

Report on 2006 Survey of Community Activities

The survey tool used had been shared by another state's breastfeeding coalition and had been suggested for use as a Needs Assessment tool. The tool proved to have strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths: The tool did result in the identification of (some) available or unavailable breastfeeding-related services in Ohio.

Weaknesses: 1. The tool did not reliably identify areas of need pertaining to breastfeeding-related services, e.g. there were no questions to help determine whether available services were readily accessible. 2. This tool did not examine services effectiveness. 3. Some questions lacked clarity, e.g. questions about postpartum support and length of Maternity LOA did not distinguish for clients, agency staff or both. 4. Many healthcare organizations and health-department-related agencies reported collecting data related to: breastfeeding initiation and duration; reason for follow-up call/visit; satisfaction surveys, etc. However, tool questions did not take advantage of this data.

Surveys were divided into *Health Agencies/Organizations* and *Health Department Agencies*, which included WIC, for analysis.

Health Agencies/Organizations

Among *Health Agencies/Organizations* (n = 20) approximately:

50% provide breastfeeding-related *education* to various staff

- RN education most frequently cited

90% promote breastfeeding in the *prenatal* setting

50% provide *1:1 breastfeeding assistance*

90% Provide later *postpartum support* in the form of:

- Breast pump rental/sales
- An area for mothers to pump
- Expressed-human-milk storage
- Break time to pump
- 33% provide a postpartum *warmline* and/or *support groups*; only one (1) offer a "*buddy*" system

Of the length of *maternity leave of absence* (LOA) from employed position:

- 45% report a LOA of 6 or 8 weeks
- 50% report a LOA up to 12 weeks
- 5% report the length varies

80% offer a variety of breastfeeding-related *educational or promotional materials*, such as books, brochures, videotapes/DVDs, posters, etc.

30% report agency/organization participation in community *public service information activities* in the past year with a couple of exceptions in both directions on a continuum:

- 65% report *newspaper* articles or publishing a resource/referral *brochure* and participation in special events
- 30% report participation in the form of a *TV announcement* or *web/internet* promotion

Significant deficits – Breastfeeding-related education for educators from daycare providers to college instructors and for students from preschool through high school is rarely provided. Provision of speakers to promote breastfeeding for church groups, business associations, civic organizations, etc. is low.

>5% provide breastfeeding-related *education for students* in their areas

>5% provide breastfeeding-related *training for educators* in any age group

>20% provide *speakers* to promote breastfeeding for community groups.

Health Department Agencies

Among *Health Department Agencies* (n = 18) approximately:

50% provide breastfeeding-related *education* to various staff

- WIC worker education most frequently cited

90% promote breastfeeding in the *prenatal* setting

65% provide *1:1 breastfeeding assistance*

- 33% report an IBCLC; 33% report “other...breastfeeding specialist; 33% report neither

80% provide later *postpartum support* in the form of:

- Breast pump rental/sales
- An area for mothers to pump
- Expressed-human-milk storage
- Break time to pump
- 65% provide a *warmline*; 50% offer *support groups*; only one (1) offer a “*buddy*” system

Of the length of *maternity leave of absence* (LOA) from employed position:

- 1 report a LOA of 6 or 8 weeks
- 70% report a LOA up to 12 weeks
- 30% are not sure of LOA length

80% offer a variety of breastfeeding-related *educational or promotional materials*, such as books, brochures, videotapes/DVDs, posters, etc.

40% report their agency/organization participated in community *public service information activities* in the past year with a couple of exceptions in both directions on a continuum:

- 75% report *newspaper* articles
- 65% report radio promotion, publication of a resource/referral *brochure* and/or participation in *special events*
- 50% report *web/internet* promotion

50% will provide speakers for community organizations, but several noted they receive few requests

Significant deficit – Breastfeeding-related education for educators from daycare providers to college instructors and for students from preschool through high school is rarely provided.

>5% provide breastfeeding-related *education for students* in their areas

>5% provide breastfeeding-related *training for educators* in any age group, except for high school students (30%).

Due to survey tool weaknesses, the current Ohio Breastfeeding Alliance Leadership Committee (2007-2008) suggests the development of a stronger needs assessment tool, which may be completed online, e.g. via Survey Monkey or a similar service.