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**PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release**

## **Idaho WIC Receives Organization of the Year Award**

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO – Every year, the Idaho Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics selects an organization in the state that has gone above and beyond to improve the lives of Idaho children. This year, they selected the Idaho Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program as their Organization of the Year.

“WIC is a premier public health program not only in Idaho, but in the nation,” said Cristi Litzinger, WIC State Director, in a statement to the WIC chapters.

This award recognizes WIC for its years of hard work and dedication to supporting moms and babies with education, breastfeeding support, and nutritional support.

“We work in WIC because we care about the families and children in our communities,” said Tammy Walters, WIC Program Coordinator at the South Central Public Health District. “Every day we get to see the positive difference it makes. It’s wonderful to see this hard work recognized on the state level.”

In 2018, South Central Public Health District served 8,245 clients, provided over \$2.9 million in food vouchers, and helped all of these clients learn how to incorporate healthier diets into their lives. WIC also promotes breastfeeding as the optimal infant feeding choice. Breastfeeding has many benefits for infants, mothers, and society. It helps reduce diseases like breast and ovarian cancer, type 2 diabetes, obesity, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, respiratory infections, asthma, and digestion issues. If 90% of women in the U.S. would exclusively breastfeed for 6 months, it could save \$13 billion dollars and prevent 1000 infant deaths in our country each year!

“Most mothers plan to breastfeed but stop early because they don’t have support or struggled in labor, delivery and/or breastfeeding. It is so important for mothers to receive help early. We provide breastfeeding peer counselors, lactation educators and consultants, classes, and education materials to help moms through the process, giving them the support and education they need,” said Walters. “It’s just one example of the important work we do here. We give parents the help and education they need to make the best choices for their families.”

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) helps families afford supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education. Specifically, the program helps low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and infants and children up to age five who are at nutritional risk.

If you or someone you know could benefit from WIC, visit [signupwic.com](http://signupwic.com) to find a location near you. South Central Public Health District manages nine WIC locations in Twin Falls, Blaine, Minidoka, Cassia, Jerome, Lincoln, Gooding and Camas counties.

Visit <https://www.phd5.idaho.gov/WIC/index.htm> for more information and clinic schedules.