

BREASTFEEDING: SIMPLY THE BEST

Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition statement

The work you do ensures that families have access to healthy foods, especially during challenging times. Thank you! Our youngest citizens—babies—are most vulnerable to food insecurity, and the Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition (MBC) is committed to making sure they receive the healthiest first food possible.

Did you know that the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend breastmilk as the optimal food for infants, especially during emergencies? MBC wants to make sure that the parents who want to breastfeed have the support they need, even during crisis.

Can you help us?

Human milk is the healthiest food for infants—and the only food needed for their first 6 months, at which time solid foods are introduced and human milk continued for the first year and beyond.

This is even more important for our Black, Brown, and Indigenous families who live with racism every day. Their babies face greater health risks, and breastmilk gives them lifelong health protections. Supporting families who are breastfeeding is critical in helping all Minnesota families thrive!

<https://mnbreastfeedingcoalition.org>



Why is Baby-Friendly Important

Baby-Friendly Hospitals uphold the highest standard of care.

• **Hospitals and maternity units set a powerful example for new mothers.** The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), launched in 1991, is an effort by UNICEF and the World Health Organization to ensure that all maternities, whether free standing or in a hospital, become centers of breastfeeding support.

https://www.unicef.org/nutrition/index_24806.html

• Infants fed formula during their postpartum hospital stay were 2.5 to 6 times more likely to be weaned earlier from breastmilk than infants who were exclusively breastfed from birth, according to a study published in the July 2020 *Pediatrics*. In a video abstract of the study “In-Hospital Formula Feeding and Breastfeeding Duration”, the authors, Marcia Burton McCoy and Pamela Heggie, recommend **“maternity centers adopt evidence-based best practices protocols, such as the Ten Steps of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative.”**

<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/146/1/e20192946?download=true>

• A *Journal of Pediatrics* November 2019 study shows **increased rates of implementation of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) are associated with decreased rates of infant deaths in the first 6 days after birth.**

[https://www.jpeds.com/article/S0022-3476\(19\)31305-8/abstract](https://www.jpeds.com/article/S0022-3476(19)31305-8/abstract)

• In a *Pediatrics* January 2019 study, leaders of Communities and Hospitals Advancing Maternity Practices, a Boston Medical Center’s Center for Health Equity program, report links **successful implementation of Baby-Friendly practices in the southern U.S. with increases in breastfeeding rates and improved, evidence-based care.** The changes were especially positive for African-American women.

https://www.bmc.org/news/press-releases/2019/01/18/improved-maternity-care-practices-decrease-racial-gaps-breastfeeding?fbclid=IwAR0zIVC6VBfTTYdt_wokAQjxuntE79L015zUW-zboGytjkWHUha-koM8la0



Why is it important to continue to promote and support breastfeeding in a family with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?

Breastfeeding protects infants from infection. Breast milk has natural bioactive factors, antibodies and targeted immunologic mediators; hence, breastfed infants are less likely to have severe respiratory symptoms. In addition to other maternal and infant health benefits, the release of oxytocin during breastfeeding promotes maternal wellness, and relieves stress and anxiety. Breastfeeding is also sustainable, and particularly important during a time of potential shortages of formula, bottles, and other feeding supplies. Counsel families to consider delaying weaning and extending the duration of breastfeeding to maximize the protection conferred via human milk during the pandemic.

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/breastfeeding-guidance-post-hospital-discharge/>



Upcoming Lactation Education and Events

August 18, 2020 (Online) **Motivating and Equipping Fathers with Tools for Success**, Great Lakes BF Webinars, www.mibreastfeeding.org/webinars

September 3, 2020 (Online) **Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition Fall Workshop**, 1:00-4:00 pm, <https://mbc41.wildapricot.org/MBC-Fall-Workshop>

September 15 - 16, 2020 (Hold the Date - 3.5 hr) **Building Bridges for Breastfeeding Duration**, MN WIC

September 15, 2020 (Online) **Ethical Lactation Support: Motivational Interviewing**, Great Lakes BF Webinars, www.mibreastfeeding.org/webinars

September 28, 2020 (phone or webex) **Northland Breastfeeding Coalition meeting**, noon - 2:00 pm, for info to join email northlandbfcoalition@gmail.com

October 4-13, 2020 (webinar), **Comprehensive Clinical Breastfeeding Medicine Course**, <https://lacted.org/shop/conf202009/>

October 12-16, 2020 (Minneapolis, MN) **Foundations for Best Practice in Lactation Care**, for more information: mspitz1@fairview.org

October 20-21, 2020 (Woodbury, MN) **Excellence in Care with the Ten Steps**, email us to be put on the waiting list: mspitz1@fairview.org

October 20, 2020 (Online) **Breastfeeding in Color: Curriculum to Support Black Families**, Great Lakes Breastfeeding Webinars, www.mibreastfeeding.org/webinars

November 5 & 6, 2020 (Online) **Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition Perinatal Hospital Leadership Summit**, for more information <https://mbc41.wildapricot.org/Summit>

November 17, 2020 (Online) **Breastfeeding Support for NICU Families**, Great Lakes BF Webinars, www.mibreastfeeding.org/webinars

November 30, 2020 (phone or webex) **Northland Breastfeeding Coalition meeting**, noon - 2:00 pm, for info to join email northlandbfcoalition@gmail.com

Ongoing (Online) **IBLCE CERP Provider Online Learning Program List**, <https://iblce.org/iblce-cerp-provider-online-learning-programmes/>

Healthy Northland seeks to improve the quality of life and health of all people in northeastern Minnesota. This newsletter is made possible by the Minnesota Department of Health's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership.

Interested in receiving this newsletter? Contact yoditg@communityhealthboard.org

For more breastfeeding resources & information visit: www.healthynorthland.org/resources/breastfeeding