



Promoting, Protecting and Supporting Breastfeeding in North Carolina

Blueprint Status Report

December 2011





In 2006, *Promoting, Protecting and Support Breastfeeding: A North Carolina Blueprint for Action* was released. This document served as a strategic plan for all North Carolinians to help improve breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity in our state. The vision of the *North Carolina Blueprint for Action (N.C. Blueprint for Action)* is that North Carolina mothers will be enabled to begin their children’s lives by breastfeeding – the best possible foundation for infant and young child feeding. This report will give an update to the progress made towards promoting, protecting and supporting breastfeeding in North Carolina.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) began releasing national and state breastfeeding report cards in 2007. In the figure below, the Healthy People 2020 goals related to breastfeeding are listed along with breastfeeding trends in North Carolina from 2009-11.

North Carolina Trends: CDC Report Card Results*

Objective	Healthy People 2010 Goal	North Carolina 2009 (%)	North Carolina 2010 (%)	Healthy People 2020 Goal	North Carolina 2011 (%)
Increase the proportion of infants ever breastfed	75 %	66.9	73.5	81.9 %	67.3
Increase the proportion of infants breastfed at 6 months	50 %	36.7	35.9	60.6 %	37
Increase the proportion of infants breastfed at 1 year	25 %	18.9	19.4	34.1%	19.6
Increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed exclusively through 3 months	40 %	30.2	28.2	46.2%	28.1
Increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed exclusively through 6 months	25 %	13.1	8.7	25.5 %	8.2

* The CDC Report Card is based on data collected from the National Immunization Survey. This table is representative of provisional and final data collected from 2006-08.

The *N.C. Blueprint for Action* outlined eight key recommendations for action. The following sections review the progress made to date in each of the eight action areas. This is not an inclusive list of all activities; major activities with statewide impact are highlighted.



I. Encourage the adoption of activities that create breastfeeding-friendly communities.

Families need support where they live, work and play. Communities that support breastfeeding are healthier.

- North Carolina (N.C.) WIC Program created an infrastructure of support by creating WIC Regional Lactation Training Centers in six regions of the state. These centers provide training to N.C. WIC Program staff and other healthcare providers in their regions.
- The Surgeon General has called for an increase in the number of programs that provide mother-to-mother support. As of July 1, 2011, there are 70 funded WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor programs serving 86 counties.
- N.C. WIC Program funded 17 local agency WIC programs to start structured breastfeeding support groups.
- The North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition (NCBC) built infrastructure for community-wide support and has enhanced their website to include ZipMilk. This search engine identifies breastfeeding resources across North Carolina by zip code. NCBC information may be found at: www.ncbfc.org.



II. Create a breastfeeding-friendly health care system.

Attitudes toward and success with breastfeeding are greatly influenced by events during pregnancy, labor and birthing, the time immediately after birth, and during later visits with health care providers.

- The North Carolina Division of Public Health (N.C. DPH) launched the North Carolina Maternity Center Breastfeeding-Friendly Designation during World Breastfeeding Week 2010. This voluntary program, endorsed by the N.C. Hospital Association and the N.C. Child Fatality Task Force (N.C. CFTF), awards maternity centers (hospitals and birthing centers) one star for each two steps achieved from the *Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding (Ten Steps)*. There are currently eight awardees. Information about the designation may be found at: www.nutritionnc.com.
- The Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute (CGBI) at UNC-Chapel Hill started their Hospital Breastfeeding-Friendly Project in 2009 to help hospitals move through the *Ten Steps* to improve best practices. CGBI is currently working with nine hospitals.

- Three maternity centers have achieved full Baby Friendly status from Baby Friendly USA in 2010-11. Those facilities are:
 - Mission Hospital in Asheville
 - Birth and Wellness Center in Chapel Hill
 - Vidant Medical Center in Greenville

There are currently several facilities across our state in various stages of the Baby Friendly process.

- NCBC has been awarding maternity centers with the “Golden Bow” for eliminating formula company discharge bags from their facilities since 2006.
- Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) across the state have continued to offer lactation specific training through collaborations with private and public institutions and providers.
- Northwest AHEC, Forsyth Medical Center and N.C. DPH continue to offer the North Carolina Lactation Educator Training Program. This training program enhances the skills of health care professionals from across the state through a combination of didactic and clinical practice sessions. This program started in 1997, trains approximately 100 health care professionals a year.
- N.C. WIC Program funded mini-grants targeted to five perinatal regions and 37 local agency WIC programs from 2007-11 to support continuing education for physicians and other health care providers.
- N.C. WIC Program continues to provide breastfeeding support, breast pumps and other breastfeeding supplies to mother-baby dyads participating in the Program.
- CGBI provided lactation training to 27 physicians located across the state in 2009-10.
- CGBI and the N.C. Women’s Hospital staff established the Mary Rose Tully Training Initiative in 2009 to train health care professionals seeking to become International Board Certified Lactation Consultants. Seventeen individuals have completed this program.

