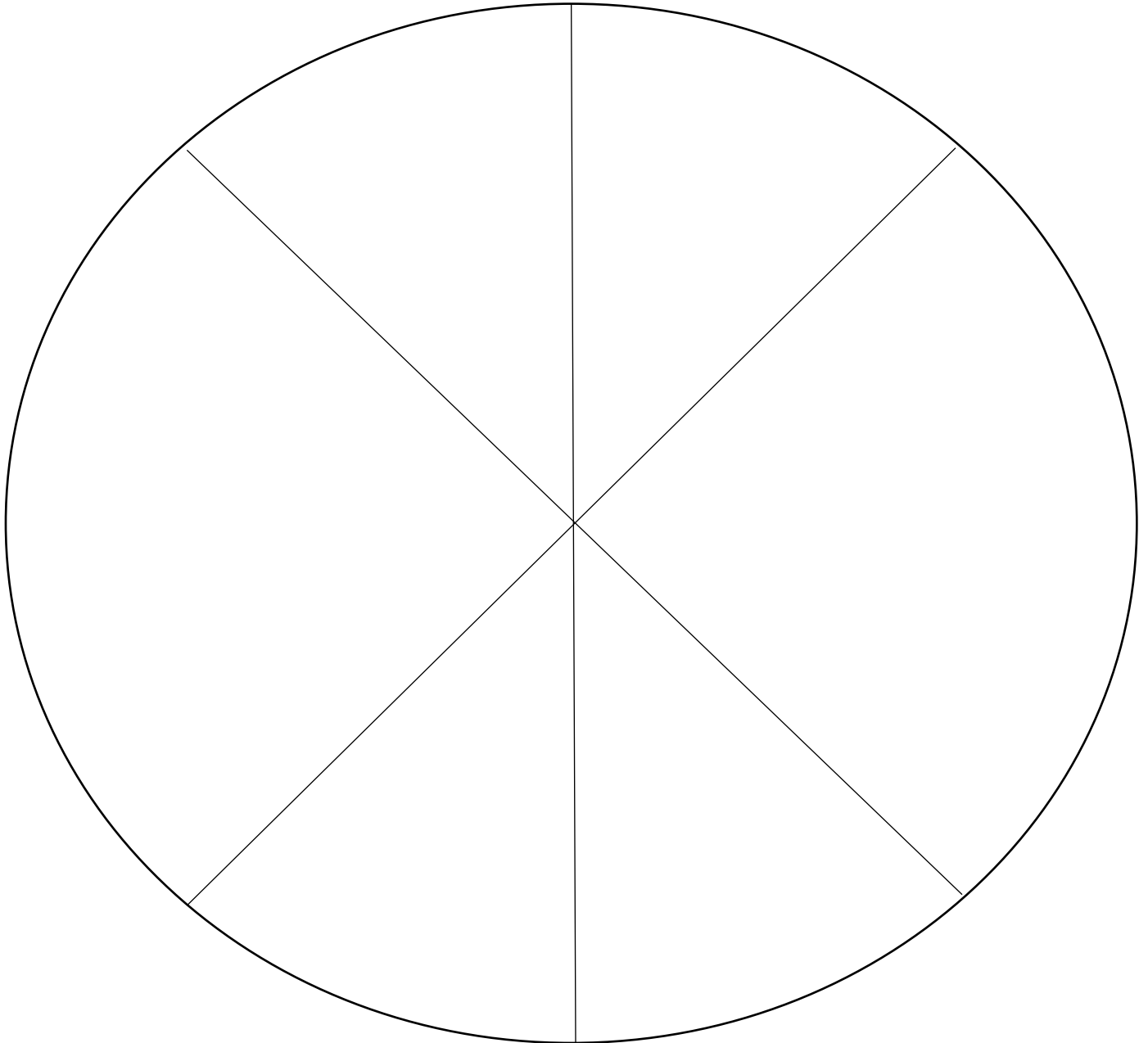


**WIC and Breastfeeding: BREASTFEEDING PROMOTION**

**Level 1 HANDOUT: Circle of Care for WIC Moms**

1. For each of the segments of the circle, write down one of the staff positions at the WIC clinic or agency. Discuss how each position can best promote and support breastfeeding as part of the circle of support for new moms.



