

## Breastfeeding Initiatives

*Objective 2.1— By 2030, increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding at 6 months by 2.5% annually through cross-sector breastfeeding policies, practices, and community supports/programs.*

**Kansas Breastfeeding Infrastructure:** While Kansas breastfeeding initiation (89.4%, 2023 Annual Summary of Vital Statistics) exceeds the national average, 6-month exclusivity rates (27.2%, National Immunization Survey, children born 2021) fall far below the national average and the Health People 2030 goals of 42.4% exclusive breastfeeding through 6 months. This requires continued focus on increasing families' access to strong community breastfeeding education, supports, and practices. In order to promote and support cross-sector breastfeeding policies, practices, and environments to increase breastfeeding duration and exclusivity, Title V will continue our strong partnership with the [Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition](#) (KBC) to continue existing effective strategies (e.g., Business Case for Breastfeeding, Communities Supporting Breastfeeding, Breastfeeding Welcome Here) and to broaden and strengthen the establishment of local breastfeeding coalitions.

Breastfeeding initiatives should be available to all populations, however Title V is specifically interested in removing barriers and addressing racial disparities noted in state-level breastfeeding data, such as among our non-Hispanic Black population. While much work has been started with this focus, particularly through contracted KBC supported projects, continuation and advancement of these efforts will be a focus for FY26. Examples of such efforts include:

- Increasing access to lactation support by African American providers such as breastfeeding peer counselors, doulas, International Board-Certified Lactation Consultants, and Certified Lactation Counselors that represent high-risk populations.
- Supporting the implementation and growth of community-centered, culturally relevant mother-to-mother, father, and grandparent breastfeeding support clubs for African Americans.
- Supporting local breastfeeding coalitions that connect health care providers and the community to local information and resources.

Support the *Becoming the Lactation Support Provider You Want to Be* program to increase the number of breastfeeding peer counselors, certified breastfeeding counselors, and International Board-Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC) available to provide culturally congruent breastfeeding support and clinical care.

- Promote opportunities for doulas, home visitors, community health workers, and others to obtain mid-level or higher lactation support provider (LSP) certification as defined by the United States Breastfeeding Committee's Lactation Support Provider Descriptor Table, through the *Becoming the Lactation Support Provider You Want to Be* program.
- Provide training and support for mother-to-mother breastfeeding support groups in Kansas City, Topeka, and Wichita in communities whose breastfeeding rates are lower than the state average to support the implementation of community-centered, culturally relevant mother-to-mother breastfeeding support through the *Becoming the Lactation Support Provider You Want to Be* program.

**Supporting Local Breastfeeding Coalitions:** Local breastfeeding coalitions bring individuals and organizations together. 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. They enable women, families, and community members to share ideas, break institutional and cultural barriers, and

solve problems related to breastfeeding, in addition to empowering and educating the public. By working together, coalitions can conserve resources by reducing duplication and sharing expenses, foster cooperation between diverse sectors, and increase the credibility and often the impact of their efforts. The work of breastfeeding coalitions is to identify the barriers that families face and work to change the system in the communities they serve.

- Deliver specialized technical assistance to local breastfeeding coalitions led by and for communities whose breastfeeding rates are lower than the state average in Topeka, Kansas City, Wichita, Northeast Kansas, and Southwest Kansas.
- Strengthen the capacity of local breastfeeding coalitions to enhance seamless lactation care delivery through cross-sector collaboration and integrated breastfeeding support services.

*KBC-MCH-WIC-Becoming a Mom (BaM) Program Collaboration:* Assuring consistent, repeat, messaging around the benefits of breastfeeding (initiation and exclusivity) to both mothers and infants (as well as where/how to access breastfeeding support) across all MCH programs and services is a goal of Kansas Title V. To achieve this goal, collaboration must occur among the various programs. Training opportunities, curriculum content and other resources must be shared and promoted across programs. Efforts in this area have been very successful over the past several years, and Title V is committed to continuing this work in FY26. Breastfeeding curriculum, presentations, lesson and activity plans, as well as other resources originally developed for the BaM group prenatal education program, will continue to be adapted and shared for implementation in other settings and with disparity populations. Special focus will continue to be given to developing a version of these resources for low-literacy and English language learners as part of the BaM Curriculum Adaptation project. Integration efforts between BaM, WIC and MCH programs such as home visiting, Teen Pregnancy Targeted Case Management and Pregnancy Maintenance Initiative will continue to be a focus of the Perinatal/Infant (P/I) Consultant workplan in FY26. Accessibility of breastfeeding education and support will be a primary component of these efforts.

Title V and KBC partnership will continue to focus on improving access to breastfeeding education for providers and MCH workforce development. Efforts will include continued support of the Childcare Provider Training, local MCH staff focused webinars and training opportunities, as well as many other more broadly focused training opportunities. Title V encourages and supports staff participation in a variety of breastfeeding education courses. It is important to meet MCH staff where they are and provide information on all the options for breastfeeding education including 1, 3, or 5-day courses. Tools such as the Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition's "[Landscape of Breastfeeding Support](#)" which provides staff with the various certification programs and the "[Lactation Support Provider Training Directory](#)" from the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee are included in a comprehensive [Breastfeeding Integration Toolkit](#) which will continue to be enhanced and promoted for use by providers across programs and services.