
FROM DAY ONE

ACTIONS TO IMPROVE BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT WITH RESEARCH AND PUBLIC HEALTH ASSESSMENT

THE NEED FOR SUPPORT WITH RESEARCH AND PUBLIC HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Data collection and analysis are essential for developing and evaluating cost-effective and targeted best practice activities for breastfeeding protection, promotion, and support; shaping policy; and identifying and validating priorities for allocation of funds, staffing, time, and other resources.

Additional research is needed on many aspects of breastfeeding in the United States. And while national monitoring on breastfeeding has improved in the last decade, it is limited at state and local levels.

YOU CAN HELP

Thank you for considering ways you can protect, promote, or support breastfeeding in Texas. We've created this list of ideas for you to consider as you identify your personal objectives and goals for making a difference.

Increase Funding of High-Quality Research on Breastfeeding

New research is needed in order to understand ways to increase breastfeeding rates among populations with current low rates as well as understand the economic impact of breastfeeding in the United States and ways to better manage lactation and breastfeeding.

The actions suggested below are ideal for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/National Institutes of Health and foundations.

Action Recommended by the U.S. Surgeon General:

- Designate additional research funding for studies on how to increase breastfeeding rates and manage lactation as well as understand the economics of breastfeeding.

Strengthen and Develop Capacity for Conducting Research on Breastfeeding

Researchers who study breastfeeding need more opportunities to collaborate with other investigators such as behavioral scientists, medical researchers, economists, and lawyers. Dissemination of findings and communication of information is also critical for translating data to action.

The actions suggested below are ideal for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/National Institutes of Health, researchers, universities and medical schools, and health and social service agencies/organizations.

Actions Recommended by the U.S. Surgeon General:

- Develop a national consortium on breastfeeding research.

- Enhance the training of scientists in basic and applied research on lactation, breastfeeding, and women's and children's health.

Additional Actions to Consider:

- Include breastfeeding indicators in programmatic and surveillance data collection.
- Use existing breastfeeding data and research to inform needs assessment, program development, implementation, and evaluation processes.
- Collect breastfeeding outcome data in program evaluation and for quality improvement initiatives when relevant.
- Develop cost analyses to build the body of knowledge related to the cost effectiveness of breastfeeding interventions.
- Analyze and disseminate breastfeeding data through presentations, reports, and publications.
- Translate data to actionable recommendations, and communicate information to internal and external stakeholders.
- Work collaboratively with other health and social service agencies/organizations, including the Texas Department of State Health Services, to align data collection systems and to share programmatic, survey, and population-based data that can be used to increase understanding and inform and evaluate programming related to breastfeeding protection, promotion, and support.
- Use standard definitions for breastfeeding indicators in research, surveillance, and monitoring activities.

Improve National Monitoring of Breastfeeding Rates, Policies, and Environmental Factors

Although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) tracks breastfeeding rates annually through the National Immunization Survey and other systems, representative local data are generally unavailable and are not timely. Few systems exist to track changes in breastfeeding behavior and attitudes.

The actions suggested below are ideal for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state governments.

Actions Recommended by the U.S. Surgeon General:

- Enhance the CDC Breastfeeding Report Card by including a broader array of process indicators and showing trends over time.
- Collect data in all states on the initiation of breastfeeding and in-hospital supplementation with formula through the U.S. Standard Certificate of Live Birth.
- Develop systems for collecting information on policy and environmental supports for breastfeeding.

Do you have an action you'd like to recommend that is not listed here? Email your action ideas to us at: WICGeneral@dshs.state.tx.us.

For more ideas about how you can help support breastfeeding, visit *From Day One: A Community for Breastfeeding Support* at: SupportFromDayOne.org.