

Title V / Maternal and Child Health Impact Story: April 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017

MCH Grantee (*check box*):

- Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health
- Fargo Cass Public Health
- Grand Forks Public Health Department
- North Dakota State University
- South East Education Cooperative

North Dakota Maternal and Child Health Priority Area (*check box*):

- Increase the rate of breastfeeding at 6 months
- Reduce overweight and obesity in children

In a sentence or two, describe the problem you were trying to solve or the reason why your intervention is needed.

Breastfeeding until 6 months has significant benefits for both mothers and their babies, unfortunately for a majority of moms breastfeeding ends prematurely around 3 months. Our grant concentrates on supporting, protecting and promoting breastfeeding by focusing our efforts on increasing breastfeeding education for families as well as employers and collaborating with community partners to identify those in need of breastfeeding assistance.

In a brief paragraph, please share what you implemented and how it made a difference.

In North Dakota, 74 percent of women with children younger than six years of age are in the workforce. While North Dakota has a high initiation rate for breastfeeding the rates drop significantly by 3 months of age. We focused our efforts on helping mothers prepare for breastfeeding and returning to work by providing assistance in the early weeks through our BAMBBE home visiting program. To increase the number of mothers to whom this support can be provided, we collaborated with the hospitals and other community partners. During home visits we inquired about support systems and breastfeeding goals and answered common questions about preparing to return to work while breastfeeding. By fostering a strong breastfeeding relationship and support system, mothers are more prepared for the challenges of breastfeeding as a working mother. In order to promote the utilization of existing community resources, we developed a breastfeeding resources pamphlet and distributed that to our community partners who serve breastfeeding mothers. To connect with the American Indian community a brochure focusing on the cultural tradition of breastfeeding was developed and was distributed at home visits and various American Indian events in the community. Our CLC's are available to assist with breastfeeding concerns or questions anytime via phone call, text message or home or office visit. Once the mother returns to work, we offer resources and support to help her overcome barriers to providing breastmilk even in many different work environments.

Are there any specific NUMBERS or OUTCOMES you can share as a result of your work?

Title V / Maternal and Child Health Impact Story: April 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017

In our efforts to support breastfeeding within the workplace we have assisted 10 workplaces in making private comfortable spaces for mothers to breastfeed or pump breastmilk. We also developed a social marketing campaign targeting working mothers, Native American mothers and employers. Our first big success came as a Facebook ad showing how dads can support breastfeeding efforts. The ad reaching 17,675 people on the first run and 17,646 on the second run a month later. Our Facebook ad focusing on Native American mothers and the cultural significance of the first sacred food reached 7,322. Another ad that provides tips on supporting a breastfeeding coworker reached 38,566. We also developed two breastfeeding video PSAs supporting breastfeeding and returning to work focusing on the employee and employer. The ads ran on Facebook for 5 weeks during the month of August. The traffic to the pages watched nearly 129 hours of video, with the paid reach behind the videos translating to 32,242 views.

Were there any “AHA” or “lightbulb” moments you can share?

Providing breastfeeding assistance through home visits in the early days after birth was easy to implement; however, talking about preparing to work during that time proved much harder. Many mothers want to enjoy the time they have with their infant and talking about returning to work seemed like, for some mothers, a far off thought and for others anxiety provoking. To our surprise many mothers responded very well to the short opportunity to ask their own personal questions about preparing to return to work. Initially, we sent out text messages 1-2 weeks prior to returning to work but mothers rarely had any questions. Our “aha” moment came when we discovered that follow up text messages 1-2 weeks after returning to work produced more questions and interaction than expected. Text message support after returning to work is successful, it allows the mother time to adjust to working and breastfeeding and reminds the mother we will continue to support her breastfeeding goals.

Are there any “quotes” from anyone benefitting from this that you can share?

“With having my second child while working at the University of Mary, I am very thankful there is now a space for mothers who needs to express milk or feed their child. During the time I was feeding my first child, there was not a space available on campus that felt as welcoming, and I often would drive into town to be in the comfort of my home. The padded rocking chairs provide a space in which the working mother has an area that feels like home, and while spending time in the room, the amenities have helped in feeling more comfortable with the task of expressing milk. “

-UMary employee

Title V / Maternal and Child Health Impact Story: April 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017

“We appreciate the furnishings and know the space will be used and appreciated by many more!”

-Heritage Center employee

“Going into having my daughter, my plans were to breastfeed and try to at least make it through the first two weeks. The day the nurse was scheduled for a visit was Day 8. I had cried on my husband’s shoulder and said I was going stop. After the visit, I felt my husband and I had more knowledge and confidence with breastfeeding. I had tools to push forward. I also learned I had support and resources when I needed help. Now we have surpassed my goal and made it two months and will continue.”- BAMBBE newborn home visit participant

“Our BAMBBE nurse was very kind and encouraging. She checked in with me several times via text on our breastfeeding success or questions. Even if I was feeling discouraged or concerned, she was very supportive and encouraged me to keep going, and I’m so glad I did!”

– BAMBBE newborn home visit participant

Is there anything else you want to share?

We appreciate the opportunity to work with new mothers in their efforts to increase breastfeeding rates and norms in our community. With the help of the North Dakota Department of Health, we have been able to make an impact in the lives of mothers and babies in Bismarck and Burleigh County by providing best-practices based on evidence-based breastfeeding research an education. We value providing client-centered care to mothers and babies; we plan on continuing to see success with our maternal and child health programs related to breastfeeding education and support.