

WIC ASSOCIATION OF NYS



Newsletter Issue No. 7 | Winter 2022



From the WIC Association of NYS

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2023 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Register Here



MEMBER
\$150

NON-MEMBER
\$200

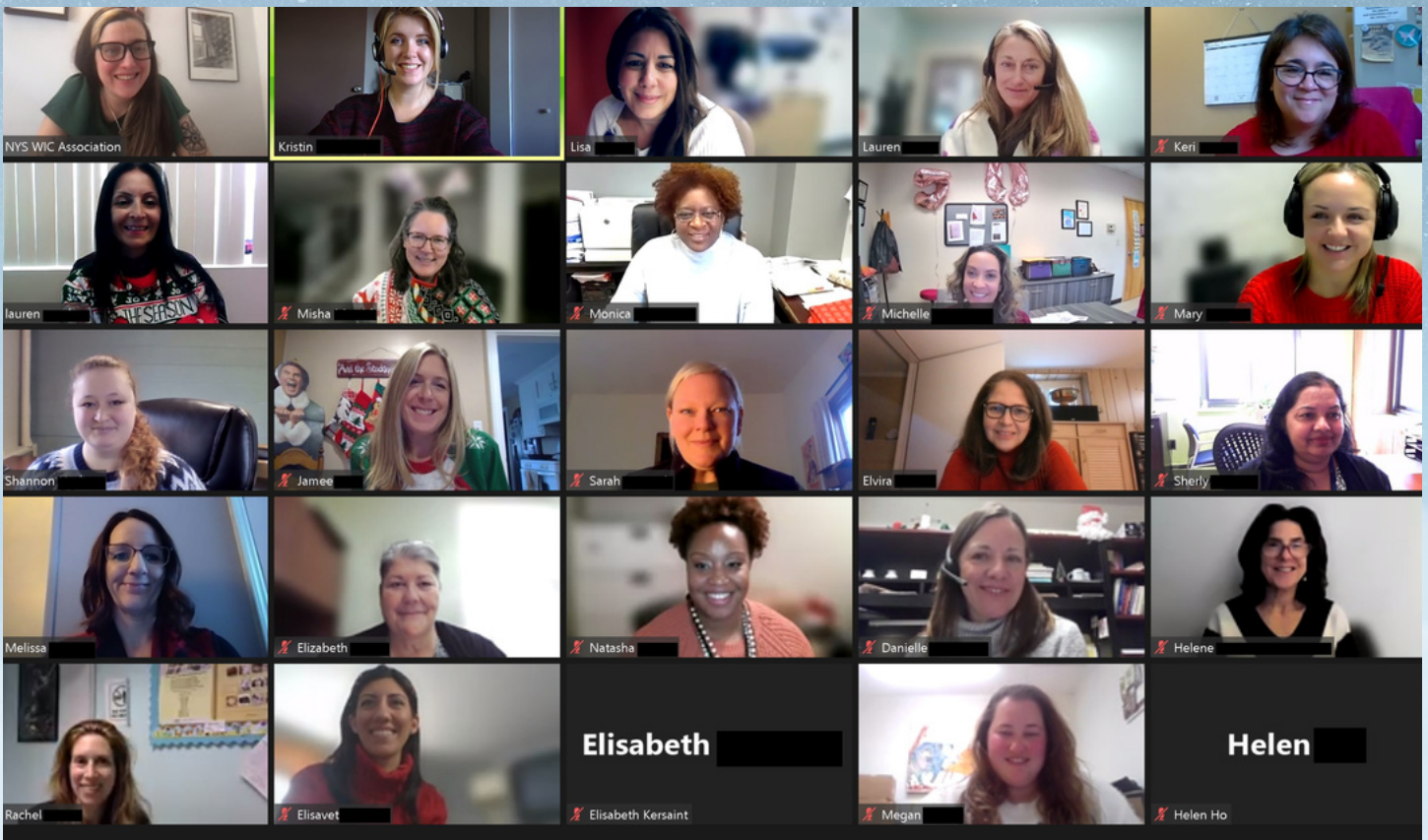


Meet-n-Greet:

NYSWICA held its second Meet n Greet session on Thursday December 1, 2022. WIC Coordinators wore their professional and best fun holiday themed sweater sharing how to perform teambuilding activities with staff during the holiday season, an open discussion on the proposed food package and shared an annual calendar for WIC Coordinators to keep up with DOH report due dates.

Join Us at the next Meet-n-Greet February 2, 2023 @ 12 pm - 1pm. Open sharing sessions will include National Nutrition month and best practices on implementing the Substance Abuse policy within local agencies.

