



2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

Hunger Free
Communities
Network

WIC's Role in Producing a Healthier America

Brian Dittmeier, Senior Director of Public Policy, National WIC Association

Darcy Dreyer, Director Maternal Infant Health, March of Dimes

Nikia Sankofa, Executive Director, U.S. Breastfeeding Committee

Molly Warren, Senior Health Policy Researcher and Analyst, Trust for America's Health



2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

Hunger Free
Communities
Network

New National Polling Data

- In September 2021, ALG Strategies/McLaughlin & Associates conducted a nationwide poll of likely 2022 voters on behalf of NWA and the Alliance to End Hunger
- WIC is popular across ideological/party lines:
 - **83% support for WIC**
 - **75% of Republicans support WIC**
 - **79% of independents support WIC**
 - **91% of Democrats support WIC**
 - **92% of liberal voters support WIC**
 - **86% of moderate voters support WIC**
 - **76% of somewhat conservative voters support WIC**
 - **74% of very conservative voters support WIC**





2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

Hunger Free
Communities
Network



Bipartisan Support for Key WIC Reforms

- Expanding value of the WIC food package: **76% support**
 - 90% of Democrats, 76% of independents, 62% of Republicans
- Expanding postpartum eligibility: **76% support**
 - 91% of Democrats, 72% of independents, 62% of Republicans
- Modernizing WIC services to allow for remote appointments and online shopping: **74% support**
 - 89% of Democrats, 68% of independents, 60% of Republicans
- Expanding eligibility to serve more families: **65% support**
 - 83% of Democrats, 56% of independents, 48% of



Hunger Free
Communities
Network

2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

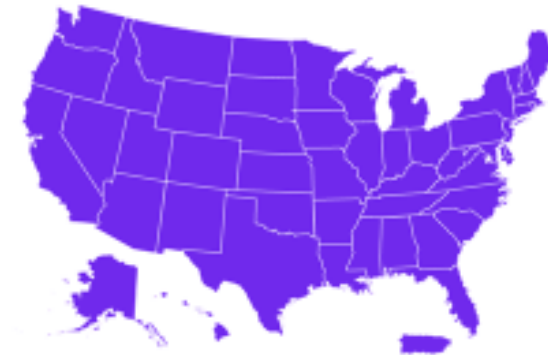
WIC's Role in Producing a Healthier America: Birth Outcomes

Darcy Dreyer, Director Maternal Infant Health



2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

THE U.S. REMAINS AMONG THE MOST DANGEROUS DEVELOPED NATIONS FOR CHILDBIRTH



2 WOMEN
will die from pregnancy-related causes today. And every day.

2 BABIES
die every hour in the U.S.

Pregnancy-related deaths have **MORE THAN DOUBLED** over the past 30 years.

More Than **2.2 MILLION WOMEN** live in maternity care deserts that have no hospital offering obstetric care, no birth center and no obstetric provider.

7 MILLION WOMEN of childbearing age live in counties without access or with limited access to maternity care.

2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

ACCESS TO MATERNITY CARE

2.2M

Women of childbearing age live in maternity care deserts with no hospital offering obstetric care, no birth center and no obstetric provider.

150K

Babies are born to women living in maternity care deserts.

7M

Women of childbearing age live in counties without access or with limited access to maternity care.

MORE THAN
500K

Babies are born to women living in these areas.



2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

Hunger Free
Communities
Network

Build Back Better Act

- Postpartum Medicaid for 12 months
- WISE Investment in our Children (WIC) Act





2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

Hunger Free
Communities
Network

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act



Benefits of WIC on Maternal and Child Health

- Reduces the risk of preterm birth, low birthweight, and infant mortality
- Increases breastfeeding initiation and duration
- Enhances children's diet quality as an effective intervention to mitigate childhood obesity





2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

WIC's Role in Producing a Healthier America: Breastfeeding Outcomes

Nikia Sankofa, Executive Director



Joining you virtually from Baltimore, MD!

USBC and NWA association are strong partners in building a landscape of support for human milk feeding in the US.

