



Michigan Breastfeeding Network

MIBFN POSITION PAPER:

MIBFN POSITION PAPER: IN SUPPORT OF BREASTFEEDING IN THE MATERNITY CARE SETTING



Overview

Evidence-based maternity care practices that support breastfeeding have been shown to increase breastfeeding initiation, duration, and exclusivity rates, which improve infant and child health, provide lasting health benefits for mothers, and protect against infant mortality. Early initiation of breastfeeding within the first hour, exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, and continued breastfeeding for at least two years is optimal for mothers and children.



Policy Recommendations

Human milk offers developmental, digestive, and immunological benefits that cannot be duplicated and breastfeeding is the foundation of health for mothers and babies. Due to its inextricable relationship with the birth experience, there are several key supportive maternity care practices that improve breastfeeding outcomes.

In support of breastfeeding in the maternity care setting, the Michigan Breastfeeding Network (MIBFN) advocates for the following:

- **All medical providers should receive and provide evidence-based breastfeeding education.**
- **WIC referrals should be universal.**
- **All birthing hospitals in Michigan should implement the evidence based practices that are outlined in mPINC and central to Baby-Friendly designation.**
- **Organizations should train, recruit, and hire diverse, multidisciplinary care teams that reflect the populations they serve.**



Vision for the Future

MIBFN envisions a Michigan in which all families receive evidence-based, culturally sensitive maternity care that is centered on reducing inequities in breastfeeding outcomes, with focus on increasing initiation rates and reducing adverse health outcomes for mothers and babies. Standardizing breastfeeding-supportive policies and practices in maternity care systems catalyzes breastfeeding support throughout communities. Especially for the most vulnerable families, breastfeeding is a key intervention in the lives of infants and young children. Diverse, multidisciplinary lactation support improves the health of all Michigan families, strengthens our communities, and builds future prosperity throughout our state.