



Jackson County Department of Public Health

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JCDPH INCREASES ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD THROUGH WIC PROGRAM

The Jackson County Department of Public Health (JCDPH) is working to increase quality nutrition education and decrease food insecurity for those at risk in our community through the Jackson County Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Program. This program provides nutrition education, nutritious foods, breastfeeding support and education for women and their children who have a family income less than 185% of the U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines.

Unfortunately, WIC is not serving all of the families in Jackson County who could benefit from its services. According to U.S Poverty Data, less than 63% of the eligible women and children in Jackson County participate in the program. Less than 57% of eligible pregnant women in Jackson County participate in WIC. Evidence demonstrates that women who participate in WIC have improved pregnancy outcomes, resulting in healthier babies. WIC also reduces infant mortality, saves public health dollars and improves children's health.

To better serve our community, the Jackson County WIC Program has implemented new strategies to decrease the barriers to participation. With the help of grant funding, WIC is now mobile and can meet clients out in their community. Mobile services are available in Cashiers, Little Canada, Cullowhee, and at the bedside of new mothers at Harris Regional Hospital. WIC also now has online education opportunities through WICHealth.org, reducing the number of in-office appointments required.

Other agencies and services are also joining the Jackson County WIC Program out in the community. Agencies such as MANNA Foodbank of Asheville, the Jackson County Department of Social Services, and North Carolina Prevent Blindness will join the Jackson County WIC Program at upcoming events.

Nutrition Programs Director Lee Lillard says, "We hope that by going out into the community, we make it easier for clients to get the services that they need. We are here to support our community and aim to bring our services to them when possible."

For more information on the Jackson County WIC Program, call 828-587-8243 or visit <http://health.jacksonnc.org/wic>. WIC is an equal opportunity provider.

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