

# ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

*Adirondack Bank Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 185 Genesee St., Utica, NY 13501*

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.  
ONEIDA COUNTY EXECUTIVE

GAYLE D. JONES, PHD, MPH, CHES  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

## ADMINISTRATION

Phone: (315) 798-6400 ☎ Fax: (315) 266-6138

# NEWS RELEASE

June 17, 2010

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** Carol Watkins, Community Educator/Nutrition Program Manager  
**798-5066**

## WIC 'Chat Rooms' Offer Nutrition/Health Education "Statewide Initiative Supports Healthy Behaviors Through Group Experience"

The Oneida County *Woman, Infants and Children (WIC) Supplemental Nutrition Program* has begun offering education sessions designed to provide its clients a group setting in which innovative solutions to family health and nutrition issues can be developed, Dr. Gayle Jones, Director of Health announced today.

*"The 'Chat Rooms' are part of a statewide initiative intended to establish a program of regularly scheduled group sessions that encourage participants to share their knowledge on a health/nutrition related topic and personal life experiences in an informal and pleasant atmosphere,"* Dr. Jones said. *"The sessions, which are facilitated by WIC staff and create a 'Talk, Listen and Connect' (TLC) atmosphere, allow participants to focus on their interests and learn from each other."*

The sessions are held every other Wednesday beginning at 10:30 a.m. at the Utica WIC site located at 1506 Whitesboro Street. Each session lasts 15-30 minutes, after which the client is issued a WIC check to purchase nutritious foods.

WIC is a federally funded program administered through the Oneida County Health Department, in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension, that provides nutritious foods, educational information, breastfeeding support and diet assessments for pregnant women, new mothers, infants and young children up to 5-years of age based on income eligibility. Many working families may qualify, as a couple with six children and an annual income of \$68,469 is eligible for WIC benefits. In addition to its Whitesboro Street headquarters, WIC operates outreach sites in North Utica, Rome Camden, Boonville, Waterville, Vernon and Sauquoit and currently serves about 56-hundred clients enrolled in Oneida County.

For more information on the *Woman, Infants and Children (WIC) program*, or to determine eligibility visit our web site at [ocgov.net](http://ocgov.net) or call the WIC office at **798-5066**.

###