

## Objectives

- Discuss cultural breastfeeding practices among Black Mamas
- Identify barriers for breastfeeding among Black women
- Discuss breastfeeding racial disparities
- Identify Interventions to promote breastfeeding in Black families
- Identify maternal care practices to improve breastfeeding outcomes

## Benefits of Breastfeeding

### Maternal Benefits

- Protect against post-partum hemorrhage,
- Protect against postpartum depression
- Reduce risk of ovarian and breast cancer
- Reduce risk of heart disease
- Reduce risk of Type 2 diabetes
- Financial savings

### Infant/Child Benefits

- Customized for infant/child
- Health promotion/disease prevention
- Bonding
- Supports healthy brain development
- Possible higher performance in intelligence tests

Chowdhury, R. et al., Paediatr. 2015

Global Breastfeeding Advocacy Initiative, ADVOCACY BRIEF: Breastfeeding and.  
<https://www.unicef.org/nutrition/files/2018>.

UNICEF.

## Breastfeeding Standards

Breastfeeding is crucial for infants

- World Health Organization (WHO)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- Healthy People Goals (2020)
- Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) (1991)
- United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC)
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Obesity Prevention Initiative
- U.S. Surgeon General Call to Action
- Affordable Care Act
- Breastfeed within one hour of birth
- Exclusive breastfeeding for six months

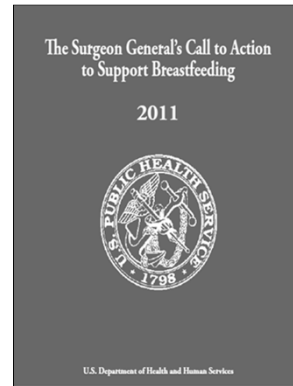
## United States Lags behind other industrial countries

- Blueprint for Action on Breastfeeding
- Surgeon General Call to Action 2011
- Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)
- CDC Report Card (2018)
- Healthy People 2020



## Call to Action

- Outlines steps that can be taken to remove some of the obstacles faced by women who want to breastfeed their babies
- Decrease inequities
- Endorsement of breastfeeding as optimal source of nutrition for infants



Surgeon General Regina M. Benjamin January 2011 from a "Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding."

## Black Mamas Do Breastfeed

- Human milk for human species
- Breastfeeding (BF) exists in all communities
- Technology and cultural evolution changes
- Black Mamas want the best for our babies



## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Breastfeeding Report 2007/2018

### US Breastfeeding Outcome

### HP 2020 BF Goals

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ◦ BF initiation increased from 73.8% to 83.2% | ◦ BF ever goal - 81.9%                         |
| ◦ 6 months increased from 41.5 % to 47.2%     | ◦ BF at 6 months - 60.6%                       |
| ◦ 12 months increased from 20.9% to 25.5%     | ◦ BF at 1 year - 34.1 %                        |
| ◦ Exclusive through 3 months 30.5% to 46.9    | ◦ Exclusive through 3 months - 46.2% (AA 36.0) |
| ◦ Exclusive through 6 months 11.3 to 24.9 %   | ◦ Exclusive through 6 months - 25.5% (AA 17.2) |

Source: CDC and Prevention National Immunization Survey. Department of Health and Human Services, Breastfeeding Report Card

## Black Mammamas' Breastfeeding Rates 2015

- 69.4 initiate BF (HP 81.9)
- 44.7 BF at 3 months (HP 60.6)
- 24.0 BF at 12 months (HP 34.1)
- 36.0 EBF 3 months (HP 46.2)
- 17.2 EBF 6 months (HP 25.5)

BF –Any breastfeeding  
EBF-Exclusive Breastfeeding



Breastfeeding Report card 2018

## Breastfeeding Racial Disparities

- In 2008, the rate of African American infants ever breastfed was 58.9%, compared to 75.2% for Caucasians and 80% for Hispanics.
- The rate of infants being breastfed at six months and 12 months was also lower among African American women, 30.1% and 12.5%, respectively, as compared with six month and 12 month duration rates of 47% and 24% for Caucasians, and 45% and 26% for Hispanics.<sup>5</sup>
- Fewer non-Hispanic black infants (69.4%) are ever breastfed compared with non-Hispanic white infants (85.9%) and Hispanic infants (84.6%)

