Michigan Illinois Indiana Ohio

# Using the Internet to Impact Parent-Child Feeding Behaviors

Minnesota Wisconsin Washington



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# Benefits of Internet Approach

- Can serve large numbers at low cost
- Access to stage specific education
- Access at home or work

# Benefits of Internet Approach

#### For WIC Clients:

- Easy Fun Convenient
- Targeted to their interest, needs, and readiness to change

#### For WIC Staff:

- Saves staff time
- Allows staff to follow-up with clients
- Reinforces educational strategies using stageappropriate educational information

# Project Purpose

- Develop alternative and innovative behavioral approach for providing nutrition education to WIC participants
- Provide WIC participants with information and tools specific to their situations, needs, and interests

# Theory-Driven Approach

- Stages of Change
- Persuasive Communication
  - Transactional
  - Response dependent
- Behavioral Intent
- Division of Responsibility

# Program Features

- Unique Approach
  - Clients are directed to existing web-based information based on the stage of readiness to change behavior
  - Ability to advance in intent toward stage change
- Use of existing web sites as "end nodes"
- Screen messages include:
  - Question/Feedback
  - Empowering statement
  - Information

# Program Features

### User receives a Certificate of Completion

- Indicates module completed
- Identifies starting and ending stages
- Indicates what they intend to do with what they have learned

### wichealth Modules



Support for breastfeeding moms



Happy, healthy, active children

Be healthy as your baby grows (also in Spanish)

Trust you child to eat enough (also in Spanish)

Make meals and snacks simple (also in Spanish)

Secrets for picky eaters (also in Spanish)

Create good eating habits in your child



Help your child make good eating choices



Baby's first cup



Starting to feed your baby solid foods



Fun and healthy drinks for kids (new 2007)

#### 6-month evaluation

- Total participants: 150,000 + (2003-2007)
- Youth age correlated with use (younger=higher use)
- Easy computer access: 82%
- Computer access from home: 57%
- Consistent results across 5 years

#### Most users:

- Find the website easy to use and helpful (97%)
- Learned something that will help them with child feeding (90%)
- Believe they can make changes using what they learned (92%)
- Want to learn about other WIC eating topics using a web-based approach (85%)
- Liked the web better than other nutrition education formats from their WIC office (81%)

- Maintenance, action, and preparation are the most frequent entry points
- Movement toward action in all modules
- 98% in preparation moved to action
- 71% in contemplation moved to action
- Implications for use: Action oriented clients

- Relationship between number of end nodes visited and stage movement
- Relationship between number of end nodes visited and stage movement
- Most popular modules:
  - My Pyramid
  - Happy, healthy, active children
  - Meals and snacks

### Resource Matrix

- Follow up tool used during counseling
- Takes off from certificate of completion
- Database organization of agency and state resources
- Categorized by age, module, stage, and processes of change
- Allows ability to share resources across agencies and states



File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

#### Certificate of Completion

This certificate is awarded to:

#### For successfully completing the WIC lesson:

**Secrets For Feeding Picky Eaters** 

This is what I will do with the information that I have learned today:

I am going to try and offer a choice of three foods and not give in to tantrums if he refuses to eat one of those choices.

