October 2019 Newsletter

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Who is Maia Synergy?

Great innovators are always in search of how best to provide maximum services in an efficient manner. So too with wichealth.org.

You may have either seen or heard of a letter from Western Michigan University informing our state partners of plans to engage Maia Synergy for wichealth.org technical support services. I (Bob Bensley) know the letter was brief and some states have had questions seeking more details. Let me try and share a bit more here:

Who is Maia Synergy?
Maia Synergy is a new technology company that spun out from the university. It consists of the current wichealth.org team of employees and contractors and will be headed by Jason Rivas, current Associate Director of eHealth at WMU and co-author of wichealth.org. Kimbra Quinn is also moving to Maia Synergy where she will continue serving as the Customer Success Manager.

Why is Maia Synergy getting involved?
We have had tremendous growth with wichealth.org over the past few years. The decision to move the team out of the university was made for two main reasons:

1. A company operating independently of a university is able to react to technology needs and advancements much faster. This is

important as it means we will be able to apply state-of-the-art programming and technology features in a far more efficient and timely manner.
2. A company can bring on additional personnel with expert skillsets to meet the growing needs of a growing program like wichealth.org.

What will our relationship be with WMU?
I (Bob Bensley), Director of wichealth.org, will remain at WMU and continue coordinating contracts and work efforts with partner states. I will be the direct link to Maia Synergy and work closely with them to ensure deliverables, contract needs and services to clients continue to operate at the same high-level partners currently experience. All contract requirements required of WMU will also flow thru to Maia.

What will be the impact on WIC staff and clients?
The services and support that partners and clients currently experience will remain the same. There will be no noticeable differences compared to current services, as all existing employees and contractors will continue providing the same services.

Is there anything else partners need to know?
Not really, as everything from the user end will appear the same.

Please feel free to contact me directly at bensley@wmich.edu should you have any questions about this exciting change.

Healthy regards,

Bob

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wichealth.org Receives National Recognition

Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior

wichealth was recently awarded the Nutrition Education Impact Award by the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior. The award is given annually to an individual or group for a nutrition education program or practice that has resulted in documented changes in behavior.

For more information on the award, click here.

Webinar LINEUP

November 13
2:00 - 3:00 PM EST
Vaccinate Your Family

Please join us for our final 2019 Lesson Webinar featuring the new *Vaccinate Your Family* lesson.

During the webinar, we will share the genesis of the lesson, review team involvement, the nutrition component of the lesson, and how we intentionally wrote the lesson with positive languaging and messages.

To register, click here.

A Dynamic Duo, Coming Soon!

Please welcome our soon-to-be newest additions to the Meal Planning Category in the wichealth.org Lesson Library: Making a Meal Plan and Maximizing Food Dollars. These two lessons go together like peas and carrots!

In Making a Meal Plan, participants will learn how to create a grocery list based on a meal plan. It doesn't matter if that list is based on a 3-

item plan or a monthly plan. This lesson will empower participants to plan in a way that fits their life, and then go shopping with a list that will save time and money.

Our second new lesson, Maximizing Food Dollars, also teaches participants to shop with a list, but with a budgetary twist. After taking Maximizing Food Dollars, participants will be able to maximize their benefits while planning and grocery shopping. With the knowledge they gain in Maximizing Food Dollars, participants will be able to maximize benefits, nutrition, and dollars.

MEAL PLANNING WORD SEARCH

You will learn about all of these words in the lessons, *Making a Meal Plan* and *Maximizing Food Dollars*!

N	E	H	C	T	I	K	E	H	T	L	A	E	H
H	Y	L	I	M	A	F	P	P	K	B	M	S	L
M	E	R	A	D	N	E	L	A	C	D	G	T	G
S	R	A	S	F	B	P	E	K	N	V	S	I	R
A	E	G	H	A	V	K	M	T	T	S	L	F	O
L	F	O	O	D	S	A	F	E	T	Y	S	E	C
E	M	C	P	T	P	Q	A	J	N	N	A	N	E
S	E	C	P	B	A	S	V	I	N	U	V	E	R
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A	I	O	T	I	Y	C	T	H	E	M	S	H	S
T	M	N	U	C	R	E	E	Y	S	H	G	D	T
A	E	S	B	C	N	R	S	S	E	M	E	H	T

WORD BANK

1. Benefits
2. Calendar
3. Coupons
4. Family
5. Favorites
6. Food Safety
7. Grocery List
8. Health eKitchen
9. Kids
10. Mealtime
11. Menu
12. Pantry
13. Recipes
14. Sales
15. Savings
16. Shopping
17. SNAP
18. Themes
19. Unit Pricing
20. WIC

Our newest lessons are fun, informative, and will help participants save money on good nutrition.

Our state partners are currently reviewing these lessons to decide if they will add them to their state's Lesson Line-up. Lessons will be available to add on November 1st, 2019. To listen to the recorded webinar featuring these two lessons, click here.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

December 5, 2019
3:00 EST.

To register, click here.

August 2019 Newsletter

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How wichealth Has Changed the Way I Parent

I am a creative writer at wichealth.org, which means that I spend my time researching, writing, designing, and building food lessons. All day long, I work with lessons addressing choosy eating habits, preparing fun and creative snacks, and introducing more vegetables and fruits into my family's meals. The result of all this is that when I prepare food for my own family, I now have an arsenal of knowledge and skills that I never knew I was lacking.

Take the food groups, for example. I had learned about food groups as a concept in elementary school. But beyond urging my 6-year-old twins to eat more protein, I hadn't thought much about them. Working through wichealth lessons allowed me to start thinking about food groups a lot more. I worked hard to provide my children with options from every food group. Then, I had an "a-ha" moment. Thanks to a wichealth lesson, I realized that not every food group had to be present

Want to share the wichealth newsletter with others in your State or ITO?

