



# Welcome

Minnesota WIC Program  
Participant-Centered Webinar Series

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## Guidelines

- ▲ Phones on mute
- ▲ Raise hands
- ▲ Chat box



## The Plan

- ▲ **Topic area:** Dealing with Difficult People
- ▲ **Survey:** Sharing challenges, tips and strategies
- ▲ **Key concepts:**
  - Emotions drive behaviors
  - Best practices
    - Listen
    - Cultivate empathy
    - Explain the process
    - Encourage autonomy

## Harness the Power Within You



## Challenging Situations

- ▲ Not prepared
- ▲ Multiple rescheduling /no shows
- ▲ Demanding /rude
- ▲ Late
- ▲ Only interested in vouchers
- ▲ Unruly kids
- ▲ WIC regulations
- ▲ Cell phones / texting
- ▲ Difficult co-workers



## Emotions Drive Behaviors

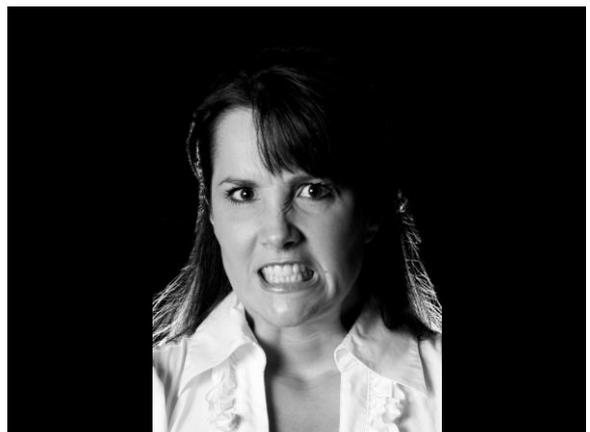
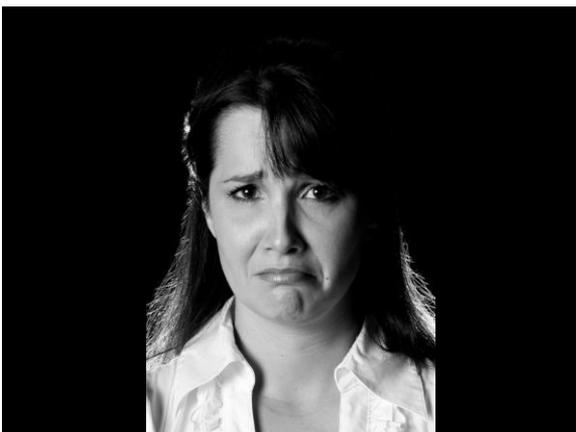


## Difficult Participants - Possible Causes

- ▲ Feeling powerless
- ▲ Not having options
- ▲ Unmet expectations
- ▲ Vulnerability
- ▲ Feeling disrespected
- ▲ Stressful life challenges
- ▲ Fear



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## Emotional Needs

- ▲ Connection / love
- ▲ Confidence / self-esteem
- ▲ Significance / importance
- ▲ Security / control
- ▲ Growth / improvement
- ▲ Understanding / respect

## Techniques

- ▲ Listen
- ▲ Cultivate empathy
- ▲ Explain the process
- ▲ Show me that you like me
- ▲ Offer choice
- ▲ Ask permission
- ▲ Apologize

## Listening



## Listening

- ▲ Really listen, acknowledge that they are upset and try to solicit why they are upset. Often people try to ignore or avoid talking about why a client is upset, but I find the opposite is more effective. Ask the client what is wrong, then you have an opportunity to address the issue.
- ▲ Remain calm. Really listen and don't interrupt. Whatever concern the difficult client has, it is REAL to them and they want to be heard.
- ▲ Try to remain calm; actively listen; empathize and offer options.
- ▲ Give full attention, offering listening ears without judgement.

## Listening



"It is your fault that I keep missing my appointments. You keep scheduling me in the morning. That is when I have to take my son to school. How can I be two places at once?"

## Show Me You Heard Me



"Afternoon appointments are going to work better for you."

## Poll Question: How Would You Respond?



## Empathy



## Empathy

- ▲ Put yourself in their shoes...you never know what may have happened in someone's life that is causing them to act out. Remember it is always easier to target someone who happens to be right in front of you, even if they are not the true source of your problem/frustration.
- ▲ Just being aware that the client may be going through a very difficult season in their life and be patient with them.
- ▲ Be empathetic about challenges WIC participants deal with on daily basis.
- ▲ Being empathetic goes a long way

## Explain the Process



## Show Me That You Like Me



## Interact with My Children

- ▲ "The one lady always makes conversation with the kids so they are very friendly."
- ▲ "We love coming to this place. My kids love being here. Everyone is so kind."
- ▲ "They always have smiling faces and are kid-friendly. They keep my kids entertained."

## Strategies for Autonomy



- ▲ Offer choices
- ▲ Ask permission
- ▲ Apologize

## Strategies for Autonomy

- ▲ Be flexible, apologize even if you don't think you're wrong.
- ▲ If unable to give what is desired, apologize and give choices for what is available, other resources.
- ▲ Ask for suggestions, offer solutions, and remember to ask permission if including others in the discussion "would it be ok if I would call my supervisor to visit with us..."

## Poll Question: How Would You Respond?



## Choosing Your Reaction



## Controlling Your Emotional Response

- ▲ Breathing
- ▲ Think before reacting
- ▲ Ask questions
- ▲ Choose your state

## Harness the Power Within You!