CDC Breastfeeding Promotion and Support, retrieved August 31, 2014 at [www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/promotion/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/promotion/index.htm)

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## Cultural Change

- Healthy People 2020: Goal of 15.6% or less of BF newborn receive supplementation
- AAP endorses exclusive BF for first 6 months
- In 2018 more than 25% of births in more than 500 BF designated facilities
- Currently 570 US BF designated facilities
- 26.02 % of annual live births in US

Do BFH practices decrease breastfeeding racial disparities ???

[cdc.gov/US](http://cdc.gov/US) breastfeeding report card

Reaching back to the  
past to inform our future



## Breastfeeding Perceptions of Some Black Mothers

- Breastfeeding is hard
- Breastfeeding is for poor people
- Breastfeeding is "Nasty"
- Breastmilk alone is not enough
- Baby ties you down
- Breasts are sexual



## Black Mama Cultural Challenges

- Stress; Racial Discrimination
- Return to work early
- Low paying non supportive employers
- Infants in day care
- Mother/Grandmothers used formula
- Peers



## Cultural Barriers

- Black slaves nursed white babies
- Forced wet nursing
- Impact of wet nursing for financial support
- Poor connection to breast feeding



Johnson, L., Kirk, R., Rosenblum, K.L., & Muzik, M. (2015).  
www.chocolatemilk.doc  
Devane-Johnson, Stephanie (2016)

<http://bluemilk.wordpress.com/2012/07/5808>  
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## BF Among Infants Born in 2015/ Percentage Births Baby Friendly Hospitals

State	Ever BF	BF at 6 months	BF at 12 months	Exclusive BF -3 months	Exclusive BF -6 months	BF infants Supple <2days	Live Births At BFH 2018
US	83.2	57.6	35.9	46.9	24.9	17.2	26.1
Idaho	90.1	62.1	39.0	52.4	28.4	9.5	9.8
Miss.	63.2	35.4	18.3	28.2	13.0	25.1	12.5
Illinois	80.3	53.0	33.8	39.6	19.5	20.7	22.3
HP 2020 Goal	81.9	60.6	34.1	46.2	25.5	14.2	8.1

cdc.gov/Breastfeeding Report Card, US 2018

## Breastfeeding Varies by Location

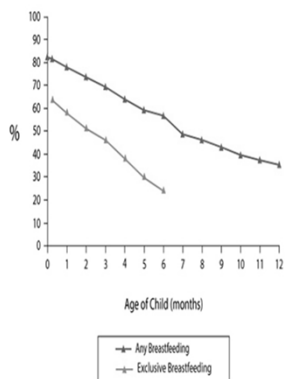
State	Ever BF Rate	BF at 6 months	BF at 12 months	Exclusive BF at 3 months	Exclusive BF at 6 months
Idaho	90.8%	58.9	35.4	52.4	23.2
Mississippi	47.2	26.2	13.0	20.0	7.6
Illinois	76.8	49.8	25.3	35.7	13.6

◦ (CDC Prevention National Immunization Survey, Provisional Data 2008)

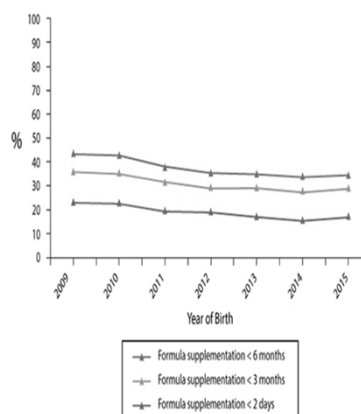
Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/reportcard2.htm>

## Exclusive Breastfeeding

Rates of Any and Exclusive Breastfeeding by Age Among Children Born in 2015, National Immunization Survey, United States<sup>1,2</sup>



Percentage of Breastfed Children Who Were Supplemented with Infant Formula, by Birth Year, National Immunization Survey, United States<sup>1,2</sup>



