



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CookingMatters program provided through McLean County WIC

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— McLean County Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition, Education, and Supplemental Food Program (WIC) will provide grocery store tours to teach participants how to determine the nutrition value of foods, shop on a budget, locate WIC-approved foods in the aisles, and better prepare foods as part of a new program called “Cooking Matters at the Store.”

McLean County Health Department WIC received a \$1,000 grant through No Kid Hungry to provide on-site education within grocery store aisles to practice skills such as: buying fruits and vegetables on a budget, comparing unit prices to find bargains, reading and comparing food labels, identifying whole grains, and shopping within a budget.

McLean County WIC is partnering with local Walmart and Kroger grocery stores to provide tours throughout the summer months. After a tour, participants can earn a free \$10 grocery purchase, a free workbook with recipes and simple tips on buying healthy and low-cost foods, free reusable grocery bag, and WIC nutrition education credit.

“Our hope with this program is for the WIC participants who utilize the grocery store tours to feel more confident making nutritious food choices for their families and learn how to make the most of their WIC food dollars,” Tammy Brooks, WIC Supervisor with the McLean County Health Department, said. “During the grocery store tours, participants share experiences with other participants and WIC staff, so we can all learn from each other.”

Educating WIC participants about how to get the most out of their WIC coupons is essential in securing funding not only for McLean County WIC, but also the local grocery stores that support the program. Local grocers are reimbursed for food purchases processed through the WIC program. By maximizing local use of WIC food vouchers, participants support the local economy by spending \$571,936 per year in WIC dollars in the community

WIC services are provided without cost to pregnant, postpartum, or nursing women who:

- Is a resident of McLean County
- Is pregnant or has had a baby in the past six months
- Has a child younger than 5 years old

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- Has physical, nutritional, and financial need as determined by an evaluation and screening
- Meets income guidelines: a family of one earning less than \$21,257 a year, a family of two earning less than \$28,694 a year, a family of three earning less than \$36,131 a year, a family of four earning less than \$43,568 a year, and so on.

For more information, contact the McLean County Health Department at (309) 888-5457 or visit the McLean County Health Department website at <http://health.mcleancountyil.gov/wic>.

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