This document outlines the ways MIBFN builds coalitions to advance breastfeeding outcomes.

To join the movement and learn more, visit www.mibreastfeeding.org/coalition-building
As we aim to build an inclusive movement to #ChangeTheSystem and to improve breastfeeding outcomes, we want our partners to know what they are getting behind when they join in our mission to lead the statewide collaborative actions for advocacy, education, and coalition building to create a supportive breastfeeding culture. The aim of this document is to provide everyone who considers herself or himself a part of our network with clarity about why and how we are committed to #ChangeTheSystem to make MIBFN’s vision into a reality, that all Michigan families will live and work in a breastfeeding-friendly environment.

WHY BREASTFEEDING SYSTEMS CHANGE

Positive breastfeeding outcomes benefit everyone - mothers, babies, society, and the environment. Recent estimates show that over 800,000 child lives worldwide and 20,000 maternal lives could be saved each year if every child were exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life.¹

Michigan mothers are already doing their part. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends six months of exclusive breastfeeding and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends continued breastfeeding to two years of age and beyond.²³ 85% of moms in Michigan initiate breastfeeding.⁴ However, mothers must navigate systems that were not built to support their long-term breastfeeding success. By six months of age the breastfeeding rate drops to 55.6% with exclusive breastfeeding through six months dropping even lower to 23.9%.⁵

Systemic roadblocks, including unsupportive and oftentimes hostile environments, drastically reduce breastfeeding exclusivity and duration rates. Currently, the workplace, child care centers, courts, maternity care facilities, and other systems are not designed for breastfeeding success and stand in the way of positive health outcomes.

Michigan families deserve better, and mothers should no longer shoulder the burden of breastfeeding without systemic infrastructure in place - it is time to change the system. To enact permanent change and advance breastfeeding outcomes, inclusive planning and work across multidisciplinary systems is necessary. All spaces and places, from the delivery room to the courtroom, must provide equitable access for positive breastfeeding outcomes.

The mission of Michigan Breastfeeding Network (MIBFN) is education, advocacy, and coalition building. We envision a landscape in which all families can live and work in a breastfeeding-friendly environment. We are working to cultivate woman-centered, equitably designed systems that make breastfeeding success feasible for every Michigan family.

Coalition building is essential for creating a breastfeeding-supportive culture across Michigan.
# MICHIGAN BREASTFEEDING RATES BY THE NUMBERS

## 2015 MICHIGAN PRAMS DATA TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breastfeeding Initiation Rate</td>
<td>85 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>87.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>75.1 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 2018 CDC REPORT CARD MICHIGAN DATA (BABIES BORN IN 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infants ever breastfed</td>
<td>77.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infants breastfed at six months</td>
<td>55.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infants breastfed at 12 months</td>
<td>34.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusive breastfeeding through three months</td>
<td>44.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusive breastfeeding through six months</td>
<td>23.9 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WE KNOW THERE IS WORK TO DO
As of 2018, MIBFN supports 22 coalitions. Every community needs culturally-aware support to dismantle the roadblocks that derail breastfeeding success.

WE WORK BETTER WHEN WE WORK TOGETHER
There is so much work to be done in the field of breastfeeding, and collaboration is the most productive way to reach families across Michigan. A breastfeeding coalition is a group of individuals and/or organizations who agree to work together to create breastfeeding supportive systems.

COALITIONS REFLECT LOCAL COMMUNITIES
Breastfeeding coalitions convene and provide support in places where families are most likely to seek out and receive help. Ideal coalitions represent broad-based, diverse, cross-sector groups working to ensure that the systems mothers encounter every single day are designed in an equitable way to promote, protect, and support breastfeeding success.

LOCAL COALITIONS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF GRASSROOTS EFFORTS
Local communities understand their barriers and opportunities best and innovative solutions come from leaders working within a community rather than a “one size fits all” superimposed approach. Community-based support for breastfeeding expedites a cultural shift in normalization efforts. Local coalition building is an important step in harnessing the power of community to make positive change and advance health outcomes. Change at this level depends on the voices of all those who are impacted, including advocates, families, parents, lactation professionals, and community members.

