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NORTH CENTRAL PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

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Public Service Announcement

Date: October 8, 2024
To: All Media
From: Shellie Campbell, Director
North Central Public Health District
Subject: NCPHD Celebrates WIC Program's 50th Anniversary

With the national Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) turning 50 years old this year, North Central Public Health (NCPHD) WIC is celebrating by highlighting its work bringing healthy foods, healthcare referrals, and nutrition education to local families.

NCPHD WIC is celebrating the 50th anniversary on Oct. 16th, from 10 am-11 am at NCPHD, located at 419 East 7th Street The Dalles, Oregon. Stop by to learn more about the program, meet the staff, enjoy some light refreshments, and get event giveaways while supplies last.

“WIC is so much more than the monthly supplemental foods. I started my career with WIC as a very young mother. My experience has been so much more than a job. WIC has taught me how to save money, and store food properly, and that having access to insurance and establishing a medical and dental home is important for my family. Now, I get the opportunity to help families in our communities with all of these things, and even after almost 17 years here, I still learn so much from our mothers. In WIC, we say, “You’ve got this, and WIC is here to help,” said Maricela Elias, WIC Program Coordinator.

Oregon WIC opened in April 1974 and supported 2,500 women, infants, and children within five pilot programs. Last year, more than 114,000 participants were served in all 36 Oregon counties. Wasco and Sherman Counties WIC archives include a State of Oregon Review conducted March 19th, 1980 with a certified caseload of 148. Fast forward to 2024, we now proudly serve 675 participants.

WIC is evolving into a more modern program. All eligible families will benefit from a streamlined application process, the option to use accessible remote and in-person services, improved shopping experiences in stores and online, expanded access to farmers’ markets, culturally tailored nutrition and breastfeeding services, and more!

In addition to infants and children served, the program supports dads, grandparents, foster parents, or legal guardians of kids younger than 5. The program offers state-of-the-art health and nutrition support through personal counseling.

“We are invested in the health and lives of participants and have spent years developing and strengthening motivational interviewing and participant-centered skills. We have a strong and dedicated team including an international board-certified lactation consultant, a registered dietitian nutritionist, and a dental hygienist,” says Elias.

NCPHD’s WIC program offers top-quality breastfeeding care and nourishing WIC foods, like whole grains, fresh fruit, and vegetables. The services WIC provides are covered in four pillars:

- Nutrition education – WIC offers state-of-the-art health and nutrition support through participant-centered counseling. Participants learn what to eat during pregnancy and while breastfeeding; how to shop for healthy foods and cook meals; and how to get more whole grains, fruit, vegetables, and lower-fat dairy into their diets.
- Breastfeeding support – WIC offers top-quality breastfeeding support and personal advice from professional and trained WIC staff, which helps thousands of Oregon-based families reach their infant feeding goals.
- Nourishing food – WIC food benefits can be used at grocery stores for fruit, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and more to ensure good health, growth, and development. WIC participants also get seasonal farm direct dollars to buy local fruit and vegetables at farmers' markets and farm stands.
- Healthcare and other referrals – WIC helps families access the services needed to stay healthy. Referrals help improve health outcomes; ensuring infants’ and children’s normal growth; reducing anemia levels; increasing access to regular healthcare; keeping children up to date on vaccinations; and ensuring prenatal care for pregnant individuals.

(For more information, please contact North Central Public Health District at (541) 506-2600, visit us on the web at www.ncphd.org or find us on Facebook.)

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