

HELP FAMILIES GET OFF TO A STRONG START

Support Federal Funding for Breastfeeding Support Programs



The Problem:

The policies, systems, and environmental factors that surround families have a significant impact on the breastfeeding experience. Families of color and low-income families experience additional structural barriers, including limited access to birthing facilities that implement evidence-based breastfeeding practices and access to lactation support. **Prenatal and postpartum care influence whether and how long babies are breastfed.** Routine hospital practices can disrupt early feeding and undermine breastfeeding and despite the importance of breastfeeding for population health, many health care providers receive limited training in lactation management. In addition, a lack of support in community and employment settings can stand in the way of continued breastfeeding.

The Solutions:

Appropriations for breastfeeding help build and strengthen critical programs and initiatives to improve maternity care practices, increase access to peer & professional support, ensure continuity of breastfeeding care, increase support for breastfeeding employees, and address disparities in breastfeeding rates.

- **Continue and enhance funding for the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) Breastfeeding Support Programs at \$15M/year**

CDC breastfeeding funding supports initiatives to improve maternity care practices, increase workplace support for breastfeeding employees, and increase access to peer & professional support and continuity of breastfeeding care.

- **Continue and enhance funding for the CDC Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program at \$50.95M/year**

The REACH program works to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities through local, culturally appropriate programs, including breastfeeding support programs.

- **Fund U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**

The WIC program provides vital nutrition education, healthy foods, breastfeeding support, and healthcare referrals for mothers and young children. It is critical that the program is funded at \$6.3 B to support WIC caseload and that the breastfeeding peer counselor program is fully funded at the current authorized level of \$90 M.

Demonstrated Effectiveness & Support:

Starting in Fiscal Year 2012 (FY12) and continuing every year since, funding has been allocated to the **Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) especially to fund initiatives to support hospitals in promoting breastfeeding** (FY14-FY19 = \$8M/year). **Since funding was first directed to support breastfeeding programs in FY12, breastfeeding initiation has increased more than 6% and exclusive breastfeeding at 6 months has increased more than 8%.**

Please maintain federal funding for breastfeeding support programs.

U.S. Breastfeeding Committee • www.USBreastfeeding.org