**My Role at WIC** \_\_\_\_\_

Ways I could improve breastfeeding support for WIC mothers within my role:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

## ACTIVITIES: COUNSELING – DASHBOARD 1: BELIEFS AND BASICS

### COUNSELING: BELIEFS AND BASICS

LEVEL 1 – 5-10 MINUTES FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING

**Purpose:** To begin to focus on exploring experiences and feelings.

Think about your reactions the first time you saw a baby breastfeed. Reflect on the situation and how seeing a baby breastfeed made you feel.

#### **Take-away Points:**

- The first time we saw a baby breastfeed was unique to each of us. Our feelings in response to it are also unique.
- Some of us have positive- Others might have felt uncomfortable or curious-
- Some of us may be surprised how reflecting on the experience quickly brought those feelings back. Others of us may realize that initial negative feelings changed after we learned more about breastfeeding.

## HANDOUTS: COUNSELING – DASHBOARD 1: BELIEFS AND BASICS

### Counseling: Beliefs and Basics

#### Level 1 HANDOUT: What If?

#### Situation #1:

A pregnant teen is at WIC for initial certification. Her mother is with her. While they are waiting, her mother complains loudly about the breastfeeding posters in the waiting area. She says she shouldn't have to look at people doing "that," and besides, she didn't breastfeed, and her children turned out fine. Her daughter needs to focus on finishing high school. What is your first thought? *(For example, maybe you feel annoyed or wish you could correct her, so others are not influenced by her negative attitude.)*

Your First Thought	How You Might Respond

#### Situation #2

A mother of a 3-week-old baby comes into the clinic without an appointment and says she needs to get formula **TODAY**. She was already certified as an exclusively breastfeeding mom a week ago. However, says she has changed her mind and wants to use formula so she can get more help with the baby. What is your first thought? *(For example, you might feel frustrated that she is giving up so soon, or maybe you are glad she at least tried breastfeeding.)*

Your First Thought	How You Might Respond

**Situation #3**

The mother of a 1-year-old baby is back at WIC for her baby’s recertification appointment. When you congratulate the mother for breastfeeding a year she says, “It’s going so well I think I’ll breastfeed until he goes to school.” What is your first thought? *(For example, maybe you feel shocked that someone would want to breastfeed that long breastfeeding that long, or perhaps you regret you did not personally breastfeed very long.)*

Your First Thought	How You Might Respond

**Situation #4**

Two mothers are talking while they wait for their WIC appointments. One mother is pregnant and the other has a 6-month-old baby. You overhear the mother of the baby telling the pregnant mother that she tried breastfeeding in the hospital but that it just didn’t feel right. She goes on to say that she knew she wouldn’t make enough milk, so she started supplementing on day one. Her baby “never got the hang of it” and by the end of the first week, she was no longer breastfeeding. She tells the pregnant mother that if she decides to breastfeed, it would be better if she didn’t tell anyone at WIC or they won’t give her any formula. What is your first thought? *(For example, you might feel angry or upset that a participant would mislead WIC about their intentions.)*

Your First Thought	How You Might Respond

## COUNSELING: BELIEFS AND BASICS

LEVEL 1 – 5 MINUTES EMOTION PRACTICE

Instructions: Using the handout Emotion Practice identify the feelings you believe the subject is experiencing. Based on what you know about emotional pulse points, what emotional messages might resonate with the subject.

## Counseling: Beliefs and Basics

Level 1 HANDOUT: Emotion Practice

Situation	Possible Feelings of Participant	Encouragement Mom Might Need
A pregnant adolescent is at WIC with her mother for an initial certification. She is quiet while her mother is doing all the talking for her.		
A mother of a 1-week-old baby is at WIC to certify her newborn. She says she is breastfeeding but wants to get formula because her baby is so fussy.		
A pregnant woman is a single mom of two other children. She works at a local fast-food restaurant and at a small retail store. She rolls her eyes when you ask what she has heard about breastfeeding and says, "There's no way."		
A new mother comes to WIC with her newborn right after discharge from the hospital. She is tearful as she reports frustration over her baby's refusal to latch. Her healthcare provider recommended the baby receive formula until breastfeeding issues are resolved.		