- Shared Commitment & Advocacy Agenda
 - Lactation Service Provider Constellation
 - COVID-19 Constellation
 - PUMP Act
 - Continuity of Care Constellation





Hunger Free
Communities
Network

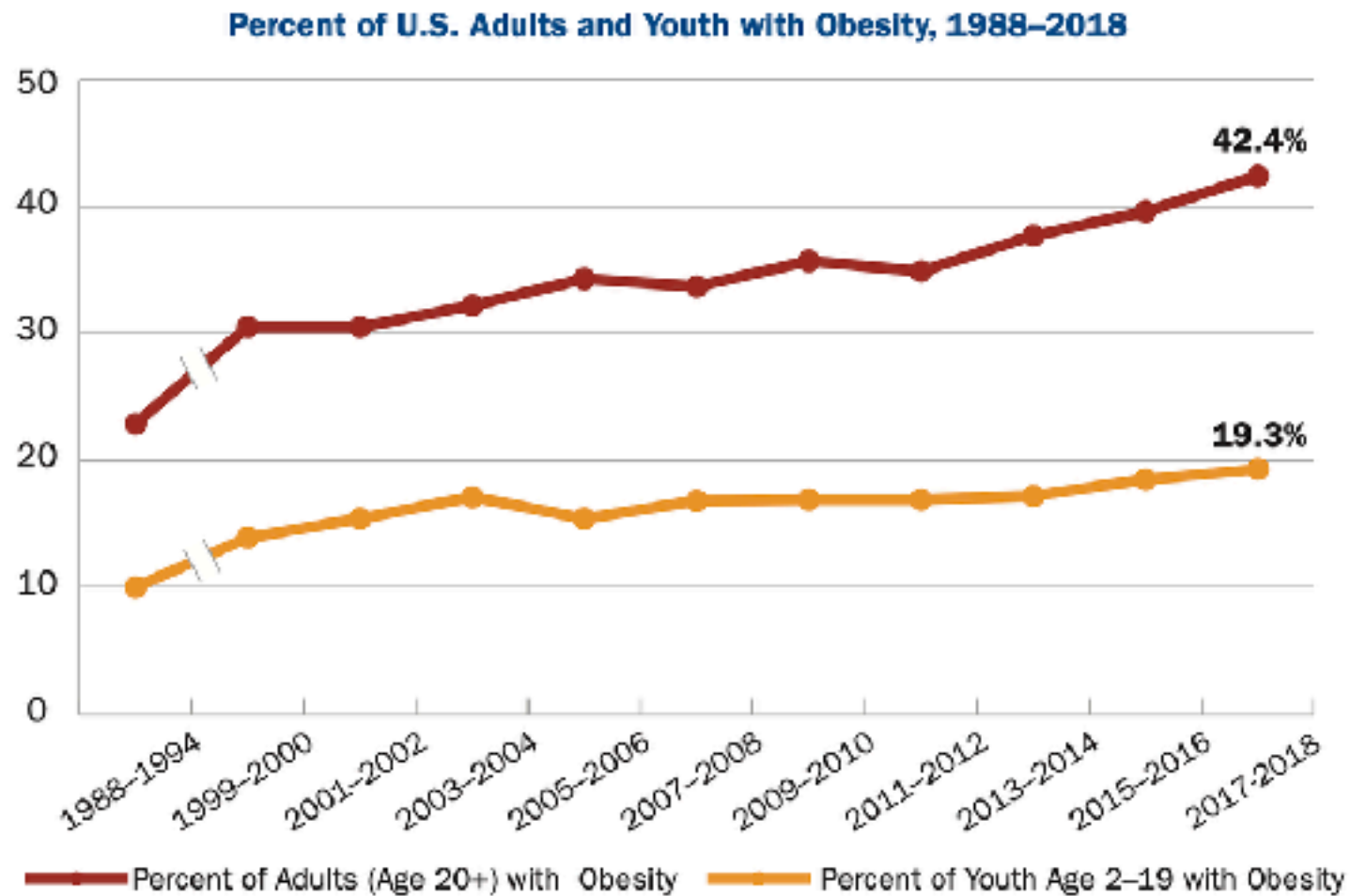
2021 Hunger Free Communities Virtual Summit

