



Michigan's Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (MiNPAO) program supports the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life and support for breastfeeding for the first year as long as mutually desired by mother and child. Exclusive breastfeeding is one of the best and healthiest choices a parent can make for their child. Breastfeeding not only improves the health of the mother and her infant, it also protects against disease and obesity, reduces medical and sick leave costs, increases workforce productivity, promotes mother-infant bonding, and is better for the environment. Even with all of these benefits in place many Michigan mothers are unable or choose not to breastfeed. In an effort to provide normal and optimal nutrition to all infants, it is important to reduce the social, structural and environmental barriers that new mothers face.

Breastfeeding support in Michigan is greatly needed:

- 70.1% of Michigan women ever breastfed, falling below the U.S. national average of 75.0%. (CDC Breastfeeding Report Card, 2010)
- 10.1% of women were exclusively breastfeeding at six months, compared to the U.S. national average of 13.3%. (CDC Breastfeeding Report Card, 2010)
- Breastfeeding is directly correlated with maternal age. Less than half (45.5% ) of Michigan women under age 18 reported breastfeeding, while more than 79% of women over the age of 25 years reported breastfeeding (PRAMS, 2008).
- In 2008, Non-Hispanic black women were the least likely (59.3%) to report ever breastfeeding, while Hispanic women were the most likely to report ever breastfeeding (89.8%) (PRAMS, 2008).

In an effort to build a supportive breastfeeding culture throughout Michigan, the MiNPAO staff is focusing on improving the strength and number of breastfeeding coalitions across the state. The program is working closely with Michigan Breastfeeding Network representatives to ensure a cohesive breastfeeding front. MiNPAO staff are also working with the Network to create a state-wide breastfeeding coalition summit to foster relationships between local coalitions and give an opportunity for coalitions to connect and share common initiatives, best practices and barriers.

Links:

- [Surgeon General Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding](#)
- [Michigan Breastfeeding Network](#)
- [The Business Case for Breastfeeding](#)