COUNSELING: BELIEFS AND BASICS

LEVEL 1 – 5 MINUTES SWITCHING OUR LANGUAGE

**Purpose:** To identify positive ways to discuss breastfeeding with WIC participants.

1. Read over the statements in the handout, "Switching Our Language." Work individually to take the negative statements on the handout and change them into more positive approaches. Write in other common statements heard in the WIC clinic setting.
2. Counseling: Beliefs and Basics

Level 1 HANDOUT: Switching Our Language

Common Statements	Positive Approach
Our policy is that mothers who opt for formula get fewer foods.	
We can't really give you any more formula if you're breastfeeding.	
The peer counselor isn't here today.	
You don't meet the income qualifications. There's nothing more we can do.	
We can only give breast pumps to women who are exclusively breastfeeding.	

Negative statements and possible alternative approaches include:

Common Statements	More Positive Approach
“Our policy is that mothers who receive formula get fewer foods.”	Moms who breastfeed will receive more foods, and receive them for up to a full year.
“We can’t really give you any more formula if you’re breastfeeding.”	We want to help you make as much milk as possible for your baby. The more you breastfeed the more milk you will make.
“The peer counselor isn’t here today.”	We can get you some help for breastfeeding. I’ll phone the peer counselor now and let her talk with you about your concerns.
“You don’t meet the income qualifications. There’s nothing more we can do.”	Even though you don’t meet the income guidelines, I can share other ways you can get breastfeeding help in the community.
“We can only give breast pumps to women who are exclusively breastfeeding.”	There are several options for getting a breast pump we can share with you.



## Counseling: Beliefs and Basics

## Level 1 HANDOUT: Personal Inventory

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
Greet participants with a smile and words of welcome.				
Speak about the reasons to breastfeed with pregnant and postpartum participants.				
Share information about the benefits of the "Fully Breastfeeding" food package with pregnant participants.				
Ask pregnant participants, " <i>What have you heard about breastfeeding?</i> " Instead of, " <i>Are you going to breastfeed or formula feed?</i> "				
Refer pregnant women to the peer counselor at initial certification.				
Invite pregnant women to prenatal breastfeeding classes.				
Refer all new breastfeeding women to the peer counselor at their postpartum WIC visit.				
Refer women experiencing problems with breastfeeding to the peer counselor or Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE).				
Affirm women who have questions or concerns about breastfeeding.				
Use open-ended questions to learn more about participants' situations.				
Listen for emotions and feelings of participants to validate them and offer support.				
Make eye contact with participants when having a conversation with them.				
Spend more time focusing on the participant than on paperwork or the computer.				
Aware of my facial expressions and body language to be sure the participant knows I am listening and interested.				
Observe facial expressions and body language in participants and respond appropriately.				
Look for positive qualities in my colleagues and participants rather than focusing on things they do that bother me.				
Give people the benefit of the doubt when they are rude or upset.				
Call participants and their children by name.				
Show respect to participants even when they do not share my beliefs or experiences.				

## DASHBOARD 2: 3-STEP COUNSELING

### COUNSELING: 3-STEP COUNSELING

#### LEVEL 1 Handout: WHAT'S MISSING?

As you review the photo(s), imagine you see this mother in the WIC clinic. What do you not know about the mother's situation that could be helpful to know as you seek to support her?

3. "What's Missing" photos (and a few sample questions to consider):

Woman breastfeeding an older baby in a public place.

*Is the mother also tandem breastfeeding another child?*

*Does she have other children she has breastfed?*

*How did she gain confidence breastfeeding in public?*

Pregnant woman at work.

*Is the employer supportive of breastfeeding?*

*What kinds of comments has the employee heard from colleagues?*

*Has the woman discussed her parenting needs with others at work?*

Woman with several children.

*Are all of these her children?*

*What kind of support network is in place?*

*Is the woman employed? Who cares for the children?*

Young mother with an older woman.

