

## ***Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success***

Location: Arizona  
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 Category: **Emerging Practice**

### **BACKGROUND**

Making institutional changes in maternity care practices has been shown to significantly increase breastfeeding initiation and duration rates. While the *Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding for Hospitals* included in the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is considered the gold standard for breastfeeding maternity practices, no Arizona hospital has earned the "Baby-Friendly" designation. While Arizona hospitals should strive to achieve all ten steps, working toward five practices would go a long way toward making a real difference in the health of infants and mothers.

In Arizona, a high percentage of mothers initiate breastfeeding with many mothers discontinuing breastfeeding in the first few days. Evidence from Colorado's Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System data (PRAMS) was used to examine the effects of hospital practices on breastfeeding duration and whether the effects differed by income level. The study showed breastfeeding duration was improved for mothers at all income levels with the use of five specific hospital practices. To encourage Arizona hospitals to incorporate changes to maternity care policies and include all five of the breastfeeding friendly practices, the Arizona Department of Health Services and the Arizona Perinatal Trust partnered to support these policies in the Arizona Perinatal Trust certification, as well as provide training and technical assistance to hospitals to ensure implementation.

### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The goal of the program is to improve breastfeeding duration and exclusive breast milk feeding. Medical facilities that participate in the program agree to follow the steps below for patients whenever medically possible:

- Initiate breastfeeding within the first hour after birth.
- Avoid giving infants fluids or solids other than breast milk unless medically necessary.

TITLE V/MCH BLOCK GRANT MEASURES ADDRESSED
#4: A) Percent of infants who are ever breastfed and B) Percent of infants breastfed exclusively through 6 months

- Promote 24-hour rooming-in, encouraging the family to recognize and respond to infant's cues.
- Avoid using pacifiers or artificial nipples with infants during the hospital stay.
- Give mothers a telephone number to call for help with breastfeeding.

### **TARGET POPULATION SERVED**

The Arizona Perinatal Trust is dedicated to improving the health of Arizona's mothers and babies through a voluntary hospital certification program. The certification program is a quality improvement process improving the perinatal health care system. Of the 41 APT certified hospitals in Arizona, 25 agreed to implement the Arizona Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success Initiative. Combined, these hospitals deliver over 66,000 infants in 2011 or nearly 80% of all babies born in Arizona.

### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

The Arizona Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success promotes implementation of five evidence-based maternity care practices that have a positive impact on breastfeeding success for mothers who want to breastfeed. Using the Social Ecological Model for health promotion, with the goal to have a broad public health impact, the program focused on systems change within hospital organizations to create a breastfeeding friendly environment.

Arizona's BSBS is modeled after Colorado Can Do 5!, which is also based on the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative's 10 model breastfeeding practices. AzBSBS adapted the program by developing materials specific for Arizona hospitals and providers. An example is the AzBSBS Model Hospital Policy Guide to assist hospitals and health care providers in the implementation of the *Arizona Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success* recommendations. The guide includes sample policies, position statements, a self-appraisal tool to review policies and practices, and other

online resources. AzBSBS also developed educational videos on breastfeeding for moms and families. Materials for patient education and program promotion were made available to participating facilities, and other health facilities and health educators that work with pregnant and breastfeeding mothers.

In 2010, all 41 APT certified hospitals received an email letter of introduction and invitation to participate in the project. Upon completion of an online survey by the facilities, ADHS compiled documented statistics and vital information and 20 hospitals throughout the state were targeted to implement the AzBSBS initiative. From fall 2010-September 2011, free education and training to hospital administrators and maternity care staff in each of the 20 implementing hospitals was provided by ADHS International Board Certified Lactation Consultants.

After every hospital training, the attendees were asked to complete an evaluation form that provided feedback to the trainers about what resonated with staff and what needed to be improved in future trainings. In addition, trainings were tailored to each hospital's unique needs. Pre-training meetings were conducted with hospital administrators to learn about which practices were already in place and which practices were new to the staff. The trainers were able to adjust the training to allow more time discussing newly implemented practices to boost staff confidence. Post-training meetings were also conducted with hospital administrators to learn how the implementation of the AZ BSBS program was going and offer technical assistance as needed. ADHS evaluated progress after completion of training and technical assistance. An overall evaluation took place in March 2012.

ADHS provides opportunities to market their successes through the Arizona Department of Health Service website, as well as information and resources on the *Arizona Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success Initiative*.

### PROGRAM OUTCOMES/EVALUATION DATA

A process evaluation was employed to answer three main questions about the program:

1. How successful were the trainings in relation to promotion of exclusive breastfeeding in hospitals?
2. How have hospitals implemented the 5 Baby Steps in their practices and policies?
3. What were the challenges and/or success of implementing the Arizona Baby Steps for Breastfeeding Success

The evaluation used a multi-modal approach, including participant observation of trainings, qualitative interviews with the trainers, and a quantitative survey to assess changes that occurred in the hospitals since the trainings. An online pre-training survey was emailed to all 41 APT-certified

hospitals. Thirty-six facilities responded to the survey and twenty-five of those responders completed the training. An online post-training survey was emailed to all hospitals that received the training with a total of 23 hospitals completing the post survey. Although both the pre- and post-surveys had a high response rate, there is always potential for non-response bias.

ADHS will complete an outcome evaluation of AzBSBS using data from the National Survey of Maternity Practices in Infant Nutrition and Care administered by CDC when updated data is available.

