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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Healthy Habits, Healthy Families with WIC

Carthage - More families than ever are finding it hard to put healthy food on their dinner tables. For young children, a lack of good nutrition can put them at risk for health problems and problems in school. North Carolina's WIC program helps low-income families meet the nutritional needs of pregnant and post-partum women, infants and children up to age 5.

"While adding more fruits and vegetables to these families' diets is an important part of our program, participants get more than food from WIC," Lauren Frazier said. "WIC offers families nutrition education and counseling, breastfeeding promotion and support, supplemental foods, and even healthcare referrals."

The North Carolina WIC Program currently serves an average of 270,000 participants each month. Studies show that children who participate in WIC are more likely to receive regular preventive health services and are better immunized than children who did not participate in WIC. WIC participants receive helpful one-on-one counseling with a nutrition professional. Group nutrition classes may also be offered by trained staff on topics ranging from healthy drink choices to grocery shopping on a budget.

Breastfeeding promotion and support is an important part of the WIC Program. All WIC agencies have trained staff ready to assist moms in making informed decisions about how they feed their babies. WIC also teaches moms the basics of breastfeeding.

Better educated moms mean healthier babies. Medicaid beneficiaries who participated in WIC had lower infant mortality rates than Medicaid beneficiaries who did not participate in WIC. WIC participation also decreases the incidence of low birth weight and pre-term births.

"WIC is so much more than people realize," said Frazier. "The nutrition education and healthy foods that WIC provides really give children a healthy start in life, which is so important."

The WIC Program is available at the Moore County Health Department located in Carthage. You may apply for WIC by calling to schedule an appointment during their hours of operation, Monday-Thursday 7:30am-5:00pm and Friday 7:30am-12:00pm.

For more information about WIC or to make an appointment, please call (910) 947-3271. You may also visit the Moore County Health Department website at www.moirecountync.gov/health or the NC WIC website at www.nutritionnc.com. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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***"To Protect and Promote Health through Prevention and Control of Disease and Injury."
<http://www.moirecountync.gov/health/>***

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