

# HOW WIC HELPS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



## MISSION OF WIC

Assuring healthy pregnancies, birth outcomes, growth and development for mothers, babies, and young children to age 5 who are at nutritional risk. Providing nutritious supplemental foods, breastfeeding promotion and support, education on healthy eating, and referrals to healthcare and critical social services.

**49%**  
of infants born in the United States participate in WIC

**57%**  
of eligible individuals in the United States participate in WIC

## WHO PARTICIPATES IN WIC IN THE UNITED STATES?

**7,837,672**  
WIC PARTICIPANTS

Pregnant women	<b>675,227</b>
Breastfeeding women	<b>628,152</b>
Postpartum women	<b>514,009</b>
Infants	<b>1,868,344</b>
Children	<b>4,151,940</b>

## BREASTFEEDING IN WIC

National WIC breastfeeding initiation rates increased by **7 percentage points** between 2010 and 2018.



Among WIC infants who initiated breastfeeding in the United States in 2018, **23 percent** continued breastfeeding at 6 months.



**Fast Fact:** Child participation in WIC increased 10% during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic.



**Benefit Bump:** Congress enhanced WIC's fruit and vegetable benefit to align with scientific recommendations. From April 2021 to March 2022, this provided an estimated **\$1.1B** in additional benefits to **4.8M** participants.

## CHILDHOOD OBESITY IN WIC IN THE UNITED STATES

The obesity rate among WIC toddlers in the United States decreased by **2 percentage points** between 2010 and 2018.

Childhood obesity rate, WIC toddlers, 2018 **14%**

## MORTALITY AND BIRTH OUTCOMES IN THE UNITED STATES

Maternal mortality per 100,000 births, 2013-2017 **29.6**

Infant mortality per 1,000 live births, 2019 **5.6**

Preterm birth rate, 2019 **10%**

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WIC PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

**\$19,355**  
average family income

**77%**  
received Medicaid

**\$38.48**  
average monthly food cost in FY 2020

## HOW WIC SUPPORTED THE ECONOMY OF THE UNITED STATES IN FY 2020

**\$2.9B**  
to spend at food retailers

**\$1.7B**  
formula rebates received

**\$2.0B**  
nutrition, breastfeeding services & admin

Sources: WIC eligible individuals participating from USDA WIC Eligibility Estimates report for 2018 (fns.usda.gov/wic/national-and-state-level-estimates-wic-eligibility-and-wic-program-reach-2018-updated). WIC participants and characteristics from USDA WIC Participant and Program Characteristics report for 2018, the most recent year of data available (fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-participant-and-program-characteristics-2018). WIC breastfeeding and obesity rates from USDA WIC Participant and Program Characteristics reports for years displayed. WIC fast facts reported by State agencies in 2021. WIC benefit bumps from National WIC Association in 2022. Mortality and birth outcomes from CDC WONDER (wonder.cdc.gov). WIC costs from USDA FNS WIC Program Data for FY 2020 (fns.usda.gov/pd/wic-program) as of January 19, 2022.