Register [here](#)



Advocacy Corner

Meet Two of Our Newest Advocates



Natasha Ashley, MS, RD, CDN
Nutrition and Health Program Coordinator
Cornell University Cooperative Extension - NYC

I became a WIC nutrition educator in 2007 and was elevated to supervisor in Miami, Florida. In those 4 years, I could see the genuine impact and importance of the WIC program. After moving to New York City and working for Cornell University Cooperative Extension - NYC (CUCE-NYC), I was introduced to the WIC Association of New York State and to the Board of Directors Metro Advocate position. I knew it was a great opportunity to bridge WIC with CUCE-NYC, since both programs support and serve the community. I also wanted to build connections with WIC providers, advocates, and consumers to aid those in need.

Cornell University Cooperative Extension - New York City is a research-based educational organization that adapts to the evolving needs of communities, families, and individuals by engaging them in learning opportunities.

CUCE-NYC programs have served as an essential link among researchers, students and faculty, and the land grant mission of Cornell University for more than 50 years. Our work - to identify connections between New York City's needs and research agenda of the university - is ongoing. Our programs are supported by Cornell research and are well-suited to the diverse needs of New York City residents.

CUCE-NYC offers school-based and out-of-school programming, diversity, community health and nutrition, positive youth development, parenting education, and youth civic engagement to New York City communities.

We currently have community educators that facilitate nutrition and health workshops series to participants at WIC agencies. We hope to continue to expand our reach to more WIC offices and WIC clients.

I'm confident that the link between the WIC Association of New York State and CUCE-NYC will continue to grow and foster more opportunities and partnerships for the better of the people who live in our cities, regions, and state.



Advocacy Corner, Continued



Sarah DeFrank
Programs & Partnerships Services Manager
Food Bank of the Southern Tier

Hello greetings from the Finger Lakes Region! My name is Sarah DeFrank, I am a brand-new board member filling the Advocate seat in the Western New York Region. I wanted to introduce myself and tell you a bit about why I decided to serve on the NYSWICA Board.

I am a former WIC recipient. I have firsthand experience with food and nutrition insecurity. I have a professional background in food as a chef, a grocery worker, a co-op board member and a food banker. I have a BA in Sociology from UC Davis with a focus on social welfare systems and a Master's in Public Policy from Mills College where I studied anti-poverty and anti-hunger policies. I was an academic fellow at the Western Center on Law and Poverty, the Advocacy Manager at the California Association of Food Banks, Director of Programs at the Berkeley Food Network, and am currently the Programs and Partnerships Services Manager at the Food Bank of the Southern Tier.

In my role at the Food Bank of the Southern Tier I am working on refocusing our programmatic strategy to support community-led solutions. We are phasing out one-size-fits-all food bank-led delivery models to building programs that get food to more people in the Southern Tier who need it by building our network's capacity and partnering with existing direct-service providers working with under-resourced populations. This includes fostering and supporting innovation, while working to address and eliminate old narratives and myths about hunger and food/nutrition insecurity in our communities.

I have deep understanding of barriers to program participation, social safety net programs, and a strong desire to improve programs meant to help the most vulnerable and historically marginalized community members. Moving forward, my hope for WIC is that other community-based organizations begin promoting WIC services more regularly and that WIC coordinators do the same for other local anti-hunger programs—that program collaboration becomes the norm and WIC consumers are able to receive additional support more fluidly.

Legislative/Public Policy.

Have you heard the great news about the new USDA proposed food package? It's 'all hands on deck' time to get it approved and over the finish line - and it's easy to make your voice heard! On Nov 17, USDA announced a proposed WIC food package rule that will update the foods available to WIC participants. Over the next few months, local agencies, WIC families, partners and friends can - and should! - comment and let USDA know that you support a food package that is guided by science and provides healthy and nutritious options for families.

Last updated in 2009, these new updates include:

- making permanent recent increases in WIC's fruit and vegetable benefit,
 - introducing seafood across child and adult food packages,
- boosting whole grain intake through stronger cereal standards and new cultural options like blue cornmeal, wild rice, whole wheat bagels and naan,
- increasing flexibility in dairy by removing barriers to substitution across milk, yogurt, and cheese, and
 - significant package size flexibility and additional substitutions to allow participating families enhanced access to WIC foods.

This NWA comment platform includes sample language and additional resources that will support WIC staff, participants, and community partners in crafting comments and having your voice heard. You can learn more from these NWA slides and webinar. Remember: commenting is NOT a lobbying activity.