III. Encourage the adoption of breastfeeding-friendly workplaces.

North Carolina is a national leader in the number of women in the work force, with mothers being the fastest growing segment of the state labor force. Returning to work or school, however, is a commonly perceived barrier to breastfeeding. New mothers who work outside the home or return to school are less likely to breastfeed.



- NCBC and partners received a *Business Case for Breastfeeding (BCB) Train the Trainer* grant from the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee for 2009-10. This grant provided training to create “Business Outreach Workers” (BOW) and build a regional infrastructure. NCBC established the Breastfeeding-Friendly Business Awards Program which awards employers and businesses that are deemed breastfeeding friendly. Sixty-two businesses received this award in 2010. NCBC was also able to offer 10 mini-grants for businesses trying to become more breastfeeding friendly.
- N.C. DPH Nutrition Services Branch (NSB) and Physical Activity and Nutrition Branch (PAN) collaborated with the NCBC in 2009 to create the publication *Eat Smart North Carolina: Businesses Leading the Way in Support of Breastfeeding*.
- N.C. WIC Program funded mini-grants in 2009-10 to five of the six perinatal regions to work on the *Business Case for Breastfeeding*. Additional funds were awarded to 31 local agency WIC programs to assist businesses that serve or employ WIC participants to become more breastfeeding friendly.



IV. Assist child care facilities in promoting, protecting and supporting breastfeeding.

With increasing numbers of women returning to work or school, child care facilities are an essential setting for promoting and facilitating continuation of breastfeeding. Child care facilities can play a key role in establishing breastfeeding as the community norm for infant feeding.

- The North Carolina Division of Child Development (N.C. DCD) passed a child care rule for all licensed child care centers and family day care homes. The rule became effective in July 2010 and requires the provision of space, other than a bathroom where a mother may breastfeed or express milk.
- N.C. DCD revised the *Child Care Center Handbook* in 2009 and the *Family Child Care Home Handbook* in 2010 to include information about the importance of breastfeeding and ways that child care programs can support breastfeeding.
- N.C. DPH will launch a Breastfeeding-Friendly Designation for child care in 2012.
- N.C. WIC Program funded 13 local agencies to support continuing education and breastfeeding lending libraries in child care.

V. Advocate for insurance coverage by all third-party payers for breastfeeding care, services and equipment when necessary.

Increasing evidence of the cost-effectiveness of breastfeeding, including lower medical expenditures for breastfed infants as compared with never-breastfed infants, has resulted in greater attention to the role that health insurance can play in improving access to breastfeeding support and lactation services.

- The Perinatal Health Committee of the N.C. CFTF endorsed approaching insurers about coverage for International Board Certified Lactation Consultants in 2010.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced preventative care guidelines as a part of the Affordable Care Act in August 2011. The guidelines are based on recommendations from the Institute of Medicine. Included in these recommendations is coverage for breastfeeding support, supplies and counseling.

VI. Involve media and use social marketing and public education to promote breastfeeding.

Positive breastfeeding images, combined with factual media campaigns and social marketing, can help mothers and families make informed decisions about infant feeding. Media, social marketing and public education initiatives can play an important role in strengthening the perception of breastfeeding as the normal accepted infant feeding method.

- N.C. DPH NSB developed and disseminated collateral pieces to accompany the *N.C. Blueprint for Action* as a part of an outreach campaign. Collateral pieces included a blueprint poster; banner stands for exhibiting; bookmarks; notepads and pens for health care providers; and crib cards for use in the hospital setting.
- The Healthy Start Foundation, funded through the Health and Wellness Trust Fund created a breastfeeding media campaign, *Breastfeeding: A Natural Foundation*. The campaign focused on addressing cultural beliefs in Eastern North Carolina. A series of television commercials ran in May 2010 and September 2010. N.C. WIC Program extended the campaign commercials and created billboards in 10 counties that ran through May 2011.
- CDC Breastfeeding Report Card information is now included in the *North Carolina Child Health Report Card* and the *North Carolina Women's Health Report Card*.



