Ask the Community First Survey Results: WIC Participants

**Demographics:**
- 165 responses: 29 WIC staff, 136 non WIC staff
- 86.5% of respondents (141) are current WIC participants, 6% of respondents (10) were former WIC participants
  - 11% of respondents (18 people) also identified themselves as community members
- 96% of respondents were female with just 4% of responses coming from males

**Other MCH programs**
- The majority of respondents were not affiliated with other MCH programs (85%); however
  - 10 survey respondents indicated that they were Black Infant Health staff members
  - 6 CalFresh staff members
  - 5 community non-profit staff members
  - 2 Adolescent Family Life Program staff members
  - 2 Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Program staff members
  - 1 Nutrition Education Obesity Prevention Programs staff member
  - And 2 other organizations were mentioned: First 5 Alameda and Healthy Black Families

- 71% of survey respondents are current or former participants in CalFresh
- 9% of respondents are current or former participants in the Black Infant Health Program

**WIC Participation**
Only 6% (10 respondents) have never participated in WIC. The rest of respondents have participated for varying lengths of time with the largest percentage having participated for 5 or more years (23.5%)

**Race/Ethnicity and Language**
5% identified as Hispanic/Latino/a (8 respondents). The large majority of respondents identified as African-American (90.2% or 148 respondents). 12 respondents identified as biracial (7.3%), with all other races having fewer responses. Nearly 100% of respondents said that they spoke English “very well.”

**Question Analytics:** (asterisk indicates: remainder responded with ‘Not sure’)
A **large majority** of respondents agreed with the following statements:
- “I see a lot of different types of people at WIC.” 82% agreed. 15% disagreed with this statement.*
- “I feel that WIC meets the needs of people who are different races/ethnicities.” 83% agreed. 7% disagreed with this statement.*
- “I feel that WIC meets a wide variety of different needs for young families.” 87% agreed. 7% disagreed.*
- “I feel comfortable and included at my WIC clinic.” 86.5% agreed. 7% disagreed.*
*remainder responded with ‘not sure’
A majority of respondents agreed with the following statements:

- “I feel that WIC is aware of my cultural customs and practices.” 63% agreed. 20% disagreed.*
- “I feel that WIC is sensitive to my cultural customs and practices.” 60% agreed. 14.6% disagreed. 25% were unsure.
- “I feel that the racial/ethnic diversity of my local WIC office staff reflects the diversity of my community.” 57% agreed. 32% disagreed.*

A large majority of respondents disagreed with the following statements:

- “At my local WIC site, I have experienced what I feel is discrimination based on my being African-American.” 16% agreed. 75% disagreed.*
- “At my local WIC site, I have experienced other forms of discrimination.” 13.5% agreed. 78.5% disagreed.*

About half of respondents disagreed with these statements:

- “I often wonder why there are not more WIC staff members who look like me.” Nearly half of respondents agreed with this statement (46%) while 50% disagreed.*
- “I often wonder why there are not more families who look like me at WIC clinics.” 36% agreed. 55% disagreed.*
- “My local WIC office needs to improve how it works with African-American women and families.” 35.5% agreed. 50.3% disagreed.*

Respondents gave more varied responses for these statements, with high ‘not sure’ response rates:

- “I feel that the racial/ethnic diversity of State WIC staff reflects the diversity of California.” 47.5% agreed. 34% disagreed. 18.3% were not sure.
- “California State WIC needs to improve how it works with African-American women and families.” 37.4% agreed. 44% disagreed. 18.4% were not sure.

*If percentage does not add to 100%, remainder responded ‘not sure’

Alternate Interpretation:

Things that WIC is doing well! (High agreement with positive statements and low agreement with negative statements)

- “I see a lot of different types of people at WIC.” 82% agreed.
- “I feel that WIC meets the needs of people who are different races/ethnicities.” 83% agreed.
- “I feel that WIC meets a wide variety of different needs for young families.” 87% agreed.
- “I feel comfortable and included at my WIC clinic.” 86.5% agreed.
- “At my local WIC site, I have experienced what I feel is discrimination based on my being African-American.” 75% disagreed.
- “At my local WIC site, I have experienced other forms of discrimination.” 78.5% disagreed.

Things that WIC could improve upon! (Relatively high disagreement with positive statements and high agreement with negative statements)

- “I feel that WIC is aware of my cultural customs and practices.” 20% disagreed.
- “I feel that the racial/ethnic diversity of my local WIC office staff reflects the diversity of my community.” 32% disagreed.
- “I often wonder why there are not more WIC staff members who look like me.” 46% agreed.
• “I often wonder why there are not more families who look like me at WIC clinics.” 36% agreed.
• “My local WIC office needs to improve how it works with African-American women and families.” 35.5% agreed.

