

Communities Supporting Breastfeeding

Location: Kansas
 Date Submitted: 5/2016
 Category: **Emerging Practice**

BACKGROUND

The Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition (KBC) asked the question - What would a breastfeeding “utopia” look like? What would mothers and babies experience there? What would they see and hear? Would breastfeeding rates be higher in communities where multiple breastfeeding programs were in place, all working synergistically to weave a net of breastfeeding support for all families?

It turns out the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Bureau of Family Health, responsible for Title V, WIC and child care provider licensing was interested in these questions as well and more importantly, the answers. The resulting conversations and meetings between KDHE and the KBC formed the basis for the Communities Supporting Breastfeeding (CSB) designation to recognize communities who provide a multifaceted approach to breastfeeding support.

The KBC already had multiple programs in place to support breastfeeding in a variety of sectors. It was easy from there to craft designation criteria that optimized existing programs, allowing local breastfeeding coalitions to utilize existing resources and materials. Coalitions were then able to focus their time and energy implementing the various programs and working towards a goal – the CSB designation.

The CSB program awards a designation to Kansas communities that support breastfeeding mothers and babies through a multifaceted approach across sectors using existing statewide programs that address barriers to breastfeeding. Alone, each program can provide a life-line of support in one area of a mother’s life; when woven together they create a net of support through which **no** mother and baby will fall.

TITLE V/MCH BLOCK GRANT MEASURES ADDRESSED

#04: A) Percent of infants who are ever breastfed and B) Percent of infants breastfed exclusively through 6 months



“A Community Supporting Breastfeeding” Designation Criteria

- A local breastfeeding coalition
 - Peer support group(s) such as La Leche League or similar mother-to-mother group
 - A least one community hospital enrolled in [High 5 for Mom & Baby](#) or [Baby Friendly Hospital USA](#)
 - 1 business for every 1000 community citizens* or 25 (whichever is lesser) participate in the [“Breastfeeding Welcome Here”](#) program
 - 1 business for every 5000 community citizens or 10 (whichever is lesser) receive a [“Breastfeeding Employee Support Award”](#)
 - A minimum of 20 child care providers in the community complete the KBC’s “How to Support the Breastfeeding Mother and Family” course
- * Community can be either a city or a county.

In collaboration with KDHE Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Program, six communities were selected to pilot the CSB program. The pilot communities represented diverse geographies and populations and served as model communities to achieve the CSB designation as defined by

the criteria above. The time period to accomplish this goal was September 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Community Supporting Breastfeeding (CSB) designation program is to create a culture of breastfeeding support in communities; ultimately increasing breastfeeding initiation and duration rates and the health and wellbeing of families.

The CSB program's immediate goals are to increase positive perceptions toward breastfeeding, increase the availability of breastfeeding resources and reduce barriers experienced in the community by women of child-bearing age. The long-term goal of this project is to increase exclusive breastfeeding rates through a sustainable model of cross-sector support for breastfeeding.

The project also effectively addresses the racial and socioeconomic disparities in breastfeeding rates. The KBC's collective impact approach supports efforts of those serving African-American and lower income women. As a result of this project, these organizations receive the support they need to increase their impact when they become aligned with other, larger organizations working towards the similar goals, creating a synergy across groups working on breastfeeding support.

TARGET POPULATION SERVED

The Communities Supporting Breastfeeding (CSB) program serves communities across Kansas. All communities in Kansas are eligible to receive the CSB designation.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- KBC contracted with individuals for the following positions:
 - Project Coordinator to oversee the project
 - Local Community Coordinator (LCC) in each of the pilot communities to provide "boots on the ground" assistance with meeting the CSB criteria
 - Hospital Educator to provide training to three communities' hospitals to help them implement the "High 5 for Mom & Baby" practices
- Hosted "Community Conversation" launch meetings in each community Oct.- Nov. 2014 to determine the local landscape of breastfeeding support, introduce the CSB criteria and create an action plan to meet the criteria by the June 30, 2015 deadline.
- Hosted "Continuity of Breastfeeding Care" meetings in each community April-May 2015 facilitated by Program Coordinator and Hospital Educator for those providing

prenatal, maternity and postpartum care in the community. The goals of these meetings were to provide consistent communication of five maternity care practices to families to prepare families for their hospital experience and to facilitate the "warm hand-off" of mothers from the hospital to the community for breastfeeding support.