## US Hospital Experience

- Birthing hospital practices changing
- Birth outcomes remain poor
- Higher infant and maternal mortality
- NICU admissions due to premature and high risk births
- Milk bank available



## Baby Friendly USA

- Currently, 570 U.S. Baby-Friendly designated facilities
- Illinois now has 25 Baby Friendly Hospitals
- Illinois 22.3 % births at BFH
- US Goal 8.1 %
- US National birth at BF H 26.1 %
- BF Rates in Illinois remain below the US goal

## Taking Action in Illinois

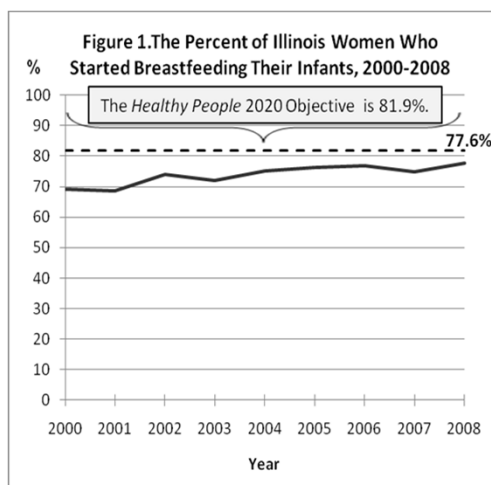
- Illinois Blueprint
- Illinois AAP statement
- Illinois Infant Feeding Act
- Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW)
  - Cook County Obesity Prevention Program
  - Chicago Hospital Based Consortium
- Community Breastfeeding Support Collaborative
- Exclusive BF data collection ( Birth Certificate)
- IBCLC Exam Prep Course Scholarships

## Illinois and Healthy People 2020

**The 2010, 2012 , 2018 CDC Breastfeeding Report Card:  
Data from the National Immunization Survey**

	Illinois 2007 (%)	Illinois 2009 (%)	Illinois 2015 (%)	HP2020 Goals (%)
Breastfeeding Initiation (Ever Breastfed)	70.2	76.8	80.3	≥ 81.9
Breastfeeding to 6 Months	36.0	49.8	53.0	≥ 60.5
Breastfeeding to 12 Months	16.4	25.3	33.8	≥ 34.1
Exclusive Breastfeeding to 3 Months	27.9	35.7	39.6	≥ 44.3
Exclusive Breastfeeding to 6 Months	11.2	13.6	19.5	≥ 23.7
Percent of live births occurring at Baby Friendly facilities	1.3	1.43	22.3	≥ 8.1
Percent of breastfed infants receiving formula before 2 days of age	28.1	32.3	20.7	≤ 15.6

## Breastfeeding Initiation

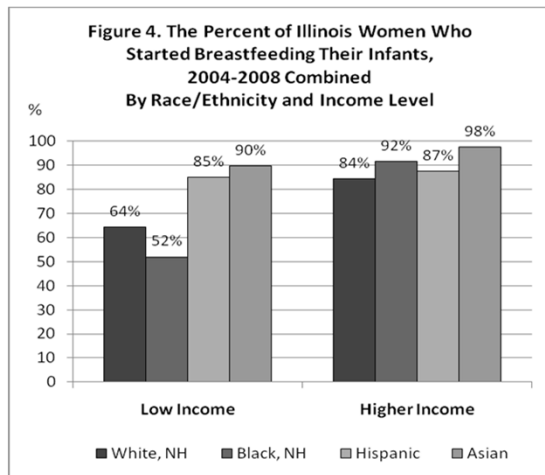


**Overall, the percent of Illinois women who started breastfeeding increased from 70% in 2000 to almost 78% in 2008. Increased to 80.3 % for infants born in 2015**

**22% lives births occur in Baby-Friendly facilities in Illinois (2018)**

HealthConnect One, Illinois Department of Human Services, University of Illinois at Chicago. Illinois Breastfeeding Blueprint: A Plan for Change. [www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org](http://www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org). Published April 25, 2011.

