

Food Shopping

Findings from the Texas Child Feeding Study¹

How do Texas parents shop for food?

Background

From 2006-2007, food prices rose at the highest rate since 1990. Prices continue to climb in 2008.

(Source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/CPIFoodAndExpenditures/consumerpriceindex.htm>)

What did we ask?

- How much do you spend each week on groceries, not counting WIC vouchers, EBT and/or Lonestar cards?
- How many times per week does someone in your household shop for food?
- How often do you shop with a grocery list?
- How often does your child eat fast food?
- How often does your child eat a home-cooked meal for his or her main meal?
- How often do you look at the Nutrition Facts on food labels when shopping for food?
- How often do you compare prices when shopping for food?

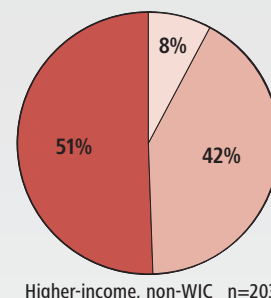
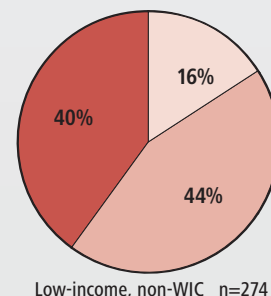
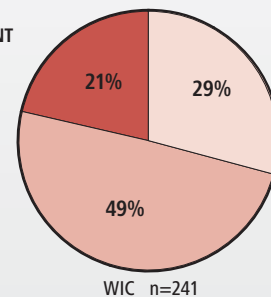
What did we learn?

In this sample, how much do households spend on weekly groceries? See Figure 1.

- WIC households reported that they spend less money per week on food (not counting WIC vouchers and other food assistance) and had larger families than low-income and higher-income non-WIC households.
 - 78% of WIC households spend less than \$100 a week on groceries, compared to 60% of low-income, non-WIC households and 50% of higher-income households.
- On average, household members shop for food about 2 times per week. There were no significant differences among WIC, low-income, and higher-income groups.
- Higher income families were significantly more likely to shop with a grocery list than WIC and low-income non-WIC families.

Continues on back.

Figure 1.
AMOUNT SPENT
ON WEEKLY
GROCERIES
n=721



AMOUNT SPENT WEEKLY
ON GROCERIES
Pies show percents
□ \$50 or Less
■ \$51 - \$100
■ More than \$100



What did we learn? (continued)

How often does your child eat fast food vs. a home-cooked main meal? See Figures 2 and 3.

- All children ate home-cooked main meals more often than fast food meals.
- WIC clients eat home cooked meals more often and fast food less often than both non-WIC groups.

Nutrition vs. cost at the grocery store See Figure 4.

- Respondents report comparing prices more often than checking Nutrition Facts on food labels. WIC clients are the most likely to compare prices.
- WIC clients were more likely to look at Nutrition Facts compared to other low-income parents.

Implications for Nutrition Educators

- All parents are concerned with the cost of foods and want a good value. WIC parents are especially concerned.
- Teach how to read nutrition labels and appreciate cost versus nutritional benefit.
- WIC appears to be successful at offsetting the cost of groceries for clients.
- Encourage clients to use a grocery list to help make the most out of their trip to the grocery store and to reduce trips to the store.
- Highlight unit pricing as a way for clients to purchase more food per dollar spent.
- Recognize that WIC clients prepare home cooked meals for their children and reinforce this as an opportunity to create a low-cost, nutritious meal for their families.
- Focus on ways to use WIC foods in recipes along with other low-cost items to build nutritious meals and snacks. For example, use beans and cheese to make quesadillas, or combine apple slices with peanut butter.

For more information about this study series, please visit:

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

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 Service. 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.

Figure 2.
WHO EATS A DAILY HOME-COOKED MAIN MEAL?
n=721

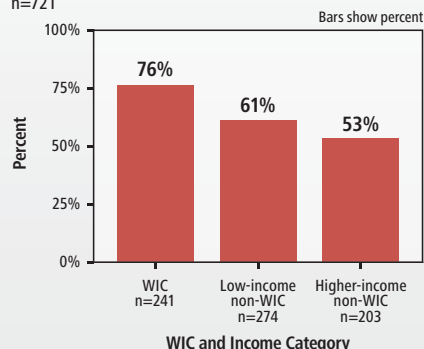


Figure 3.
WHO EATS FAST FOOD AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK?
n=721

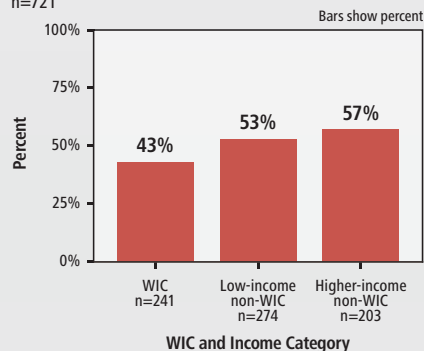


Figure 4.
NUTRITION vs. COST WHEN FOOD SHOPPING
n=721