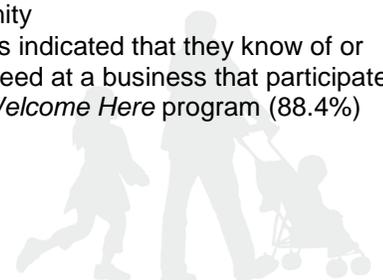
- Conference calls with LCCs to share strategies, successes, and challenges. Program Coordinator and Hospital Educator facilitated the calls .
- Mid-project reviews were held with LCCs in early February 2015 to discuss project status and strategies for meeting the CSB designation by June 30th.
- Hospital Educator provided eight hours of hospital staff education and a hands-on skills session in three communities to assist them being recognized as "High 5 for Mom & Baby" hospitals. She also met with community physicians in these communities to help them understand their role in supporting the hospital's implementation of the "High 5" practices.
- Hosted CSB Celebration events in each community at which the City/County Commission read a proclamation from the KBC and a reception/dinner followed. Celebration events were open to the public. Media coverage of the proclamation increased awareness of the CSB designation.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES/EVALUATION DATA

A cross-sectional study was designed using self-reported surveys to evaluate mothers' perceptions of the availability of breastfeeding resources and breastfeeding barriers in the six pilot communities associated with the Communities Supporting Breastfeeding (CSB) program. To accomplish this study's objective, surveys were administered to women of child-bearing age in each of the six pilot communities. Through local meetings, the Local Community Coordinator (LCC) contacted potential study participants to discuss survey participation. Participants completed the survey within six months of implementation of the CSB program. Data were collected between January and March 2015. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board, University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita.

A total of 115 mothers completed the survey. Summary of key findings:

- Majority of respondents believed local breastfeeding leadership (90.1%), peer support (92.6%), and hospital support (97.4%) provided adequate breastfeeding support in the community
- Majority of respondents indicated that they know of or would prefer to breastfeed at a business that participates in the *Breastfeeding Welcome Here* program (88.4%)



- Respondents were not as familiar with the following programs: *Business Case for Breastfeeding* (60.7%) and child care provider support (58.5%)

In their response to open-ended questions related to each of the CSB’s criteria, mothers reported a lack of:

- Designated public breastfeeding space
- Knowledge that breastfeeding is natural
- Designated space and sufficient time to express breast milk in the workplace.

Due to its formative nature, small sample size, and higher socio-economic status of the study population, this study is somewhat limited. Additional research that includes a larger sample with a more racially and ethnically diverse study population across all levels of the socio-economic spectrum is needed. Based on results from our evaluation along with improved exclusive breastfeeding rates in the majority of the communities (Table 1) that could be associated with the CSB criteria, we believe the CSB program is impactful.

Table 1. Exclusive Breastfeeding at 6 Months*

	June 2014	May 2016	Change
Barton County (Great Bend)	13.9%	16.3%	2.4%
Cowley County (Winfield)	10.2%	19.6%	9.4%
Ellis County (Hays)	5.3%	13.3%	7.0%
Labette County (Parsons)	17.4%	22.6%	5.2%
Saline County (Salina)	22.5%	15.7%	-6.8%
Seward County (Liberal)	14.3%	17.6%	3.3%

* KS WIC data WIC infants only

PROGRAM COST

The pilot program cost \$41,500 (\$7,000/community) to assist six communities over one year. Breakdown of funds:

- \$25,000 Independent Contractors (Local Community Coordinators, Program Coordinator and Hospital Educator)
- \$9,500 Supplies, postage, misc.
- \$4,000 Travel expenses
- \$3,000 Food for meetings and celebrations

ASSETS & CHALLENGES

Assets

The CSB program:

- Invigorates established local breastfeeding coalitions and is a motivator for the creation of local breastfeeding coalitions where they do not exist.

Coalitions have a collective goal to work towards, resulting in increased engagement, leadership development and sustainability for the CSB program.

