**Guidance on Writing an Op-Ed**

Click here for tips on how to write an Op-Ed from the National WIC Association - <https://s3.amazonaws.com/aws.upl/nwica.org/2018-wic-engaging-the-media-to-promote-wic.pdf>

Below is an Op-ed that was created by two Medical Students from UW (Minaliza submitted to Milwaukee newspapers in Spring 2018.

How can you tailor an op-ed to your region/project?

* Use the first paragraph to share a success story for one of your participants.
* In the last paragraph – refer to “Recruitment and Retention” handout to find local statistics on how many infants/children/moms utilize the program in your country.

**Milwaukee Op-Ed Example**

Natasha is a 27 year-old pregnant woman. She and her spouse work full-time and still worry about having enough food for themselves and their newborn. Now that she is pregnant, these financial constraints concern her. She knows the importance of a healthy diet as part of prenatal care and has recently enrolled in Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Since then she has been able to supplement both her and her future newborn’s diet with nutrient-rich foods.

WIC is a supplemental nutrition program that started in 1972 to address the negative impacts of poverty on health. It serves pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, infants, and children up to age 5. In addition to increasing access to healthy foods, the program has grown to provide nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support, and referrals to healthcare and other social services. Breastfeeding has lifelong health benefits, such as lowering the risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes for both mother and child.

The most important time for human brain development is the first three years of life to set the foundation for a healthy future. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) notes that healthy brain development requires a balance of proteins, fats, and glucose.Scientific research shows that poor nutrition in the first three years has been linked to lower success in school, problems with behavior, and a lower IQ. WIC targets malnutrition during this time-sensitive period. The AAP emphasizes that babies born to mothers who participated in WIC have lower rates of anemia, fewer premature births, and overall healthier infants.

79% of infants born in Milwaukee County rely on WIC for proper nutrition and development. Continued funding for WIC is necessary to protect our children and families. Investing in the next generation will reduce future health care spending and support WIC participants in reaching their highest potential.

To find your local WIC office, visit <http://signupwic.com/> or call 1-800-722-2295.