Satisfied Question
Respondents are most satisfied with the “overall ethnic and racial diversity of my local WIC office staff” (65% of respondents are satisfied) and that “WIC has developed classes and activities that are interesting to me” (60% are satisfied).
Respondents are least satisfied with whether “WIC materials include images of people who look like me.” 30% of respondents are dissatisfied with the inclusiveness of WIC materials and images. 27% of respondents are unsure as to whether WIC conducts culturally appropriate activities that are attractive to them (very high number of ‘not sure’ responses).

About 36% of respondents agreed that there are things that get in the way of WIC better including African Americans.
The following items were most often deemed a ‘barrier’ by respondents (top 5 responses):
1. Lack of African American staff at local WIC offices (63% saw as a barrier)
2. Lack of African American staff at State WIC (55% saw as barrier)
3. Inability of WIC to conduct effective outreach into the African American community (46.5% saw as barrier)
4. Use of paper checks, rather than debit/EBT cards (46% saw as barrier)
5. Lack of transportation or transportation difficulties (41% saw as barrier)
The following items were deemed ‘not a barrier’ by a majority of respondents/therefore probably not areas for WIC to focus on:
• Difficulties qualifying for benefits? 73% of respondents said this was NOT a barrier
• Inconvenient hours/days that WIC clinic is open? 70% of respondents said this was NOT a barrier

[Entire table included at the end of this document!]

What currently helps WIC to be inclusive?
Top 3 most helpful attributes of WIC:
1. Location of WIC food stores (71% of respondents chose this as a positive WIC attribute)
2. I feel that WIC staff understand and respect me (63% of respondents chose this)
3. Types of food in WIC are known to me (57% of respondents chose this)
Least helpful? Only 18% of respondents said “My local church/religious home encourages me to participate in WIC programs”

What would help WIC to be more inclusive?
In order of most frequently chosen, top 3:
1. More African American staff (79% of respondents agreed this would be helpful)
2. Use of texting for reminders (73% agreed)
3. Posters and materials that include images of African Americans (71% agreed)
4. Food selection/recipes that are familiar (70% agreed)
5. Option for online classes (69% agreed)
6. Inclusion of fathers (68% agreed)
7. More AA breastfeeding peer counselors (65% agreed)
8. Use of EBT instead of paper checks (64.6% agreed)
9. Relationship with churches (61% agreed) – most “not sure” responses for this option ~20%
10. Location of sites close to where AA live (56%) – most ‘no’ responses for this option ~29%

Supplementary table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Barrier</th>
<th>Percent of Respondents who saw it as a barrier</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of African American staff at local WIC offices</td>
<td>62.61%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of African American staff at State WIC</td>
<td>55.26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inability of WIC to conduct effective outreach into the African American community</td>
<td>46.49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of paper checks, rather than debit/EBT cards</td>
<td>46.02%</td>
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<td>Lack of transportation to WIC clinics or transportation difficulties</td>
<td>41.23%</td>
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<td>WIC foods are hard to find on the shelves in stores</td>
<td>37.17%</td>
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<td>WIC staff not understanding how African Americans might think or feel about using WIC benefits</td>
<td>36.84%</td>
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<td>Not enough use of technology or convenient options (like cell phone reminders/text messages, or online class options)</td>
<td>35.71%</td>
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<td>Child care is not offered at WIC clinics</td>
<td>35.40%</td>
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<td>Language barriers or immigration concerns</td>
<td>30.36%</td>
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<td>Not feeling comfortable participating in the WIC program</td>
<td>30.09%</td>
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<td>WIC food selection is not desirable</td>
<td>30.09%</td>
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<td>Waiting for and getting services takes too much time</td>
<td>29.73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIC clinics are not well located for the African American community</td>
<td>28.95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIC food stores are not well located for the African American community</td>
<td>27.43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of information or knowledge on where to go to get WIC Program benefits</td>
<td>27.19%</td>
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<td>Feeling ashamed or shy to be seen going to a WIC program clinic</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
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<td>Waiting space at the WIC clinic is limited</td>
<td>24.11%</td>
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<td>Inconvenient hours/days that the WIC clinic is open</td>
<td>22.12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulties qualifying for benefits</td>
<td>15.04%</td>
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