We also want to be sure we continue to provide legislative offices feedback from WIC providers in their area on how the CVB benefit is being implemented, the response from families, and the positive impact it is having on the broader community. Please keep asking participants (and staff and vendors) to share their thoughts, and if they would be willing to have them posted on social media and/or included in a message to their Congressional Representative. There's no wrong door to get these comments to us; email, or DM on our social media channels. RIGHT NOW there's a need to get the CVB extension funded through Sept 2023 - it takes 2 minutes for you, WIC families, and partners to add your voice to urge Congress to include CVB in the omnibus and pass CNR with WIC improvements this year!



2023 MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Membership Invoices were emailed to local agencies between
October 24-25, 2022

If you did not receive your invoice or have questions or request
please email wicassociationofnys@gmail.com

You can also find 2023 blank invoice on our website:
[2023 Membership Invoice](#)

Formula Update

Formula supplies are getting better! Many thanks to all the Local Agency staff and Vendor Management Agencies for supporting the WIC families in helping them find the formula they need to feed their babies. Communicating with vendors and trying to locate formula at the stores is not an easy task. Getting the health care providers to update the medical documentation forms for in stock formulas and completing the formula changes is also time consuming. All of your efforts are recognized and appreciated!!!

Our VMA's are doing their best to provide communication to the vendors and local agencies. There are still some pockets throughout the state that are struggling with formula supplies. We are probably wondering what is causing these issues. The short answer has been and continues to be the COVID disaster has created the "perfect storm." Some of these issues are related to lack of ingredients used to make the formulas, some are factory issues and some are warehouse issues.

The hardest part about all of this is we are limited in what we can control. The vendor website www.nyswicvendors.com is a great resource for locating stores, the store phone numbers and the temporary formula substitutions. It also provides helpful information about all the WIC foods. It is available in "Resources" tab on the WIC2go App for our WIC families and offers a great way to empower families to use the tools available at their fingertips.

Local Agencies should continue to reach out to your local VMA with formula challenges. If formula changes are happening due to supply issues please make sure the VMA is aware. Be as specific as possible with the information you are providing the VMA. This can be very difficult to obtain with a family that is upset. It is really important they understand the information is needed to help their baby get the formula they need. The following information is needed:

- Basic info - Formula and type, BVT, last formula purchase and severity of need
- Formula attempts - When and what vendors have been attempted (in-person, online or phone)
- Location - Zip code and transportation flexibilities

Thanks so much for your hard work, dedication, patience and empathy for our families and for each other during this challenging time.

"Together we can do great things." ~ Mother Teresa



How to Stay Healthy during the Holiday Season and Winter Months.

Winter is a fun season with all the holiday festivities and winter activities. Whether you like to just sit with a cozy blanket and warm up to the fireplace and watch movies. Or, if your active, and like to go skiing, sledding, ice skating and building snowmen. Either way, it's important to stay healthy during the winter season when viruses and colds wreak havoc on your immune system.

Here are a few tips to stay healthy during the winter months;

- Drink plenty of water. The frigid, dry air outside and indoor heating can take a toll on your nose and skin. Rule of thumb, aim to drink at least ½ your body weight in ounces. For example, if you weigh 120 pounds, you should drink 60 ounces of water every day.
- Maintain optimal sleep, at least 7 to 8 hours per night. Try having a regular sleep schedule, waking up early and going to bed early and having a bed routine will promote optimal sleep.
- To keep your gut healthy to fight off foreign invaders drink bone broth. Bone broth contains gelatin and collagen which support healthy digestion and a healthy mucosal lining.
 - Eat ginger daily. Ginger contains gingerol that promotes proper digestion and nutrient absorption. Ginger reduces oxidative stress and is a free radical scavenger which will keep bacteria at bay.
- Eat a diet rich with foods high in Vitamin C, Zinc and Beta-Carotene such as leafy green vegetables, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, carrots, avocados, blueberries, broccoli, cauliflower and lean sources of protein such as chicken and fish.
- Most importantly stay active and go for walks outdoors during the day. Your body will make Vitamin D when exposed to sunlight. Vitamin D is necessary for a healthy immune system and to beat the winter time blues.
- Overall be mindful, by being kind to yourself and showing gratitude towards others. Take a moment to appreciate the everyday rewards that life gifts you.

<http://www.amymyersmd.com/article/winter-health-tips/>

**Wishing you and your family a happy new
year filled with hope, health, and happiness
- with a generous sprinkle of fun!**

