

# Milk Droplet

## COMMUNITY LACTATION ASSISTANCE PROJECT NEWSLETTER

SACRAMENTO COUNTY WIC PROGRAM

### COLLABORATION: REFERRALS *Call to Action*

An exciting new partnership is forming between WIC’s lactation consultants (LCs) and Sacramento County’s Public Health Nurses (PHNs) to provide in-home visits lactation support and care to parents who are unable to come to WIC for assistance. This critical service focuses on providing early lactation interventions to parents of medically fragile infants and/or parents who are unable travel to WIC for support and would otherwise miss out on the care they need.



In addition, this collaboration provides on-the-job breastfeeding counseling skills training to the PHNs, who can use this specialized training to enrich their interactions with additional new parents. The Sacramento County PHNs and WIC (LCs) are trusted providers to the communities and families they serve. They provide care that is culturally informed and meets the needs of each family. Many of these staff members are bilingual/bicultural which helps to ensure clear communication and that the needs of the family are met. By helping to spread accurate and meaningful breastfeeding knowledge, this partnership furthers the reach of WIC’s lactation program to the greater community and beyond.



### SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNS

The Community Lactation Assistance (CLA) Project is strengthening the local workforce by helping to educate volunteers and student interns from the community and provide them with the practical and well-rounded skill set they will need when they graduate.

WIC has a longstanding history of partnering with interns from CSUS—Sacramento dietetic internship Program, and the lactation programs at UCSD Extension and the UCD Maternal and Child Health MS Nutrition Program.

The nutrition interns work alongside WIC’s lactation consultants where they learn to appreciate the challenges that some parents face in the early days of infant feeding, and better understand the role of the lactation consultant in helping solve a variety of breastfeeding concerns. In addition, nutrition students complete projects such as breastfeeding newsletters and job aids that are then shared with WIC staff and community partners.

The lactation interns learn valuable clinical skills from WIC’s lactation consultants that help them become competent and effective lactation consultants when they venture out into the community. They also have the opportunity to work with families from diverse backgrounds and learn about different beliefs and traditions that can impact the success of the breastfeeding dyad. These experiences help the interns become more culturally competent in their own practice following their internship.

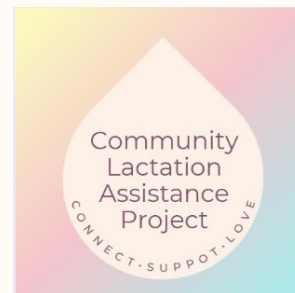
Here's one volunteer's thoughts on how the CLA Project is helping her pursue her goals:

*“Throughout my internship, I had the chance to collaborate with experienced lactation consultants who shared all their knowledge with me. I learned very valuable techniques for assisting mothers with addressing common breastfeeding issues and promoting successful breastfeeding outcomes.*

*One of the most fulfilling aspects of this internship was seeing the transformation in mothers' ability, confidence, and motivation to breastfeed successfully after receiving our support. It reinforced the importance of accessible lactation services and education in promoting the health and well-being of families.*

*Overall, my time as an LC intern at WIC was a gratifying experience that deepened my passion for maternal and child health. It not only equipped me with valuable skills but also provided me with a profound appreciation for the significance of breastfeeding support in promoting the health and happiness of families.”*

— WIC Lactation Consultant Intern



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The Sacramento County WIC Program’s breastfeeding support services provided by the Community Lactation Assistance Project (CLA) makes a significant difference in the way mothers feed their infants. The charts below illustrate the dramatic increase in breastfeeding rates when comparing WIC families who received at least one CLA Project service to those who did not. Charts are based on data from fiscal year 2022-2023.