*What is the relationship between these two women?*

*What is the older woman telling the pregnant woman about feeding her baby?*

*What is the living arrangement for the family?*





### COUNSELING: 3-STEP COUNSELING

#### LEVEL 1 – 5 MINUTES OPEN QUESTIONS – FOCUS ON FEELINGS

**Purpose:** To help staff identify knowledge gaps when communicating with new families.

**Materials Needed:**

- Handout – What’s Missing? Using the same pictures ask these questions
- 4. “What’s Missing” photos (and sample feelings to consider):
  - Woman breastfeeding an older baby in a public place
    - *Potential feelings: nervousness, pride, bonding, fear*
  - Pregnant woman at work.
    - *Potential feelings: anxiety, fear of approaching supervisor, overwhelmed, confidence*
  - Woman with several children.
    - *Potential feelings: love, overwhelmed, depressed, confident*
  - Young mother with an older woman.
    - *Potential feelings: guilt, intimidation, excitement, joy, pride*

**Discuss:**

- What are common assumptions typically made about people’s feelings?
- How can we figure out what people are feeling?

**Take-Away Points:**

- Rather than making assumptions about feelings, it can be helpful to check in first.
- For example, “So you are feeling....?”

COUNSELING: 3-STEP COUNSELING

**LEVEL 1** Handout: PRACTICE #1: OPEN/CLOSED?

*Mark whether you believe each question is open or closed.*

Do you work?  Open  Closed

How do you feel about that?  Open  Closed

Did you bring your income documentation with you today?  Open  Closed

Are you going back to school?  Open  Closed

What have you heard about breastfeeding?  Open  Closed

Do you know about the WIC food packages?  Open  Closed

What does your partner say about breastfeeding?  Open  Closed

What is a good plan for you?  Open  Closed

## COUNSELING: 3-STEP COUNSELING

## LEVEL 1 Handout: PRACTICE #2: OPEN UP!

*Turn each of these closed questions into open ones.*

<b>Closed Question</b>	<b>Open-ended Question</b>
Did you bring your income documentation today?	
Are you going to breastfeed or formula feed your baby?	
Have you talked to your mother about breastfeeding?	
Are you going back to work after the baby is born?	
Have you gone to a prenatal class yet?	
Do you have other children?	

COUNSELING: 3-STEP COUNSELING

LEVEL 1 – 5 MINUTES AFFIRMATION CASE EXAMPLES

1. **Purpose:** To help attendees build skills in identifying appropriate ways to validate feelings of WIC mothers. Examine the affirmation case studies to identify the mother's feelings and possible ways to validate her.

2. For each situation consider what the mother might be feeling, and ~~share~~ develop affirming statements that could help validate what she is feeling.

3. Case Example: Monica

Monica is pregnant and came to WIC for initial certification. She is unsure she will be able to breastfeed. She tried to breastfeed her last baby but never felt she had enough milk. It was very upsetting to her and she is not sure she wants to try it again with this baby.

Monica might be feeling she or her body failed, and the pain of failing is not something she wants to repeat. She might even feel she was not a good mother because she was not able to continue.

Possible affirming statements:

- *What a great mom you were to give it a try.*
- *I can tell it was very important for you to breastfeed. You should be very proud.*
- *Many moms have had that experience, and it can be discouraging.*

4. Case Example: Gwen

Gwen began breastfeeding her newborn and is worried that her baby is not getting enough milk. Her baby is fussy and cries every time she tries to lay the baby down.

Gwen might be feeling scared and is worried that her baby will not be able to thrive on her milk alone. The fact her baby cries when she puts the baby down suggests to her that the baby must be hungry, and this continues to feed her fears.

Possible affirming statements:

- *It's great you are breastfeeding and giving your baby such a great start in life.*
- *I can tell what a good mom you are to be concerned about your baby's well-being.*
- *It can be scary when babies cry.*
- *I worried about this too. The early days are tough while you are still learning your baby's hunger cues.*

5. Case Example: Shira

Shira plans to return to work in about 4 weeks. Her baby is 2 weeks old. Shira will be working at a fast-food restaurant and is not sure how she would be able to continue breastfeeding in that environment.

Shira might be feeling overwhelmed by the demands in her life and might feel shy talking about her breasts with her supervisor. She might also feel afraid that co-workers might make negative comments and make her feel uncomfortable.