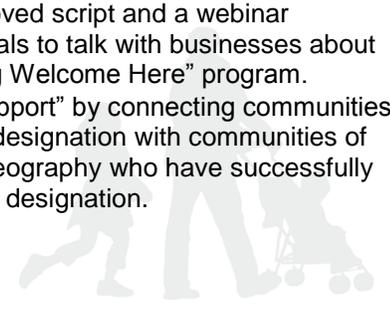
- Builds local partnerships:
 - Nursing school students enrolled businesses in the “Breastfeeding Welcome Here” program as a course project
 - Child care provider coalitions presented “How to Support the Breastfeeding Family” trainings
 - A local health department used the CSB project as a strategy for their “Community Health Improvement Plan”
- Engages individuals and organizations. Everyone can find something they can do to help their community become a “Community Supporting Breastfeeding”. Retired La Leche League Leaders, grandparents and business owners have all stepped up to help their community achieve the CSB designation.
- Raises awareness among governmental officials and the public learn about the importance of community level support for breastfeeding families when the CSB proclamation is read at the City/County Council meeting and the subsequent media coverage.
- Fosters leadership and engages individuals through the creation of a Local Community Coordinator.

Challenges

- Explaining the “Breastfeeding Welcome Here” program to businesses. Questions and attitudes from businesses arose for which recruiters were not prepared.
- Moving too quickly. Some communities needed a slower pace for meeting the CSB criteria when relationships need to be build both within the breastfeeding coalition as well as the larger community.
- Involving physicians.
- Refocusing work on the *coalition* level with less reliance on the local health department to do the foot work.
- Raising awareness among local businesses and employers about their role in the CSB designation.

Overcoming Challenges

- Provided an improved script and a webinar preparing individuals to talk with businesses about the “Breastfeeding Welcome Here” program.
- Provided “peer support” by connecting communities seeking the CSB designation with communities of similar size and geography who have successfully achieved the CSB designation.



- Asked *High 5 for Mom & Baby* program to require/encourage community hospital to have at least one senior staff person attend local breastfeeding coalition meetings.
- Provided a press release at start of CSB project to inform and prepare community/businesses
- Asked Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatricians to encourage their members to become connected to their local breastfeeding coalition.

LESSONS LEARNED

The CSB program builds relationships across multiple sectors. Therefore, the CSB criteria are more easily met in communities where diverse sectors are represented on the local breastfeeding coalition, beyond the local health department and hospital.

All too often businesses, child care providers and families are missing from local breastfeeding coalitions. These groups need to be actively recruited, welcomed and engaged within their local breastfeeding coalitions for a vibrant and healthy coalition. A diverse and active local breastfeeding coalition is imperative for achieving the CSB designation.

FUTURE STEPS

KDHE has secured funding from the Kansas Health Foundation to contract with the KBC to provide technical assistance to 10 additional communities over two years (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017) to achieve the CSB designation. Since the end of the pilot project, six additional communities have achieved the CSB designation.

COLLABORATIONS

The following state and local partnerships were developed or strengthened as a result of the CSB project:

- KDHE Bureau of Family Health Programs:
 - Child Care Licensure
 - Nutrition and WIC Services
 - Healthy Start Home Visitors
- Early Head Start
- Child care provider organizations (Child Care Aware of KS and KS Child Care Training Opportunities)
- Parents as Teachers
- High 5 for Mom & Baby (state-level hospital QI program)
- Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatricians

PEER REVIEW & REPLICATION

The CSB program was selected for an oral presentation at:

- Association of Maternal and Child Health Professionals Annual Conference, Washington, DC April 5-8, 2016.
- Kansas Public Health Association Annual Conference, Wichita KS, Sept. 20-21, 2016

CSB Poster presentations:

- Quality Forum Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc., July 31, 2015
- Kansas Public Health Association Fall Conference, September 16 – 17, 2015
- American Public Health Association Annual Conference, Oct. 31 2016

The CSB technical assistance program is being replicated in ten (10) additional communities in Kansas between July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017.

RESOURCES PROVIDED

Communities Supporting Breastfeeding webpage on KBC website – <http://ksbreastfeeding.org/cause/communities-supporting-breastfeeding/>

Materials created for the project:

- Application for CSB designation
- Promotional flyer
- Position descriptions: Local Community Coordinator & Hospital Educator
- Continuity of Breastfeeding Care meeting
 - Meeting agenda
 - Invitation
- Post Designation:
 - Press release
 - City/County Proclamation
 - Designation Certificate
 - Invitation to designation celebration
 - Celebration action ideas

(All materials are accessible at:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/pq4t8djhsfs0kp/AADl5Ywfmjv5L8uQzlgH_66a?dl=0)

Key words: Breastfeeding, Community, Multi-sector, support, coalition, child care, business, employer, hospital

****For more information about this program please contact: Brenda Bandy, Program Director, Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc., bandy@kansas.net**