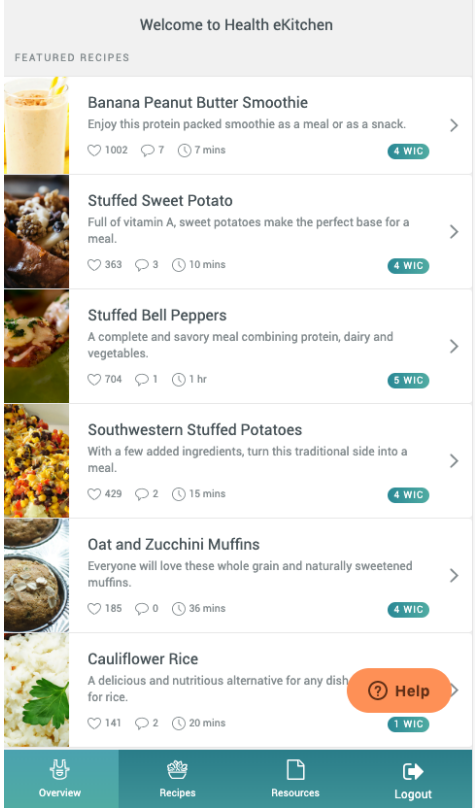
Click here to add individuals to our mailing list!

P.S. You can also include the URL below in your monthly communication with your staff.

http://eepurl.com/dPg1Rv

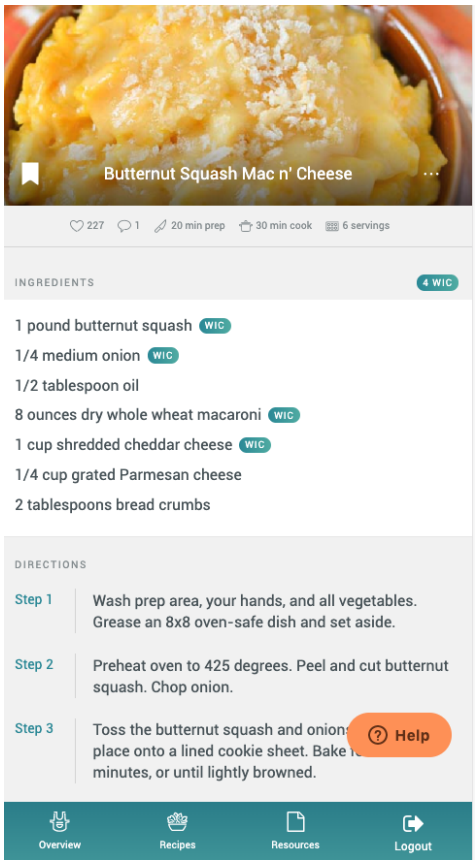
Health eKitchen

Gets a Makeover



The all-new Health eKitchen is now live and it's more mobile-friendly than ever! WIC participants can now browse, search, and sort through over 200 English recipes and 65 Spanish recipes. Over the next year, we'll continue to add to both recipe collections. We'll also soon be adding new sort options including dietary restrictions and world cuisines.

What's even more exciting is that to kick off the new year we'll be launching the Health eKitchen meal planner, which will allow WIC participants to build a weekly or monthly meal plan for their family using the recipes included in the wichealth collection. We'll be collecting feedback along the way and using it to ensure everyone enjoys and gets the most from their Health eKitchen experience.



New Fiscal Year, New Blog Topics!

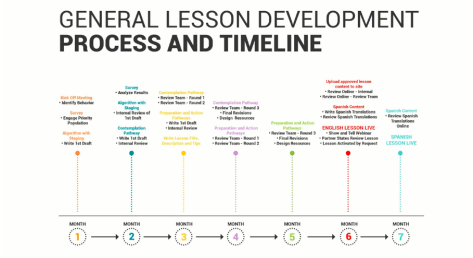
This fiscal year, we are embarking on a new editorial calendar for our blog (wichealthblog.org). Like last fiscal year, we are spotlighting bloggers from within our own WIC community. These guest bloggers are real WIC parents who have taken wichealth classes and volunteered to share their stories through our blog. We are honored that so many WIC parents have sent us their stories, words of wisdom, and advice for other parents.

In the weeks to come, look for new posts each week! These posts will be organized by monthly themes like Preventing Cavities As Halloween Approaches (October), Including More Veggies and Fruits into Festive Family Meals (November), and Enjoy Whole Grains With Your Holiday Treats (December).

WIC staff members are welcome to submit guest blogs as well! Email wichealthblog@gmail.com if you would like more information on how to submit a post. And be sure to subscribe to our blog at wichealthblog.org for weekly newsletters spotlighting the latest printables, recipes, and blog posts!

Subscribe Now

Welcome to wichealth academy



Nutrition Education - The Heart of wichealth.org

Lessons in the Making

In 2019, wichealth developed twelve new lessons, more lessons than have ever been created in one year. Have you ever been curious as to what it takes to develop a lesson for wichealth? Watch ***Lessons in the Making*** to find out!

To watch this video, or others, first log in with your staff account to wichealthsupport.org, and then click here.

HELP DESK STATISTICS

FIRST REPLY TIME

September	August
3.30 hours	3.23 hours

SATISFACTION RATING

During the month of September, our help desk had a 98% satisfaction rating as compared to 100.0% in August.

Our Helpdesk tracks the satisfaction of both WIC staff and clients after using our service.

"Excellent, quick response!!!!"
-Missouri

"Am thankful to the Help Desk staff at wichealth.org for their willingness and completeness in customer service skills."
-Colorado

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