## Breastfeeding Initiation Disparities



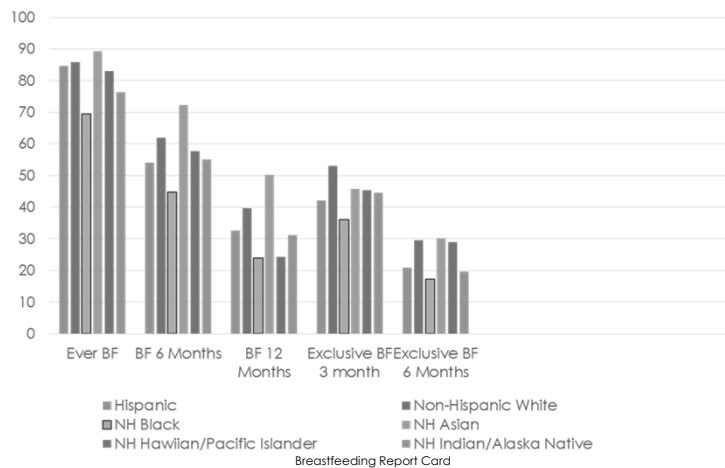
The racial/ethnic disparity among higher income women was quite small.

Among low-income women, there are wide racial/ethnic disparities.

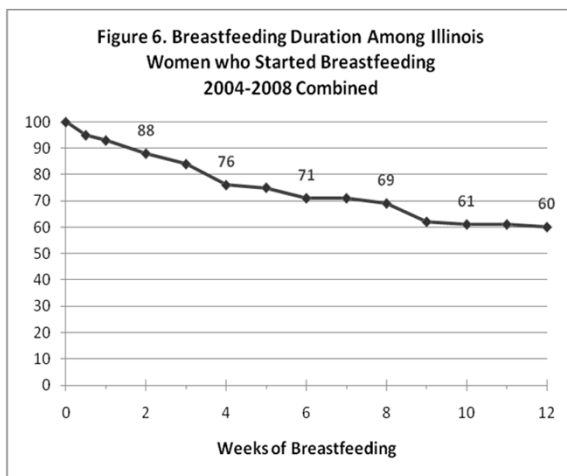
For both black and white low income women the rate of breastfeeding falls far below The *Healthy People 2020* objective.

HealthConnect One, Illinois Department of Human Services, University of Illinois at Chicago. Illinois Breastfeeding Blueprint: A Plan for Change. [www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org](http://www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org). Published April 25, 2011.

## BF Disparities by race/ethnicity Infants Born 2015



## Breastfeeding Duration

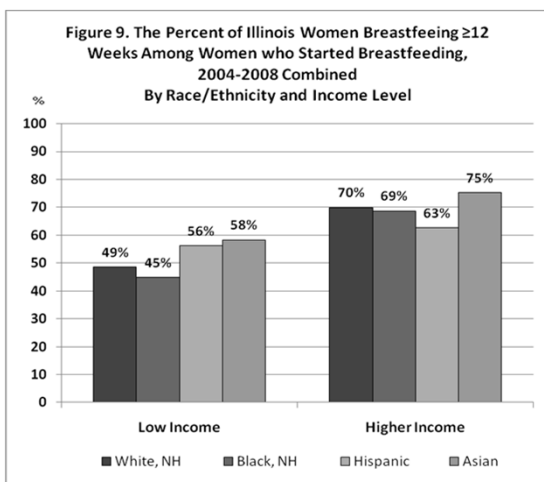


Only about 6 in 10 women who start breastfeeding continue for at least 3 months.

Women were most likely to stop breastfeeding during the first 6 weeks after the birth of their baby.

HealthConnect One, Illinois Department of Human Services, University of Illinois at Chicago. Illinois Breastfeeding Blueprint: A Plan for Change. [www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org](http://www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org). Published April 25, 2011.

## Breastfeeding Duration Disparities



More than half of low income black and white women had stopped breastfeeding before 3 months. About 4 in 10 Hispanic and Asian low income women stopped breastfeeding before 3 months.

Among higher income women, about 3 in 10 black, white, and Hispanic women had stopped breastfeeding before 3 months, and one-quarter of Asian women had stopped.

HealthConnect One, Illinois Department of Human Services, University of Illinois at Chicago. Illinois Breastfeeding Blueprint: A Plan for Change. [www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org](http://www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org). Published April 25, 2011.

