



San Diego/Imperial Counties

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American Red Cross WIC Program Wins Statewide Recognition

San Diego WIC agencies honored for collaboration with American Academy of Pediatrics

San Diego, March 30, 2011 –San Diego's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program will accept the statewide Best Practices Award—Excellence In Health Linkages at the California WIC Association (CWA) 19th Annual Conference in San Jose on March 30, 2011. The local American Red Cross WIC program is being honored along with the San Diego WIC agencies, for its groundbreaking project in partnership with the local chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, where local pediatric physicians were trained on the importance of WIC services.

This award is given each year by the California WIC Association to a WIC program that has implemented and demonstrated a successful collaboration with community partners toward a public health objective.

“The San Diego WIC agencies are truly honored to have received this award, and, more importantly, to have had the opportunity to work with the AAP on such an important project,” said Ann Leisenring, director of the American Red Cross WIC program. “This new partnership between WIC and pediatricians will ultimately result in better service to thousands of WIC families in San Diego,” said Ann Leisenring, director of the American Red Cross WIC program.”

The San Diego WIC agencies including SDSU Foundation WIC, Scripps Mercy WIC, North County Health Services WIC, and San Ysidro Health Center in partnership with the AAP trained 40 pediatric clinics (totaling 346 physicians and medical staff) and the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative on the importance of WIC services. Surveys showed that at every clinic, staff felt better informed after the presentations and felt more comfortable referring their patients to WIC services. A continued partnership between WIC and pediatricians will ultimately result in better service to WIC families.

“We loved the opportunity to work with the WIC Agencies to better serve children and families in San Diego County as our organizations are so closely aligned, working toward the same goal to get children good care,” said Meredith Kennedy, MPH, Executive Director of the American Academy of Pediatrics, CA Chapter 3. “There is more pressure on pediatricians in the office with many competing topics and the WIC in-services provided needed support and education to the pediatrician. This project highlights the alignment between WIC, AAP and pediatricians.”

The American Red Cross WIC program is a supplemental nutrition program to help pregnant women, infants, and children up to age five eat well, stay healthy and be active. WIC is a federally-funded program administered by the California Department of Public Health. For additional information or to enroll in the WIC program please contact the American Red Cross WIC program by calling 1-800-500-6411, or by visiting www.sandiegowic.org.

About the American Red Cross, San Diego and Imperial Counties Chapter

The American Red Cross is not a government agency and relies on the generosity of the American people to provide our programs and services. The San Diego/Imperial Counties Chapter is leading the effort to make San Diego and Imperial Counties “America’s most prepared communities.” With the public’s ongoing support we provide life saving preparedness training; disaster relief services; 24-hour emergency services to deployed military personnel and their families; and nutritional counseling through our Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. For more information about or to support the chapter please contact (858) 309-1200 or visit www.sdarc.org.

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