WIC's Role in Producing a Healthier America: Child Health Outcomes

Molly Warren, Senior Health Policy Researcher and Analyst

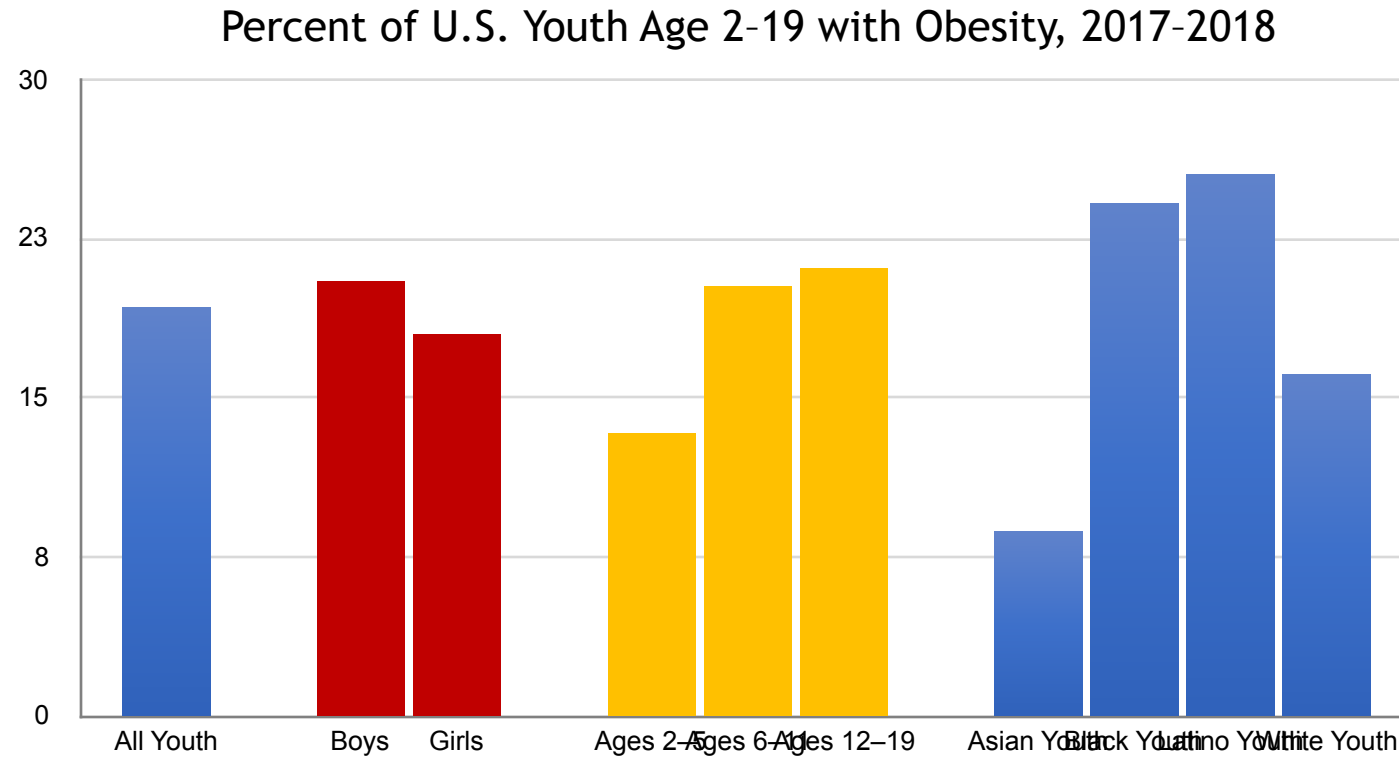


Obesity Trends, by Year



Source: NHANES

Childhood Obesity Trends, by Demographic



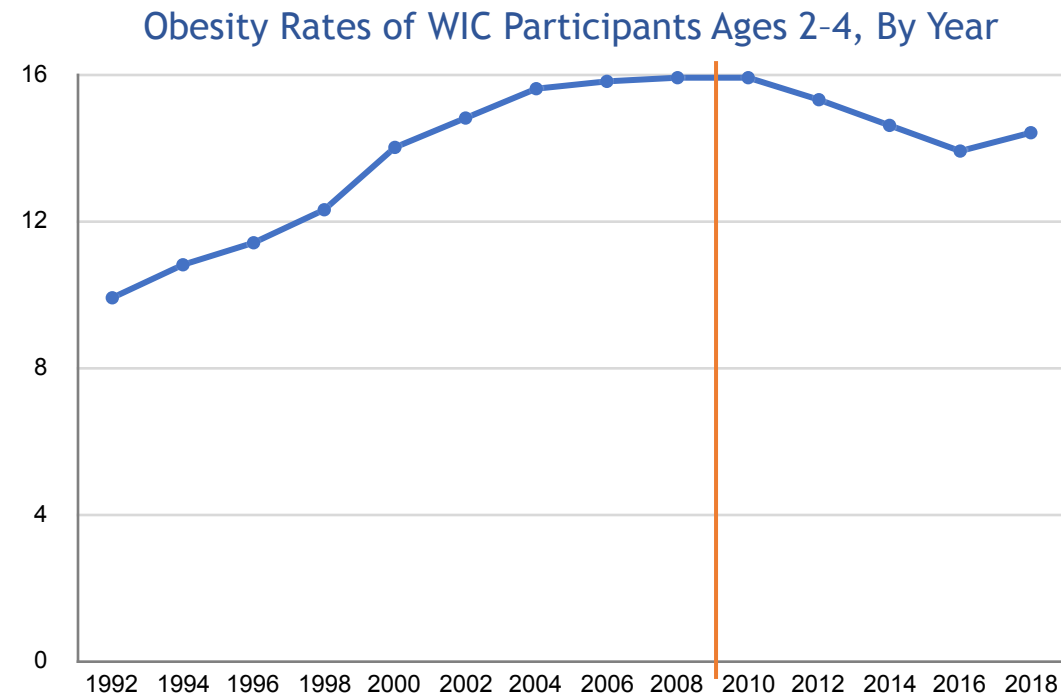
Source: NHANES

2009 WIC Food Package Update

- Changed to provide options better align with *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*
- Includes more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains; lower fat levels for milk; and less juice
- First change since 1974 when WIC was created