## Impact of Hospital Practices in Illinois

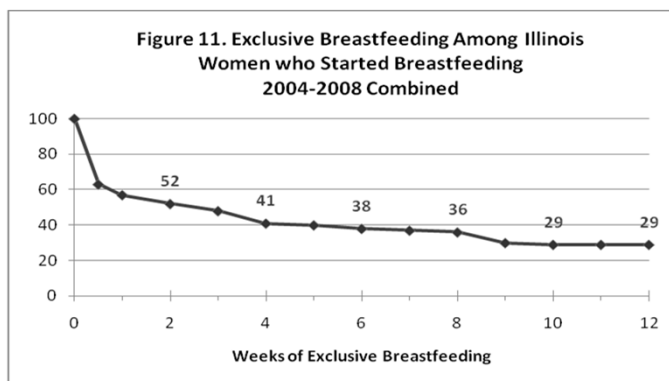
- Illinois women do not all share the same hospital experience in terms of breastfeeding support practices.
  - Black women are less likely to benefit from breastfeeding-supportive practices than white and/or Hispanic women.
  - Black women are also more likely than white and Hispanic women to experience the hospital practices that discourage breastfeeding: pacifier use and formula gift packs.



HC One Picture: Breastfeeding Peer Counselor  
Photo by Flint Chaney

HealthConnect One, Illinois Department of Human Services, University of Illinois at Chicago. Illinois Breastfeeding Blueprint: A Plan for Change. [www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org](http://www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org). Published April 25, 2011.

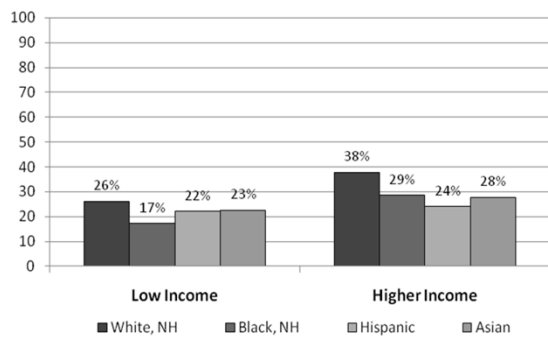
## Breastfeeding Exclusivity



**Even among those women in Illinois who started breastfeeding, fewer than 1 in 3 exclusively breastfeed for at least 3 months.**

## Breastfeeding Exclusivity Disparities

Figure 14. The Percent of Illinois Women Exclusively Breastfeeding  $\geq 12$  Weeks Among Women who Started Breastfeeding 2004-2008 Combined, By Race/Ethnicity & Income Level

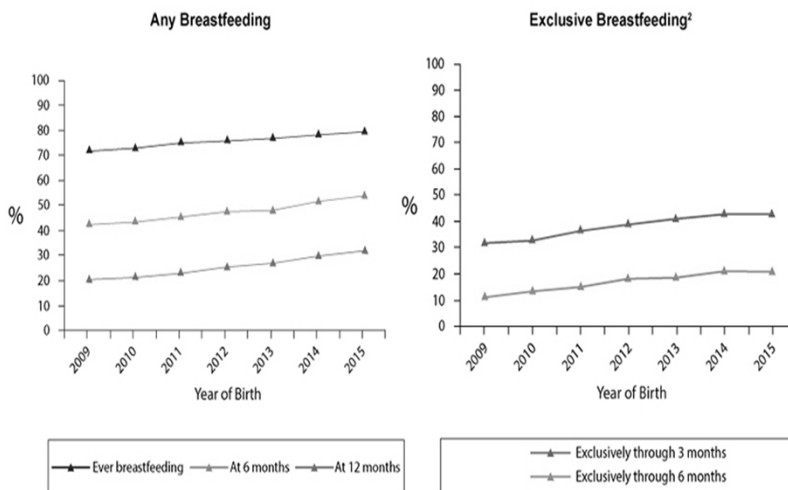


Racial/ethnic and income disparities almost disappear when we look at exclusive breastfeeding, but this “equality” is for the wrong reason.

