

***Partnership Collaboration to Support Breastfeeding with an Obesity Prevention State Plan.***

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**Key Partners and Stakeholders:**

Montana Hospital Association, Physician groups, Family and Community Health Bureau, Montana Public Home Visiting, Local Maternal and Child Health Services, WIC. Hospitals, Montana Medicaid, Head Start, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Insurance providers, Moms, families and babies of Montana.

**Background:**

Meta-analysis of the relationship between breastfeeding and BMI in children shows that the duration of breastfeeding is inversely related to pediatric overweight. Some studies also suggest that exclusive breastfeeding has a greater protective effect than does breastfeeding supplemented with formula feeding. Breastfeeding is also recommended as a disaster preparedness strategy.

The Montana Nutrition and Physical activity Program staff were tasked to develop a 2011-2020 State Plan to Prevent Obesity and other chronic diseases under a contracted agreement with DPHHS/CDC. One of the targeted behaviors to address is the initiation, duration and exclusivity of breastfeeding through program implementation, enhanced development of infrastructure with ongoing evaluation and process improvement.

**Montana data:**

According to 2009 CDC Breastfeeding Report Card, Montana meets all the Healthy people 2010 goals for breastfeeding as follows:

Infants ever breastfeed=82.7%

Infants breastfeed at six months=56.8%

Infants breastfeed at 12 months=30.6%

Infants exclusively breastfeed at three months=40.8%

Infants exclusively breastfeed at six months=20.5%

Relative to most states, Montana has high rates of breastfeeding. To optimize the health of Montana's tiniest citizens and their families, however, additional efforts can be made.

**Project goal:** Develop a 2011-2020 Montana State Plan to Prevent Obesity and other Chronic Diseases with a strong emphasis to promote, protect and support breast feeding across Montana.

**Methods:** Process coordinated by MT NAPA staff using the PRISM (Prevention Impact Simulation Model) stakeholders/partners agreed upon specific strategies that should be implemented in the targeted settings in Montana over the course of 2010.

**Results:** At least one breastfeeding strategy/activity is included in all settings at the 2, 5 and 10 year evaluation timeframes with the exception of the built environment. For example: Increase the number of Montana hospitals that have adopted written policies consistent with the Baby-Friendly Hospital initiative.

**Summary:** Working with many different types of agencies, organizations within Montana over the past 5 years to develop capacity for policy, environmental and system change was reflected in the state planning process in 2010. It was very exciting and rewarding to observe the many discussions to promote, protect and support breastfeeding during this complex process. It was especially fulfilling to have CDC representation witness the paradigm shift.