Changes in Obesity Rates With New Food Package

- Program data shows statistically significant decreases in obesity rates among all racial and ethnic groups studied: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Latino, and White
- Other studies and evaluations support causal link



Source: USDA

TFAH's Obesity Recommendations

1. Increase health equity by strategically dedicating federal resources to efforts that reduce obesity-related disparities
2. Decrease food insecurity while improving nutritional quality
3. Change the marketing and pricing strategies that lead to health disparities
4. Make physical activity and the built environment safer and more accessible
5. Strengthen obesity prevention throughout the healthcare system

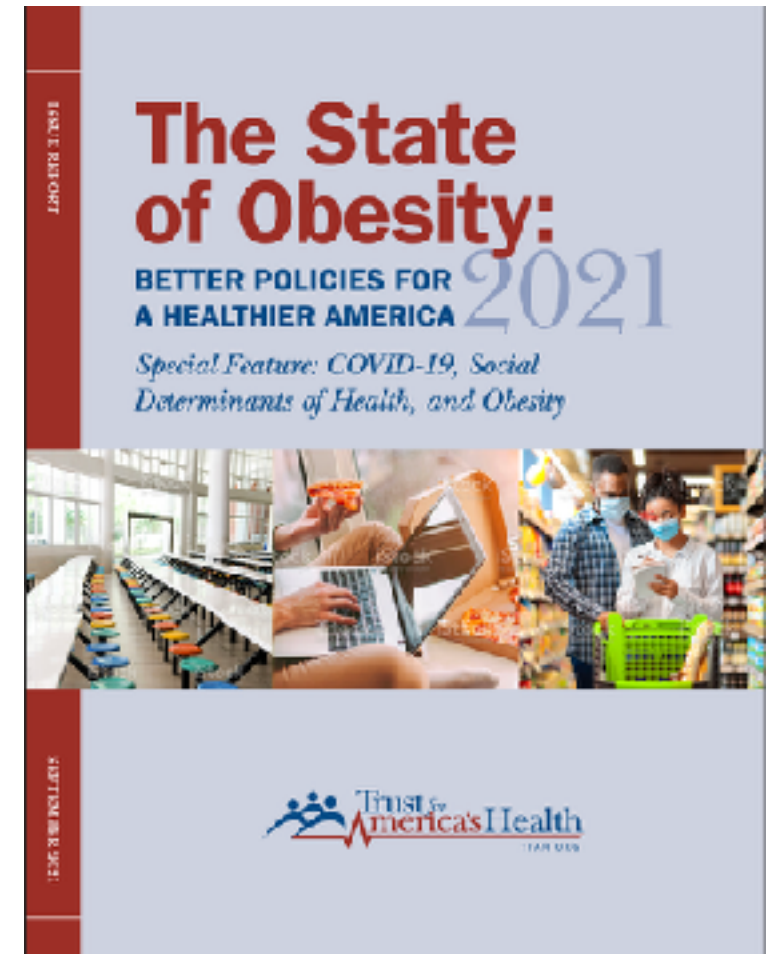
TFAH's WIC Recommendations

- **Continue Benefit Increase:** Extend WIC's fruit and vegetable benefit through FY 2022, and make permanent reforms that increase the value to the WIC benefit
- **Expand Eligibility to More Americans:** Expand access to WIC for young children up to age 6 (or the beginning of kindergarten) and postpartum women up to two years postpartum
- **Reduce Administrative Burden for Participants and Service Providers:** Extend certification periods to streamline clinic processes, partner more closely with Head Start to enhance child retention, and implement an online purchasing solution to simplify the shopping experience.

TFAH's Obesity Resources

- **Congressional briefing next week: 11/10 at 1pm EDT**
 - Speakers: Chef José Andrés, DNPAO Director Ruth Petersen, Alaska's Chief of Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion Karol Fink, Tufts Professor Dariush Mozaffarian, and TFAH President Nadine Gracia
 - Register: <https://www.tfah.org/webinars-briefings/>

- **2021 Report**
 - Special Feature on COVID-19, SDOH, and Obesity
 - Latest Data: NHANES, BRFSS, YRBS, NSCH, WIC
 - Economic, Nutrition Assistance & Education, Community, and Healthcare Policies and Programs
 - Recommendations
 - Appendix with State-Level Indicators and Policies



Thanks!

Molly Warren

mwarren@tfah.org