The post survey revealed that all 25 participating hospitals have made good-faith efforts to comply with all of the five Baby Steps for Breastfeeding Success Policy recommendations and do want to become more baby friendly. While all hospitals have implemented all five steps, survey results indicate that breastfeeding within the first hour and promoting 24-hour rooming in have been perceived to be the easiest to implement. Of the five steps that were perceived to be the hardest to change by nursing staff, 78% of hospitals indicated that "Avoid using pacifiers" has been the most challenging to impact policy change. The second hardest step to change was "Avoid giving infants' fluids other than breast milk" with 52% responding that this step was hard to change. The training has proven to be valued by the hospitals as they all want to have more training and they are sustaining efforts to continue practice of all of the five Baby Steps.

While hospital breastfeeding data was not part of the formal evaluation plan, one hospital shared their data with ADHS before and after implementing the AzBSBS program. The facility delivers approximately 5,000 babies each year and was one of the early adopters of the AzBSBS program. In the first 6 months after implementation, the proportion of mothers leaving the hospital exclusively breastfeeding more than tripled, going from 3% to 10%. There was also a 70% in breastfeeding initiative among mothers that indicated they intend to breastfeed prior to delivery.

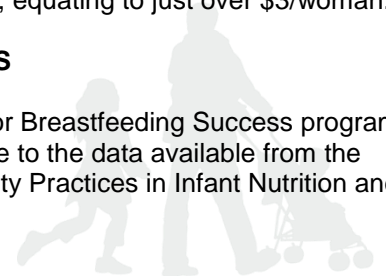
### PROGRAM COST

Implementation of Arizona Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success included a dedication of \$46,000.00 for personnel across a total of .5 FTE and \$200,000 for the training curriculum development, materials, and marketing campaign. This total of \$246,000 across two years is reaching approximately 72,000 birthing women and their infants annually in Arizona, equating to just over \$3/woman.

### ASSETS & CHALLENGES

#### Assets

The Arizona Baby Steps for Breastfeeding Success program was developed in response to the data available from the National Survey of Maternity Practices in Infant Nutrition and



Care administered by the CDC and available funding from the CDC Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant.

### Challenges

Based on the responses from the post-training survey, the Baby Steps for Breastfeeding Success program was successful in its goal of improving policy to support breastfeeding in Arizona Perinatal Trust-certified hospitals. One of the components of Baby Steps was the development of a physician toolkit that provided physician's information about the evidence-based program and materials for physician's to provide to patients to promote the program in the hospital. The OB/GYN practitioners did not take an active role in breastfeeding promotion or promotion of the AZBSBS program. OB/GYNs have a critical role in prenatal education on breastfeeding and supporting breastfeeding decisions in the hospital after delivery.

### Overcoming Challenges

To encourage OB/GYN practitioners to take a more active role in breastfeeding and the AZBSBS program, ADHS hosted two physicians conference where nationally renowned physicians, one OB/GYN and one pediatrician, presented research, data, and practical guidance on supporting breastfeeding in their practices. Unfortunately, the majority of the physician's that attended the breastfeeding training were pediatricians. Trainers also outreached through the professional association and individual hospital workgroups to reach OB/GYN at regularly scheduled meetings.

### LESSONS LEARNED

Physicians are an important element to implementing maternity care practices that support breastfeeding. Incorporating a stronger physician outreach and education would enhance the implementation from critical practitioners. Another potential model to employ when implementing this training is to identify a champion nurse in each facility that provides additional hands-on practice after the state training is complete. This will help transfer knowledge into practice.

### FUTURE STEPS

ADHS developed an online class for the Arizona Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success program. It is available at [www.azbabysteps.org](http://www.azbabysteps.org). Hospitals can use this course as a refresher class, train newly hired staff, or become a Baby Steps designated hospital by having all women and infant staff complete the course.

In addition to the online class, ADHS is hosting a hospital summit in the fall of 2012 targeting hospital administration. The summit will focus on creating hospital systems and adopting policies that support the health of infants and mothers. Finally, the department will continue to provide Baby Steps promotional materials to the hospitals at no cost.

### COLLABORATIONS

The Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatricians, Arizona Perinatal Trust and the Arizona Chapter of American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists offered support and guidance in assisting ADHS in implementing this initiative and provided valuable credible justification instruments to present to hospital administrators as needed. The initiative also involved crucial collaboration on the part of the participating hospitals.

### PEER REVIEW & REPLICATION

The AZBSBS was evaluated by an Arizona State University professor in the college of nursing and health innovation. The abstract entitled "Evaluation of Outcomes of Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success" has been selected for Oral presentation during the 140th APHA Annual Meeting in the fall of 2012.

In terms of replication, this program is currently being implemented by the Indian Health Services in Arizona.

### RESOURCES PROVIDED

A website was developed for the initiative and contains several resources, including:

- AzBSBS Model Hospital Policy Guide to assist hospitals and health care providers in the implementation of the *Arizona Baby Steps to Breastfeeding Success* recommendations. This document included evidence-base best practices that have been demonstrated to significantly increase duration and exclusivity of breastfeeding.
- Information and videos for Moms and Families to learn how to keep babies breastfeeding.
- Materials for patient education and program promotion, available to participating hospitals by order: Baby Steps Information Bookmark, Baby Steps Magnet, Baby Steps Table Tent, Baby Steps Badge Clip. These materials are available in English and Spanish.

All resources are accessible on the website:

<http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/bnp/gobreastmilk/BFAzBabySteps.htm>.

**Key words: Breastfeeding, Quality Assurance, Birth Outcomes, Nutrition & Physical Activity, Health Promotion**

**\*\*For more information about programs included in AMCHP's Innovation Station database, contact [bp@amchp.org](mailto:bp@amchp.org). Please be sure to include the title of the program in the subject heading of your email\*\***