Possible affirming statements:

- *I remember feeling that way when I went back to work. It can be overwhelming.*
- *It must be difficult thinking about managing so many demands.*

- *A lot of moms worry about approaching their boss about breastfeeding.*

**COUNSELING: 3-STEP COUNSELING**

**LEVEL 1 Handout: PRACTICE #1: AFFIRM!**

*Write an affirming statement for these statements a WIC mother might say.*

<b>Mother Says</b>	<b>Affirming Statement</b>
My breasts are too small. The baby will starve.	
I'd be too afraid to breastfeed since I smoke.	
I don't want my dad to see me breastfeed.	
I'm afraid breastfeeding will be too painful.	
She wants to nurse all the time!	
I have to go back to work right after my baby is born.	
My mom says the baby will be too hard to take care of if I breastfeed.	

## ACTIVITIES: PREPARING FOR BREASTFEEDING — DASHBOARD 1: REASONS TO BREASTFEED

### Preparing for Breastfeeding: Reasons to Breastfeed

Level 1 – 10 minutes Breastfeeding Matters

**Purpose:** To help attendees consider reasons to breastfeed that are meaningful for WIC families.

- Video: “Breastfeeding Matters”

**Instructions:**

6. Play the video, “Breastfeeding Matters,” available on the “Reasons to Breastfeed” dashboard.

**Discuss:**

- What reasons to breastfeed might resonate best with pregnant women?
- What reasons to breastfeed might resonate with family members?
- How will you determine which reasons to discuss with a new mother?

**Take-away Points:**

- Ample evidence shows that breastfeeding makes a profound difference in the health of both infants and mothers.
- Mothers will differ in the reasons that appeal most to them.
- Listen to the mother to identify the reasons to breastfeed that might be most meaningful.
- Preparing for Breastfeeding: Reasons to Breastfeed

### Preparing for Breastfeeding: Reasons to Breastfeed

Level 1 – 10 minutes Social Media Meme

**Purpose:** To help attendees identify ways to talk about reasons to breastfeed.

Create a “meme” is a virally transmitted image or post. It could include a written post on the “Top 10 Reasons I Love Breastfeeding” or an image with a funny or touching slogan that is “shared” through social media.

**Discuss:**

- Which reasons to breastfeed do you feel would be most appealing to WIC women?

**Take-away Points:**

- Breastfeeding makes a profound difference in the health of infants and mothers both in the early days after birth and long-term.
- Listen to the mother to identify reasons to breastfeed that might be most meaningful.



## ACTIVITIES: PREPARING FOR BREASTFEEDING — DASHBOARD 2: BARRIERS

### PREPARING FOR BREASTFEEDING: BARRIERS

LEVEL 1 – 10 MINUTES BREASTFEEDING BARRIERS

**Purpose:** To help attendees consider potential barriers to breastfeeding among WIC families.

**Materials Needed:**

- Video: “Breastfeeding Barriers”

**Instructions:**

Play the video, “Breastfeeding Barriers,” available on this “Barriers” dashboard.  
Listen for barriers or concerns verbalized by the mothers and write them down.

- What comments did you hear on the video that reflect the most common barriers you hear from pregnant women?
- What other barriers do you typically hear from WIC pregnant women?

**Take-away Points:**

- Mothers will differ in both the reasons to breastfeed that appeal to them most and their perceived costs or barriers.
- While there are often similar barriers heard in certain population groups, each WIC participant will have unique perspectives based on beliefs, experiences, and goals.
- Listen to the participant carefully to identify the unique barriers. Offer solutions that can help make breastfeeding manageable.

## Preparing for Breastfeeding: Pregnancy

Level 1 – 10 minutes Oh Baby!

**Purpose:** To help WIC staff appreciate the various ways new parents might respond to a pregnancy.

Come up with some words that could describe how a mother might feel when she finds out she is pregnant.

### Take-away Points:

- Pregnancy can be an exciting time of preparation and anticipation for many mothers.
- Some parents are excited, but worry about their living conditions or medical needs.
- Others might feel stressed, especially if the pregnancy was not planned.
- It is important not to make assumptions about feelings. They are unique to each person and might change throughout the pregnancy.
- WIC staff meet parents where they are and offer participant-focused approaches to help them make healthy decisions.