



United
States
Department
of
Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

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«Date»

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«City»«, State» «ZIP»

Dear «Contact»:

As you may remember, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has contracted with Abt Associates to conduct a multi-year national evaluation of the *Loving Support Peer Counseling* program. The evaluation consists of two phases. In Phase 1, data collected from a web-based survey to WIC State agencies provided a wealth of important information about the *Loving Support Peer Counseling* program. Since the administration of this survey in 2008, approximately six years have elapsed and funding for the *Loving Support Peer Counseling* program increased from approximately \$15 million to approximately \$60 million. As a result, we are preparing to conduct a second round of this survey as part of Phase 2 of the evaluation, to learn how State agencies have used these additional funds and what changes State agencies may have made in the policy guidance, training procedures, and monitoring they provide to local WIC agencies with *Loving Support Peer Counseling* programs.

We will begin asking State agencies in your region to complete this follow-up survey in the next few weeks. The survey will again be web-based and will ask State Agencies about how *Loving Support* peer counseling is being implemented. Specifically, it includes questions about State agency staff that work on *Loving Support* peer counseling, training, support, and policy guidance that the State agency provides to local agencies, and what types of data the State agencies collect from local Agencies about their *Loving Support Peer Counseling* programs. In response to feedback received during the first round of the survey, we have shortened the length of the survey overall and clarified questions that agency staff found confusing. We would like to ask for your support in encouraging State agencies in your region to

complete the second round of this survey. The deadline for survey completion is <INSERT DATE>.

Enclosed is a copy of the letter that FNS will send to State Agencies to solicit their participation in the survey. Study staff from Abt Associates will be sending these letters on <INSERT DATE>.

Thank you for your assistance with this effort. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Castellanos-Brown, Project Officer for the WIC Peer Counseling Study at FNS by phone, (703)-305-2732 or email, Karen.Castellanos-Brown@fns.usda.gov, or the Abt Project Director, Carter Epstein. She may be reached toll-free at 1-855-311-2461 or by email at Carter_Epstein@abtassoc.com.

Sincerely,

DEBRA R. WHITFORD
Director
Supplemental Food Programs Division

JAY HIRSCHMAN
Director
Special Nutrition Research and Analysis
Division, Office of Policy Support

Enclosures:

Letter to State WIC Agencies

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0548. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 120 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection.