

APPENDIX E:

STATE AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT EMAIL

Sent to All State Agency Directors as an email with
Brochure Attachment



WIC | Nutrition
Education
Study

Dear [State Agency Director's Name],

We are contacting you regarding the **WIC Nutrition Education Study (NEST)**, a 5-year study being conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The main purpose of the study is to better understand how WIC local agencies and sites provide nutrition education. Specifically, the study results will provide a nationally representative description of nutrition education policies and practices. The study provides an excellent opportunity for States and local agencies to provide information to help strengthen and enhance WIC nutrition education and highlight the efforts across the country to promote healthy eating and physical activity behaviors among WIC participants. Findings from the descriptive study of WIC nutrition education (Phase I) will be considered in designing Phase II of the study. Phase II will include an in-depth examination of nutrition education delivery and its impact on WIC participants' behaviors in six sites throughout the country.

To conduct this study, FNS has contracted with RTI International, a research organization in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. RTI will conduct this study with team members Altarum Institute, the Atkins Center for Weight and Health at the University of California at Berkeley, and consultants from the Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC Program. In addition, an external Advisory Panel of WIC experts and researchers will provide input at critical points in the study.

This letter and the attached study brochure are being sent to all State agencies to provide an overview of the study should local agencies in your State be selected to participate.

Following are the key study activities that will involve State and local agencies and their WIC sites:

Spring-Fall 2014

For Phase I, the descriptive study, a total of 1,000 local agencies will be selected through a sampling process designed to provide national representation. This summer, the study team will inform State agencies of the local agencies in their State that are included and ask them to provide a local point of contact for each local agency. In some cases, the State Agency may also be the local agency and the point of contact may be an individual in the State Agency. In the fall, the individuals identified as points of contact will receive information regarding completing an online Local Agency Survey about nutrition education policies and processes that affect all WIC sites they oversee. They will also be informed of an online Site Survey about nutrition education practices to be completed for

one to three of their WIC sites. A paper version of the surveys will be available for local agencies or sites that cannot complete the online survey.

Using the survey responses, the study team will select 80 sites and ask them to participate in telephone interviews. These interviews will focus on details of how the sites provide nutrition education and their opinions about effective nutrition education approaches.

Winter 2014

To initiate Phase II, a small group of sites will be identified as candidate sites for the nutrition education study. The State agencies affiliated with these sites may be asked to assist with communication with the sites and their local agencies about the study.

Summer 2015-Fall 2016

Six sites will take part in a 1-year study to evaluate the impact of nutrition education on participants' eating and physical activity behaviors.

In the event that local agencies and sites in your State are selected for the surveys and interviews or for the Phase II study, your assistance in encouraging them to participate will be greatly appreciated and pivotal to the study's success. Survey responses will not be used for compliance or monitoring activities by FNS. Local agencies, sites, and individual respondent names will not be identified in any study reports or publications.

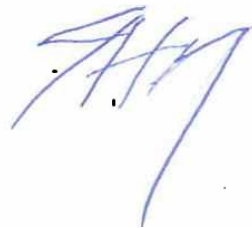
We ask that you please forward this communication and brochure to local agencies to make them aware of this upcoming study.

Thank you for your assistance in conducting this important study of WIC nutrition education. If you have questions regarding the study, please contact Karen Castellanos-Brown, the Project Officer at FNS, at Karen.Castellanos-Brown@fns.usda.gov or (703) 305-2732 or Linnea Sallack at linnea.sallack@altarum.org or (405) 310-4775.

Sincerely,



Linnea Sallack, MPH, RD
Center for Food Assistance & Nutrition
Altarum Institute



James Hersey, PhD
Food and Nutrition Policy Research Program
RTI International

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