IF EVERY CHILD WERE EXCLUSIVELY BREASTFED FOR THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF LIFE

800,000 Child lives could be saved each year
20,000 Maternal lives could be saved each year
LOOKING AHEAD: A NEW BREASTFEEDING LANDSCAPE

MIBFN envisions a Michigan in which coalitions across the state bring together multi-sector partners, cultivate systemic change, and support communities to make breastfeeding feasible for Michigan families.

OUR AIMS

MIBFN aims to cultivate and support breastfeeding coalitions in every Michigan community – including tribal, ethnic, geographic, and cultural communities. Local coalitions should be formed and work within the communities they serve to ensure representation from the local community and targeted support for the needs of each particular community.

MIBFN aims to ensure that coalition members reflect the communities they serve. The voices of individuals and groups who are already supporting communities are best situated to identify both problems and solutions that affect families. Breastfeeding support across disciplines and organizations is key to reducing inequities in breastfeeding outcomes. One of the most effective ways to provide culturally-competent support is through coalitions that reflect the cultural identities of the communities in which they serve.

MIBFN aims to support coalition work that cultivates mother-centered systems. The work of breastfeeding coalitions is to identify the barriers that families face and work to change the system in the communities they serve. Coalitions are partners in systems change and are best able to represent and support breastfeeding families within their communities. Coalitions cultivate connections across all sectors of their community and can work to change the systems that most impact breastfeeding rates and related health outcomes.
MIBFN COALITION BUILDING REFERENCE LIST


MIBFN offers the following support for new and existing coalitions throughout the state. More information is available at [www.mibreastfeeding.org/coalition-building](http://www.mibreastfeeding.org/coalition-building) and by emailing [info@mibreastfeeding.org](mailto:info@mibreastfeeding.org).

**MIBFN 310 CONNECT PROJECTS**

MIBFN 310 Connect projects are structured around state and local collaboration on the issues most central to breastfeeding success in each community. Integral to all 310 Connect projects are: cultivating local coalition infrastructure and sustainability, establishing consistency of messaging across partners, integrating process and outcome evaluations, and building and diversifying community networks of systemic breastfeeding support. In partnership with MIBFN, 310 Connect, local coalitions determine the issues they endeavor to address, and implement tangible, locally driven solutions. Currently, MIBFN 310 Connect Flint is working to increase the quantity and impact of diverse, multidisciplinary lactation supporters through the hospitals, outpatient clinics, local public health agencies, and grassroots support organizations. MIBFN 310 Connect Calhoun County is working to increase breastfeeding initiation, exclusivity, and duration rates as well as changes in related health outcomes such as infant mortality and SIDS rates. To learn more, visit [www.mibreastfeeding.org/310connect-flint](http://www.mibreastfeeding.org/310connect-flint) and [www.mibreastfeeding.org/310connect-calhoun](http://www.mibreastfeeding.org/310connect-calhoun).

**FREE COALITION SUSTAINABILITY TEMPLATES**

We have a variety of tools to get you started based on lessons learned from other coalitions around the state. We work better when we work together! As a newly formed coalition, you have access to templates that make your job easier. These materials will help you to catalyze change in your community, pointing you toward projects, initiatives, and education and outreach opportunities that matter locally. Check out the MIBFN Local Coalition Toolkit and join the movement on [https://www.mibreastfeeding.org/coalition-building/](https://www.mibreastfeeding.org/coalition-building/).

**ONLINE SUPPORT THROUGH THE MIBFN SOCIAL SHARING CENTER**

In order to foster sustainability and build a culture of local leadership, MIBFN provides technical assistance to local coalitions via email, phone, and our social sharing center on Facebook. To learn more, message us at [www.facebook.com/mibfnetwork](http://www.facebook.com/mibfnetwork) or email [info@mibreastfeeding.org](mailto:info@mibreastfeeding.org).

**FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES**

Joint fundraising impacts breastfeeding families both locally and on the state level. Local funds are invested into the community in order to support the goals of the local coalition. Coalitions can use this money for web-hosting, meeting refreshments, outreach swag, educational events, and more. Statewide funds support advocacy goals for comprehensive breastfeeding support across all sectors of society. To learn more email [info@mibreastfeeding.org](mailto:info@mibreastfeeding.org).