

Highlights from the Texas Child Feeding Study

Findings from the Texas Child Feeding Study¹

Summary of Findings

Background

The Texas Child Feeding Study was conducted by The University of Texas at Austin Nutrition Education Team, in collaboration with the Texas Department of State Health Services, WIC Program in order to learn what children in Texas are eating and drinking and to better understand the context in which parents feed their preschool-age children.

Seven hundred and twenty-one (721) Texas households were surveyed by telephone and grouped into the following categories for comparison: WIC households (n=241); low-income, non-WIC households (n=274); and middle to high-income households (n=203)¹.

What did we learn?

Breastfeeding

- WIC moms were more likely to have initiated breastfeeding than low-income non-WIC moms. See Figure 1.
- Middle to high-income moms were more likely to have initiated breastfeeding than both WIC and low, income non-WIC moms. See Figure 1.
 - Within WIC, Spanish-speaking Hispanics and Whites were most likely to initiate breastfeeding. See Figure 2.

Beverage Intake

- One in five children do not drink water daily.
- WIC children were more likely to drink juice daily than children not on WIC.
- 93% of children drink milk daily.
 - Over half of children (52%) ages 2-5 usually drink whole milk.
- About one quarter (23%) of all children had drunk 7 or more sugar-sweetened beverages in the previous week (or at least one per day).
- We found no significant differences in water, milk or sugar-sweetened beverage intake among WIC, low-income non-WIC and higher-income non-WIC groups.

Figure 1.
BREAST FEEDING INITIATION RATES
n=721

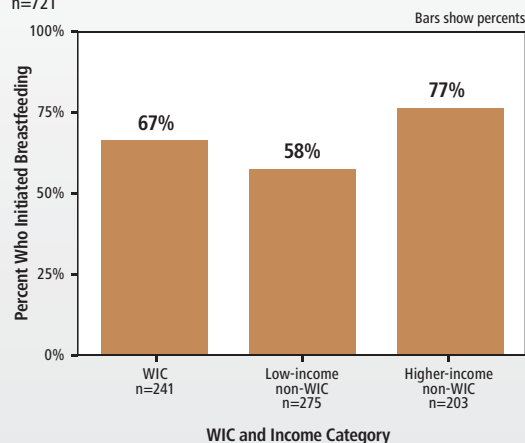
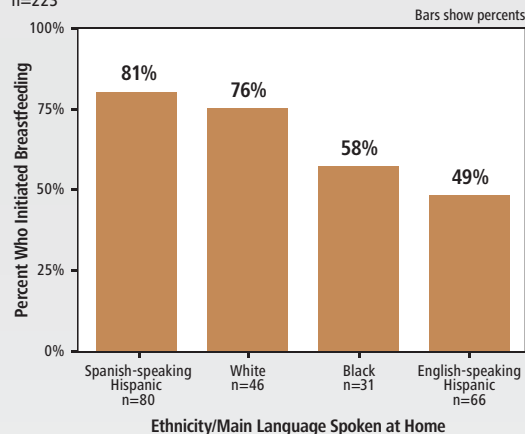


Figure 2.
BREASTFEEDING INITIATION AMONG WIC CLIENTS
n=223



¹ Results from the Texas Child Feeding Study, conducted by the University of Texas at Austin Nutrition Education Team, in conjunction with the Texas Dept. of State Health Services. Seven hundred and twenty-one (721) Texas households were surveyed. Households had at least one child between the ages of 1 and 5 years and were grouped into the following categories: WIC households (n=241); low-income, non-WIC households (n=274); middle to high-income households (n=203). For more information on the study, contact Shellie Shores at: shellie.shores@dshs.state.tx.us.

² Income categories were determined based on reported monthly household income and household size, using the WIC income eligibility criterion of 185% of the federal poverty level as a cutoff between low and higher income.

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What did we learn? (continued)

Food Intake

- Almost half of the children represented eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables (F/V) daily even though only 14% of parents knew that their children should eat 5 or more servings of F/V per day.
 - Self-efficacy for preparing and serving fruits and vegetables was the strongest predictor of F/V intake for children.
 - We found no differences in F/V intake among WIC, low-income non-WIC and higher-income respondents.
- Children on WIC consumed more of certain foods on the WIC food package than children not on WIC. See Figure 3.
- Children on WIC ate less sugar-sweetened cereal than either low- or higher-income children not on WIC.
- On average, children in the sample ate 2.2 “sweets” (e.g., cookies, cakes, candies) per day.
 - We found no difference in sweets intake among WIC, low-income non-WIC and higher-income respondents.

Shopping for Food

- WIC households reported more food insecurity than low-income non-WIC clients.
- WIC clients spent less on groceries and had larger families than families not on WIC.
 - 79% of WIC households spend less than \$100 per week on groceries compared to 60% and 49% of low- and higher-income households, respectively.
- 66% of all respondents reported that they often or always compare prices when shopping for food; 34% often or always check Nutrition Facts on food labels.

Preparing Food

- WIC children were more likely to eat home-cooked main meals and less likely to eat fast food than non-WIC children. See Figures 4 & 5.
- 79% of all respondents reported that child preference was very important when deciding what to feed their children; 32% reported that nutritional content was very important.

For more information about this study series, please visit:

www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/nut/riskreport-nut.shtm

Figure 3.
INTAKE OF WIC FOODS IN THE PREVIOUS WEEK
n=717

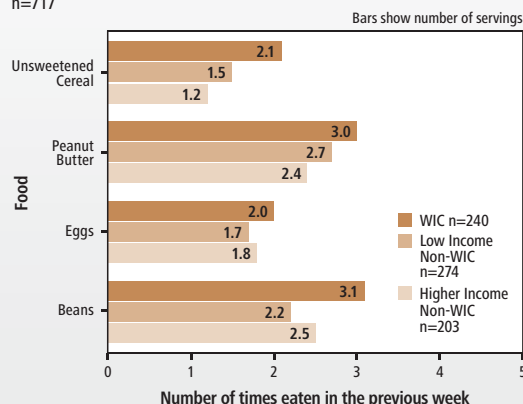


Figure 4.
WHO EATS A DAILY HOME-COOKED MAIN MEAL?
n=721

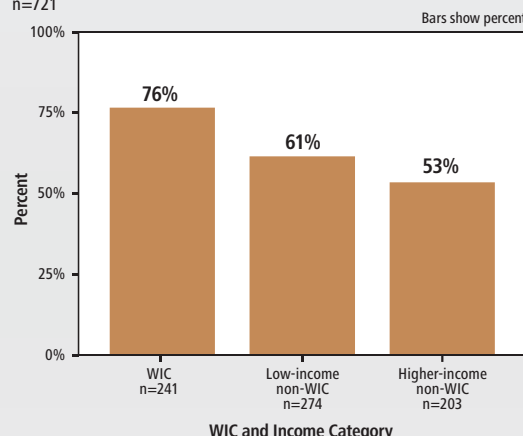


Figure 5.
WHO EATS FAST FOOD AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK?
n=721

