are quite expensive with the temporary increased allowance of $25.

– Mariel, Laredo, TX

UTAH

WIC has been a blessing. It kept me and the baby fed and still provides food for my baby. I don’t know how I’d be able to afford food with out the help of WIC.

– Jaime Saint George, UT

WIC made it possible for me to help feed my kids after life threatening complications with my pregnancy. I was on short term disability which had me making too much for SNAP benefits. If it wasn’t for WIC and food bank pantries I wouldn’t have been able to feed my kids and myself.

They have been able to help me with breastfeeding and pumping questions with all 3 of my kiddos. I have really appreciated all the support they have given me over the years.

– Tiffanie Roy, UT

VIRGINIA

I could not afford formula for my son. I tried breastfeeding and was not producing enough by the time my son was 5 weeks old.

He is allergic to regular formula and so WIC provides the formula he needs with the approval from his pediatrician. It is the only way he is able to thrive and have the best possible future. It is a literal lifesaver.

– Alanna, Orange, VA

As a mother of twins WIC helped feed me and my children from my pregnancy all the way through to their...
5th birthday. I only wish it could have lasted longer! One of my favorite things to do on WIC was to experiment and challenge myself to find out how many recipes I could come up with that use only WIC ingredients with as few things outside of WIC as possible.

WIC saved my family enough money that we could afford shoes and clothes and gifts for birthdays and holidays, without it I am struggling now and having to go to a food bank to make it through the month.

– Kimberly, Courtland, VA

VERMONT

WIC has helped in every way. The cereals are great for breakfast (sometimes rice krispie treats if we can afford the ingredients). The milk and formula alone. We simply couldn’t survive without it.

– Amanda, Windsor, VT

When we were a young family, my husband struggled to find work, our son was critically ill as an infant and I needed to be with him; we needed all the help we could get, and having the WIC program was a life changer for us. Not only were we able to access extra food for the kids and ourselves, but we met so many wonderful people through the program... other parents, our incredible delivery guy who introduced us to friends, nurses at the WIC clinics who helped with our son.

I feel so incredibly fortunate we had access to the WIC program. I’m sure there are countless others who feel the same.

– Deborah East Hardwick, VT

WASHINGTON

We just had twins and they were both fully formula fed by 6 months, and supplemented with it their whole lives. We would go through almost 3 canisters a week. That would be almost $60 a week just in formula, not to mention diapers and food for my other 2 kids.

My husband is a school teacher, which would have made this pretty near impossible with prices of everything going up. We are so grateful we had WIC to help ease that burden for us so we could enjoy the time we had with our new babies. As a mother, I also appreciated help from a lactation specialist and being directed to many other resources from WIC counselors. I felt so supported and am so grateful.

– Kazhia, Snoqualmie, WA

“When I was a single parent, and in school to earn my teachers certification, I was able to keep both my son and I healthy by shopping for fresh foods at our local farmer’s market. It also provided much needed nutritional staples from the grocery store. It kept us fed, and helped me complete my schooling so that I could provide a stable career to my household, and for my son.”

– Robyn, Olympia, WA
“WIC kept me going as a college student with a young son. It’s gotten even better these days with fresh veggie allowance and the ability to spend it at the local farmers market. I’m no longer a semi-starving college kid, but am thrilled my tax dollars go to this program.”
– Rosa, Washburn, WI

WISCONSIN

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– Rosa, Washburn, WI

My husband died when our daughter was 8 months old. Raising her alone would have been much harder without WIC. Children from many types of families still need WIC.
– Paula, Nelsonville, WI

WEST VIRGINIA

WIC is an amazing program that has helped put food in my baby’s mouth. They let you have access to certain things that are for your child’s benefit such as milk, formula, juice, baby food, fresh fruits and vegetables, and cheese. They also have a very supportive staff that actually gets to know you and your children. They make sure that your child is growing right and that they are hitting their milestones.
– Allison, Huntington, WV

WIC helps my family with all sorts of stuff from the fresh vegetables and fruits my kids and I enjoy eating to supplying the milk my kids like and it definitely helps tremendously for us mothers who work part time only to help support our kids. So having WIC definitely helps me in a tremendous way.
– Donna, Benwood, WV

WYOMING

After I had my second child, I planned on nursing him through the first year. WIC helped supply us with healthy foods to get off to a good start. At 6 months he stopped gaining weight, failure to thrive, we were at the doctor’s office weekly, sometimes bi-weekly. They wanted me to start supplementing formula. Soon after we found out that he is allergic to milk and soy. WIC had been much needed help before, but with this new development they became a savior.

Since my little one could not drink any of the regular formulas, WIC made sure that we got the specialty formula that he needed, which cost about 3 times more than the standard, already too expensive, formula. On top of that they adjusted our benefits to fit his allergies so that he was still getting the same nutrition he needed and helped us figure out how to deal with everything.
– Chandra, Cheyenne, WY

To learn more about our stories or to reach out to our staff, please contact Elyssa Schmier at elyssa@momsrising.org
MomsRising.org is an online and on-the-ground grassroots organization of more than a million people who are working to achieve economic security for all families in the United States.

MomsRising is working for paid family leave, flexible work options, affordable childcare, and for an end to the wage and hiring discrimination which penalizes so many others. MomsRising also advocates for better childhood nutrition, health care for all, toxic-free environments, and breastfeeding rights so that all children can have a healthy start.

Established in 2006, MomsRising and its members are organizing and speaking out to improve public policy and to change the national dialogue on issues that are critically important to America’s families. In 2013, Forbes.com named MomsRising's web site as one of the Top 100 Websites For Women for the fourth year in a row and Working Mother magazine included MomsRising on its “Best of the Net” list.