VII. Promote and enforce new and existing laws, policies and regulations that support and protect breastfeeding.

Increasingly, attention is being focused on the role of federal and state legislation and regulatory action in the support and protection of breastfeeding. North Carolina was one of the first states in the nation to review and amend state statutes for this purpose. In 1993, the N.C. General Assembly exempted breastfeeding from the criminal statute, and clarified that women have the right to breastfeed in public, even if there is exposure of the breast.

- The N.C. Office of State Personnel (OSP) Lactation Policy was passed and became effective on July 1, 2010. This policy provides space and paid break time to employees subject to the State Personnel Act. The OSP policy may be found at: www.osp.state.nc.us/manuals (Section 8, Workplace Environment, Health, Wellness and Work/Life)



VIII. Encourage research and evaluation on breastfeeding outcomes, trends, quality of care and best practices.

The scientific evidence for both the benefits of breastfeeding as the optimal infant feeding method for human beings and for the efficacy of interventions that promote breastfeeding continues to grow more robust. Continuous data gathering; monitoring and analysis of breastfeeding trends; best practices; quality of care; and innovative state and community programs assure the investment that North Carolina makes in breastfeeding will serve as the catalyst for future action to increase breastfeeding rates in North Carolina.

- The Perinatal Quality Collaborative of North Carolina (PQCNC) is conducting two initiatives focusing on increasing the use of exclusive human milk in newborns. PQCNC 2010-12 projects include the increasing the Exclusive Use of Human Milk in 13 NICUs (EHMNCC) and in 25 Mother-Baby Units (EHMNursery) across the state of North Carolina.
- The State Center for Health Statistics published one breastfeeding paper in 2009: *CHAMP Surveillance Update: Breastfeeding Initiation – North Carolina 2008* and two breastfeeding papers in 2010: *SCHS Study 164 – Does Breastfeeding Reduce the Risk of Child Overweight in North Carolina* and *Statistical Brief 36 – Twenty-year Trends in Breastfeeding Initiation in North Carolina: Results from the North Carolina Child Health Assessment and Monitoring Program (CHAMP) Survey*.
- N.C. DPH routinely provides input into various statewide surveys that assess women's and children's health to assure that valid breastfeeding questions are included.

- NCBC and North Carolina State University (NCSU) collaborated on *The Landscape of Breastfeeding Support*. This photo journal supported by a grant from the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee features the work of the NCSU laboratory. NCSU is performing human milk research in order to create more accurate guidelines for human milk storage and the safety of human milk donations.
- CGBI continues to focus many of its efforts on advancing breastfeeding research in North Carolina. For a list of their current research initiatives visit: <http://cgbi.sph.unc.edu>.

Moving Forward

New Healthy People 2020 Objectives

In addition to the previously listed Healthy People 2020 objectives for initiation, duration and exclusivity, three new objectives have been added. The new objectives are complementary to the recommended areas of need identified in the *N.C. Blueprint for Action*.

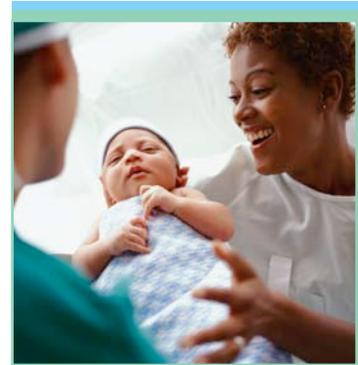
Objective	Goal
Reduce the proportion of breastfed newborns who receive formula supplementation within the first 2 days of life	14.2%
Increase the proportion of live births that occur in facilities that provide recommended care for lactating mothers and their babies	8.1%
Increase the proportion of employers that have worksite lactation programs	38%

Next Steps

- Implement programs that support the newly added Healthy People 2020 Objectives.
- Address racial and ethnic disparities in breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity.
- Continue to use the *N.C. Blueprint for Action* and the *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding* to build momentum and guide strategic planning in the area of breastfeeding.
 - www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/breastfeeding/calltoactiontosupportbreastfeeding.pdf
- Provide continued support for current initiatives that promote, protect and support breastfeeding.
- Use current data surveillance systems and geographical information system mapping to identify barriers and needs; measure progress; assess implementation of current programs; and guide future programming and training efforts.



- Partner with the N.C. Department of Labor, businesses, and municipalities to provide guidance to employers on worksite lactation policies and programs.
- Engage stakeholders in health care, public health, school systems, faith-based settings, worksites, child care, advocacy groups and communities to support the message that breastfeeding is the normal way to feed our youngest citizens.
- Strengthen programs that provide mother-to-mother support and peer counseling.







State of North Carolina
Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health
www.ncdhhs.gov