

THE OPPORTUNITY ALLIANCE WIC PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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2023 Highlights

New Programming & Partnerships: This year, the WIC program launched new initiatives in partnership with local and statewide organizations. Some examples include a weekly breastfeeding peer support group in Windham, a well-water testing program with the [Maine Environmental Protection Agency](#), weekly [Locker Project](#) produce bag distribution in Portland and Westbrook, and a monthly Spanish-language clinic in Portland with [Presente! Maine](#). The WIC team also partnered with [Cultivating Community](#) again to host a weekly summer farm stand in Portland and started an oral health clinic in partnership with the [University of New England](#). The Windham oral health clinic, through a partnership with [Mainely Teeth](#), launches in 2024.

The WIC team also secured \$706,000 from the Food Research Action Center (FRAC) for an innovative 18-month collaboration with MaineHealth Access to Care and Maine Medical Center, a project that includes hospital-based WIC services, and has already served 127 participants.

New Hires & Promotions: To make all of this work possible, several new team members joined TOA WIC this year including Nutrition Counselors Pauline Lumumba and Chantal Ruzindana, Community Health Worker Sylvie Kabanda, and Breastfeeding Coordinator Michelle Segovias. Additionally Ihiri Lilian Vitale was promoted to Special Projects Coordinator and Hortense Massamba to WIC Nutrition Counselor.

Other News & Celebrations: WIC and SNAP-ED joined together in 2023, forming the Health & Nutrition Services Team under the supervision of Senior Director Anna Bullett. Ihiri Lilian Vitale gave presentations locally and at the National WIC Association's annual conference. Finally, the program celebrates Nutrition Coordinator Tasha Gerken-Nelson's achievement of a new Lactation Consultant credential and congratulates Nutrition Counselor Jill McPhail on 30 years of service with TOA WIC!

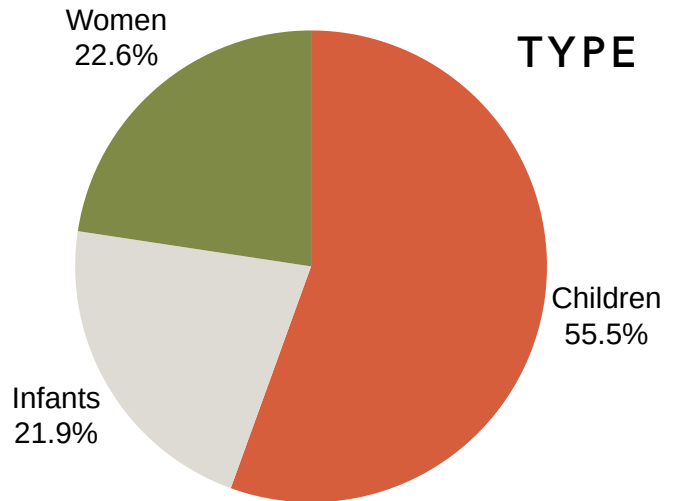
PARTICIPATION & REDEMPTION

5,324 TOTAL

RESIDENTS SERVED

PORTLAND	3116
WINDHAM	1093
SOUTH PORTLAND	242
WESTBROOK	582
BRUNSWICK	160
BRIDGTON	131

PARTICIPANT TYPE



\$2,489,940

FOOD REDEEMED

An increase of over half a million dollars from 2022, this jump in redemption is the result of increased participation, community health workers supporting WIC shopping, and inflation.

90% FRUIT & VEGETABLE BENEFITS REDEEMED

\$17,021

FARMERS MARKET BENEFITS REDEEMED

Up over \$5,000 from 2022 redemption, this jump can be attributed to many dedicated hours of staff time helping participants navigate the BNFT app, the onsite farm stand, and the community health workers.