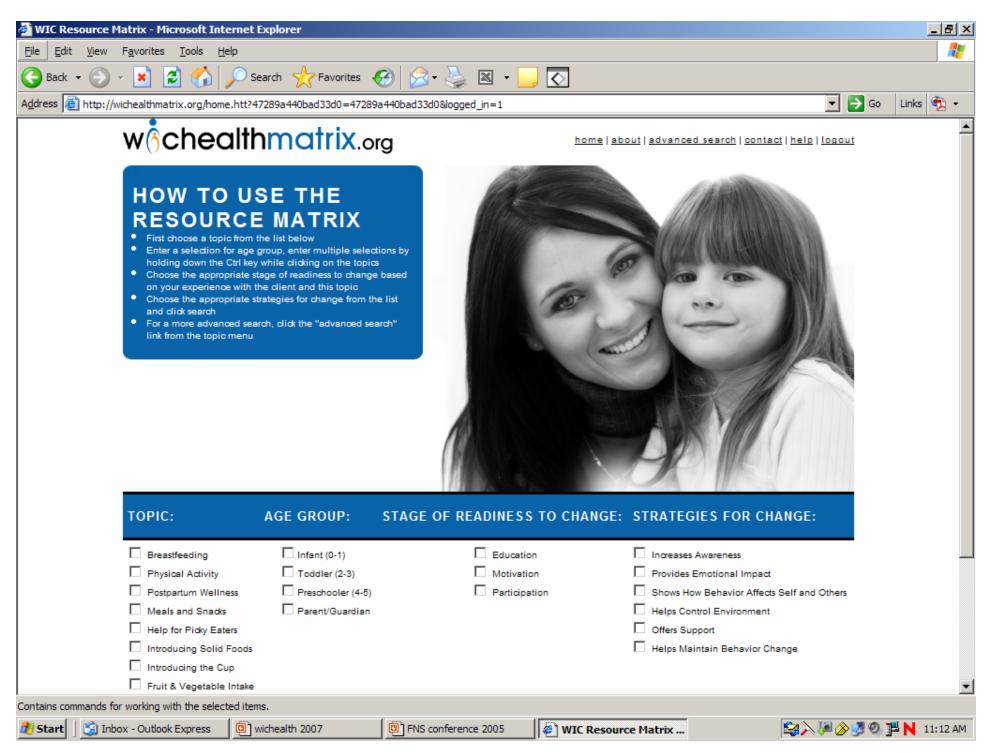
**Initial Stage: Preparation** 

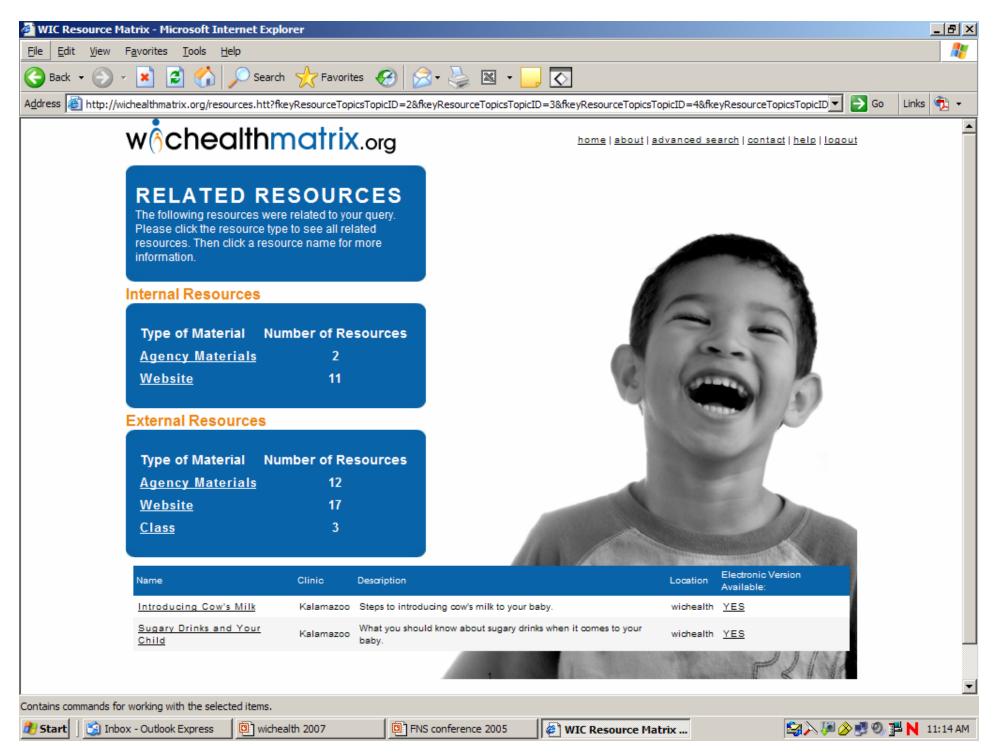
**Ending Stage: Action** 



Signature

Date





# Challenges

- Staying ahead of technology
- Compatibility issues
- Maintaining end nodes

## **Next Steps**

- Add 1 additional modules
- Translate 4 modules into Spanish
- USDA special projects grant for 2 fruit and veggie modules
- Partner with other states
- Expand avenues for Resource Matrix

### Conclusion

- Innovative use of technology to deliver low cost and stage-specific education to WIC participants
- Promising and consistent impact
- Expanding modules
- Multi-phased intervention with follow up