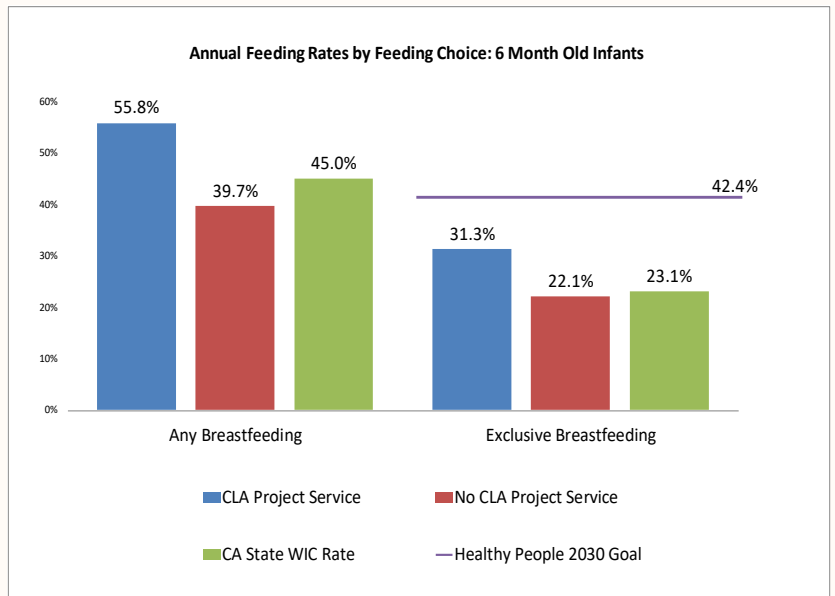
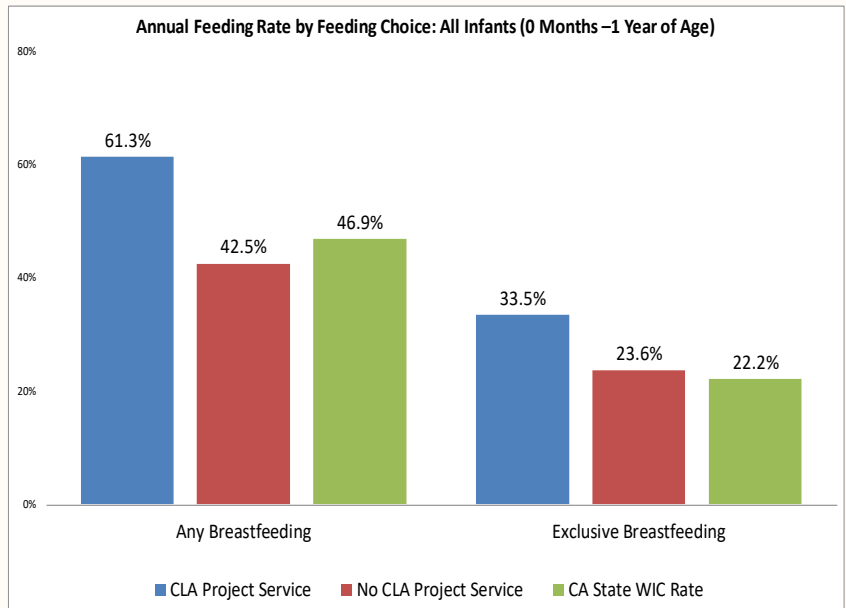
The first chart shows the feeding rates for all Sacramento County WIC infants (0 months –1 year of age). The second chart shows the feeding rates of six month old infants.

**Definitions:**

- **Any Amount of Breastfeeding:** Infants receiving only breastmilk or in combination with infant formula
- **Exclusive Breastfeeding:** Infants receiving only breastmilk (and complementary foods when appropriate)

The rates for any amount of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding were statistically higher among families that received a CLA Project service for both age groups.

WIC agencies are only required to provide basic breastfeeding education to their families. Without the support of lactation professionals, the breastfeeding rates for DHS WIC would be below the State WIC average, signaling the decrease in number of Sacramento babies receiving the benefits of their mother’s life saving milk.



**BREASTFEEDING REFERRALS:**  
 Know a Sacramento County mother needing breastfeeding support and care? Please Refer her to our **Breastfeeding Helpline** at:  
 English: 916-875-2120  
 Spanish: 916-875-2121  
 Because breastfeeding isn’t always easy, but it is worth it!

**Sacramento County WIC Program**  
**Phone: 916-876-5000**



CLA Project is made possible with funding from First 5 Sacramento, Anthem, Health Net’s Strategic Giving and Community Engagement Program, Kaiser Permanente, and Molina Healthcare. WIC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.