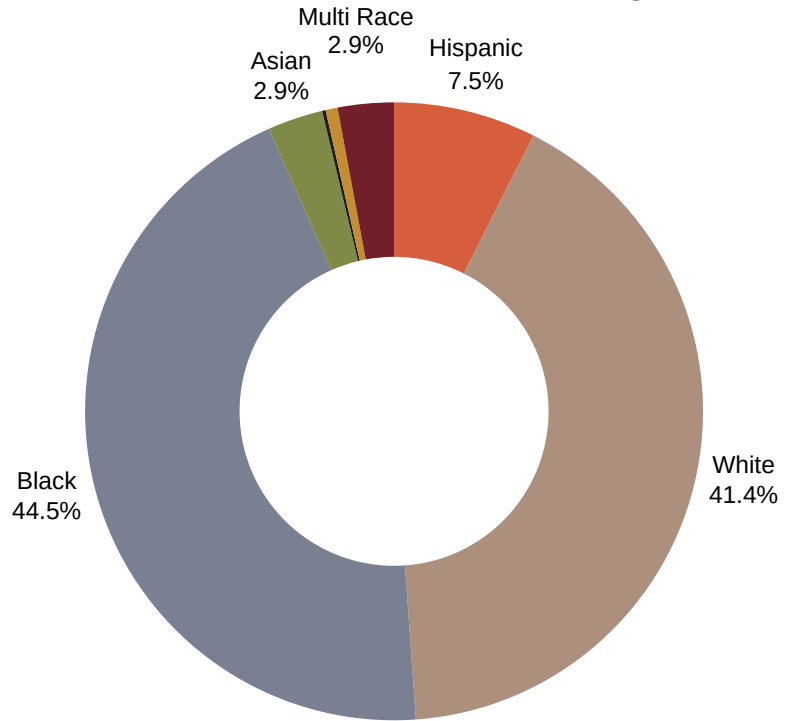
DEMOGRAPHICS

PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN

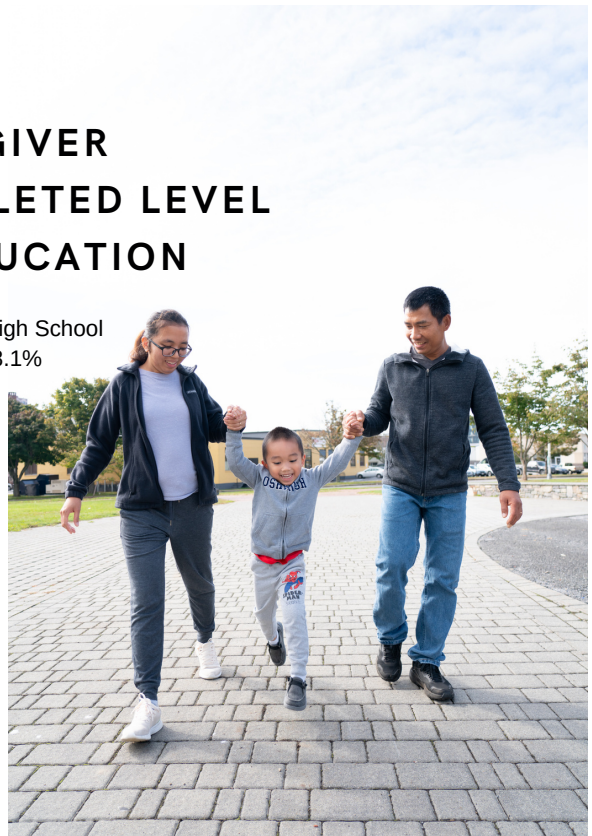
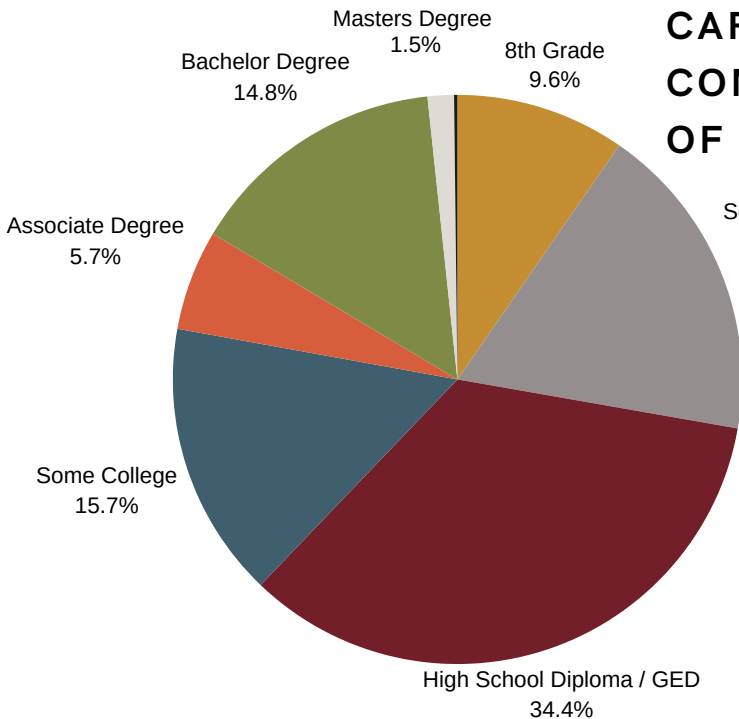
English	50 %
Lingala	13 %
French	12 %
Portuguese	8 %
Spanish	5 %
Arabic	4 %
Somali	2 %
Haitian Creole	0.6 %
Swahili	0.4 %
Vietnamese	0.2 %
Cambodian	0.2 %
Farsi	0.2 %
Russian	0.2 %
Kinyarwanda	0.2 %
Chinese	0.1 %
Acholi	0.1 %
American Sign Language	0.1 %
Other*	3 %