Fewer than 2 in 5 women were feeding their babies only breast milk at 3 months regardless of their race/ethnicity or income.

HealthConnect One, Illinois Department of Human Services, University of Illinois at Chicago. Illinois Breastfeeding Blueprint: A Plan for Change. [www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org](http://www.ilbreastfeedingblueprint.org). Published April 25, 2011.

### Percentage of U.S. Children Who Were Breastfed, by Birth Year<sup>1</sup>





## Common Themes from Black Mamas

- Reasons for not initiating BF
  - Fear of difficulty BF or fear of pain
  - Family/Peer influence
  - Maternal health/birth trauma
  - Need to return to work
  - Fear of embarrassment
  - Prefer to bottle feed
  - Lack of health care provider support
- Reasons Discontinue BF
  - Not enough milk
  - Breast discomfort or pain
  - Infant breast rejection
  - Returning to work
  - Maternal illness
  - Lack of health care support



## Perception of Black Breastfeeding Experience

### Social Issues

- Research shows mixed results
- Rural vs. Urban
- Southern vs. northern
- Fathers, grandmothers, and peer influence
- Welfare reform
- WIC support
- Social ecological perspective ( Johnson et al 2015)

## Breastfeeding Norms Among Black Women

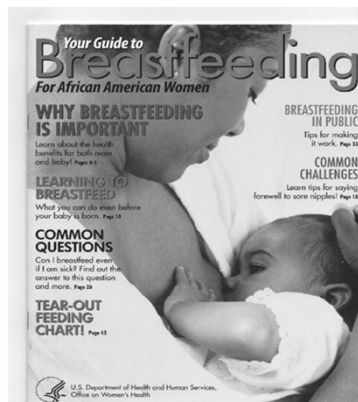
- Family structure
- Stress impacts
- Empowerment
- Social groups



Chicago Mural near 63<sup>rd</sup> and Kedzie

## Improve Breastfeeding for Black women

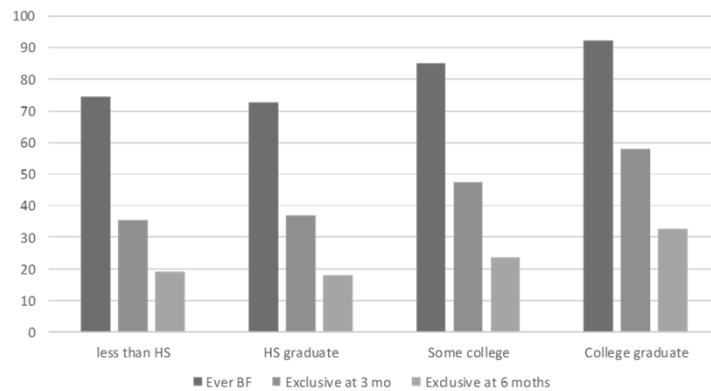
- Breastfeeding material for Black women designed to be culturally sensitive
- Prenatal education Early
- Increase positive breastfeeding images
- Community health team approach
- Workplace pumping room



## Begin Interaction Early



## Breastfeeding by Education



## Remember...

- Blacks are comprised of large heterogeneous population/ cultural experiences (American born, Afro-Caribbean, African, multi-cultural)
- Different practices within each group
- Build rapport
- Explore beliefs and values
- Explore socio-economic reason that can impact her BF goal
- Engage her and (family)
- Listen to her concerns and feelings

## Impact of Family, Peer Support, Cultural Norms



HC One Picture: MSHC Breastfeeding Luncheon, Photo by Brenda Reyes

## Complex Issues

- Complex issues surround mother's decision to breastfeed
- Interaction provide forum for individual
- Maternal attitude
- Protect birth and breastfeeding

## Influence of Health Care Providers Personal Beliefs on Patient Communication and Care

- Assessing our own beliefs and feelings regarding breastfeeding
- Ethical responsibility to provide non-bias breastfeeding information
- Ghosts in the nursery
- What has been your experience in working with different cultural groups?
- How did that experience change you?



