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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WIC program benefits children until age 5

LANSING, Mich. – March is National Nutrition Month and to celebrate the Ingham County Health Department is encouraging families to “Stick with WIC.” Income-eligible children can participate in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program until their fifth birthday.

Many families are eligible, and income requirements for WIC are higher than they are for many other assistance programs. For example, a family of four making \$45,510 or less would be eligible for WIC.

“Too many children are leaving the program after age one,” said Ingham County Health Officer Linda S. Vail. “There is a perception that the program is for babies, but participation is highly beneficial for toddlers and preschoolers too.”

The first five years of life are critical to child development and the establishment of lifelong healthy eating habits. Studies have found that children who participate in WIC during early childhood are less likely to have developmental delays and have better health outcomes compared to similar children who did not participate.

Each child over age one who participates in WIC receives approximately \$45 worth of healthy food each month. A child’s WIC food package, which the parent/guardian would shop for at a local grocery store, may include cereal, milk, juice, cheese, fruits and vegetables, yogurt, pasta, eggs and more. Participants are also eligible for free consultations with a dietitian, worth approximately \$150 per consult.

For more information about the WIC Program, contact the health department at (517) 887-4326.

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