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## 380.05

### Nutrition Education in WIC

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**Introduction**

Nutrition education is one of the most effective components of the Iowa WIC program and is provided to participants at no cost. The nutrition education provided is determined by an individual comprehensive nutrition assessment and is combined with the WIC supplemental foods that contain nutrients needed by mothers and children. This combination provides WIC participants with the tools they need to make healthier choices.

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**Definition:  
nutrition  
education**

Nutrition education is the process of gaining understanding and skills necessary to promote and protect nutritional well-being through food choices and other health behaviors.

See Policy 240.30 for examples of education contacts and activities that do not count as education contacts.

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**Goals of WIC  
nutrition  
education**

Nutrition education within the Iowa WIC Program is designed to:

- Emphasize the relationship between proper nutrition and good health,
- Assist the individual who is at nutritional risk in identifying and achieving positive changes in personal food habits and individual status,
- Provide the individual with consumer skills to use in making the most of available food resources, and

Promote breastfeeding and help women make informed decisions about infant feeding.

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**Participant  
centered  
approach**

Nutrition education must be completed using the participant centered approach. The participant centered approach involves engaging the participant through talk, information exchange, listening, and feedback. This type of interaction helps build rapport, improves the quality of information the participant is provided, and allows feedback to flow smoothly between WIC staff and the participant.

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**Participant  
goals**

Problem solving and goal setting between WIC staff and the participant should be participant centered. Participants should be engaged in the goal making process. Goals should be developed that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-specific (SMART).

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