## Infant Feeding Decisions

- Exploring mothers feelings
- Explore cultural beliefs
- Ask Open Ended Questions, Affirm, Educate (AAE)
- Remember be sensitive to cultural differences
- Employer breastfeeding support
- Help her reach her BF goal



## Culturally Appropriate Support

- Early unbiased prenatal support
- Breastfeeding education for mothers returning to work
- Postpartum follow up
- Need community organizations
- Cultural appropriate Care
- Peer Support/Increased IBCLC from Community
- Communication with mother is key



"Many barriers exist for mothers who want to breastfeed...They shouldn't have to go it alone. Whether you're a clinician, a family member, a friend, or an employer, you can play an important part in helping mothers who want to breastfeed."



“

Surgeon General Call to Action to support Breastfeeding

## Interventions to Promote Breastfeeding in Black Women

**It's only natural**  
mother's love, mother's milk

**Join us!**

More than half of African American women breastfeed their babies. Why? Because it makes babies healthy and strong and builds a feeling of love.

Join other pregnant women and new moms to learn about breastfeeding. If you attend this session you will:

- Get useful tips and information from a breastfeeding expert
- Discuss breastfeeding challenges and get advice
- Find support in your community

- Black community is composed of diverse ethnic population
  - Different practices within each group
- Build rapport
- Explore beliefs and values
- Explore socio-economic reason that can impact her BF goal
- Engage her (family)
- Explore rather than making assumptions

# Ujima

collective work and responsibility

- Black mothers breastfeeding support
- Community support
- Black Mothers Breast Feeding Association
- Black MaMas Matter
- Health Connect One



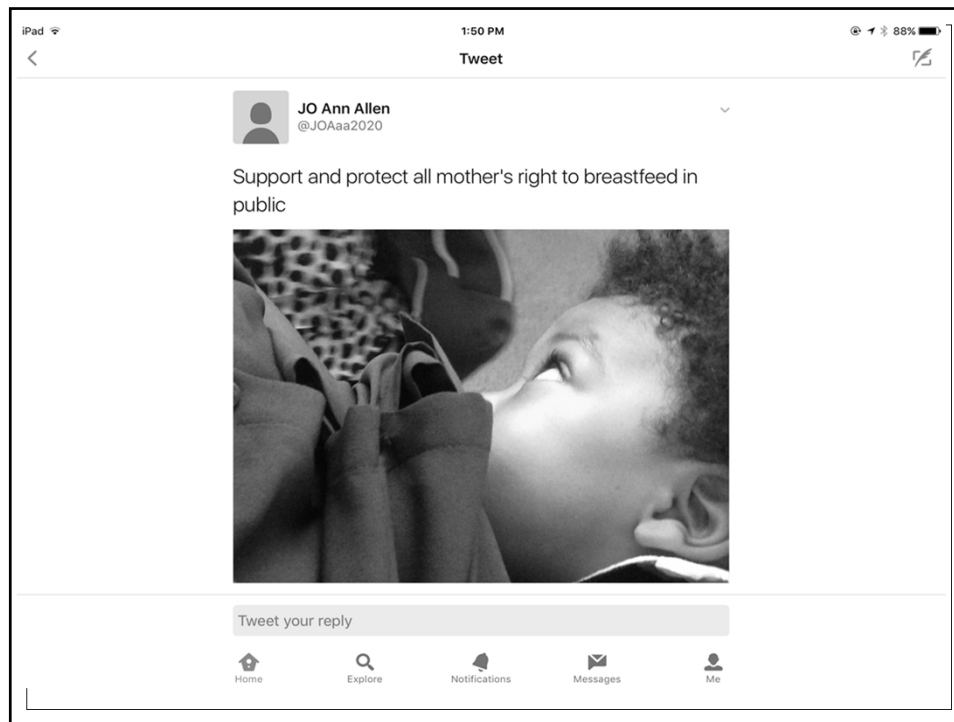
This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

# It Takes a Village to Breastfeed a Baby



Logo of African American Breastfeeding Alliance Milwaukee Wisconsin  
Obtained 11.9.13 [www.africanamericanbreastfeedingalliance.org](http://www.africanamericanbreastfeedingalliance.org)





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200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20201

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