*Other includes: Dari, Kirundi, Pashto, Amharic, Bengali, Tigrinia, Kanjobal, and Mandarin

RACE & ETHNICITY



CAREGIVER COMPLETED LEVEL OF EDUCATION



MATERNAL HEALTH



**195 BOTTLES OF
PRENATAL VITAMINS**

DISTRIBUTED

**96 ELECTRIC
BREAST PUMPS**

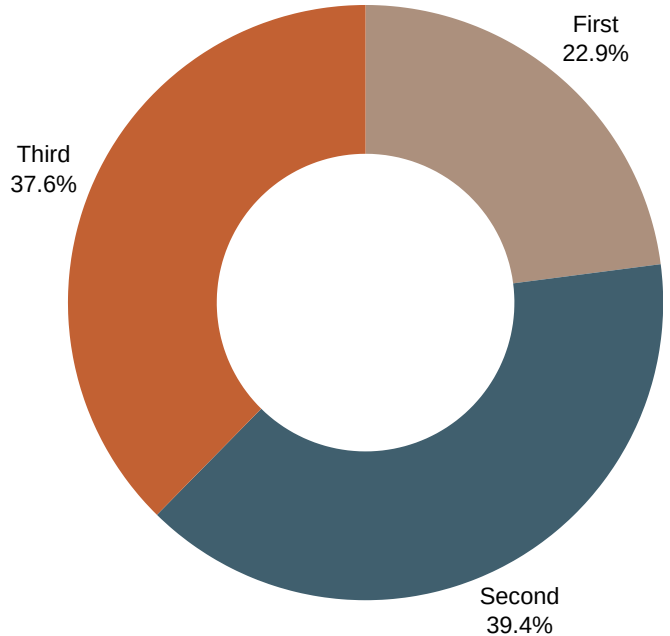
LOANED TO LACTATING
WIC PARTICIPANTS

**1687 BREASTFEEDING
PEER COUNSELOR**

COMMUNICATIONS WITH
PARTICIPANTS

18% breast- and chest- fed infants
exclusively fed human milk

PREGNANT ENROLLMENT BY TRIMESTER



PREGNANT ENROLLEE
INITIATED BREAST
& CHEST FEEDING **90%**

Statewide the average breast & chest feeding initiation rate is 84.5%. Portland boasts a 96% initiation rate, Windham 79% & Westbrook 78%.

HUMAN MILK FEEDING DURATION

	STATEWIDE	TOA
> 3 MONTHS	49.5 %	55 %
> 6 MONTHS	41.4%	54 %

38% PREGNANT ENROLLEES
SMOKING COMMERCIAL
TOBACCO QUIT AT TIME
OF WIC ENROLLMENT

ORAL HEALTH

100 PATIENTS

TREATED AT PORTLAND WIC BY 32 STUDENT DENTAL HYGIENISTS & UNE FACULTY

DIAGNOSES

Caries, occlusion concerns, and soft tissue issues. 95 referrals made for follow up care with Mainely Teeth.



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

INFANT SECONDARY SMOKE EXPOSURE	STATEWIDE	TOA
	32 %	14 %

WELL WATER TESTING

Of wells tested, 3 reports listed one or more contaminant present, including Arsenic, Uranium, Bacteria, Total Coliform, and E.Coli. WIC offers ready-to-feed formula to infants with well-water, nutrition counseling, and referrals to Maine Environmental & Occupational Health Program.

361 FAMILIES

Received 1-on-1 WIC Smartphone App assistance, shopping transportation, and WIC grocery acquisition instruction from community health workers.

IMMIGRATION

Portland shelters over 1,500 asylum seeking parents and children nightly, using a patchwork of shelters, gyms, motels, and churches. In January and February of 2023 alone over 700 new immigrants arrived. Newly arriving community members experience critical health and nutrition needs. WIC and its low-barrier access ensures pregnant people, infants, and children can access nutritious foods and fresh produce.