

PROJECT REPORT

RACIAL EQUITY IN BREASTFEEDING & IMMUNIZATIONS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BREASTFEEDING &
EMERGENCIES WORKING GROUP & CORE COHORT



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THANK YOU!

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project was to plan and implement strategies that ensure greater equity and access to COVID-19 vaccine by Black and Indigenous families with young children who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 in a myriad of ways.

Breastfeeding serves as the first vaccine for infants. Human milk contains essential nutrients and antibodies, protecting infants from disease and decreasing their risk of death. According to the World Health Organization, breastfeeding is the most cost-effective public health improvement strategy for saving lives. Human milk also counters the presence of viruses which is negatively correlated with COVID-19 transmission and contraction.

This project worked to create and launch a social marketing campaign and education around breastfeeding and immunizations as well as provide mini-grants to birth and breastfeeding organizations who center Black and Indigenous families in their human milk feeding journeys, including addressing vaccine hesitancy, providing immunizations education, and referring to providers who administer the COVID-19 vaccine, as necessary.

FAST FACTS



TIMELINE:

DEC 1, 2021 TO
SEPT 30, 2022



AMOUNT:

\$165,000



**FUNDING
PARTNER:**

MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES

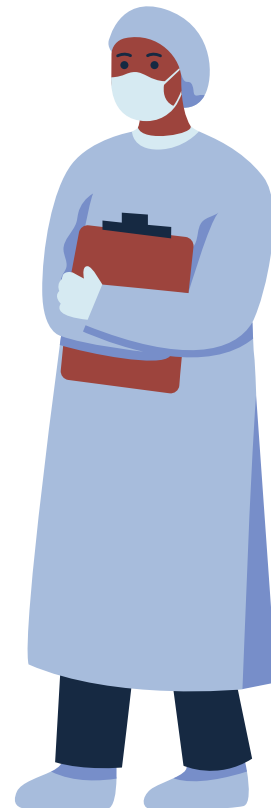
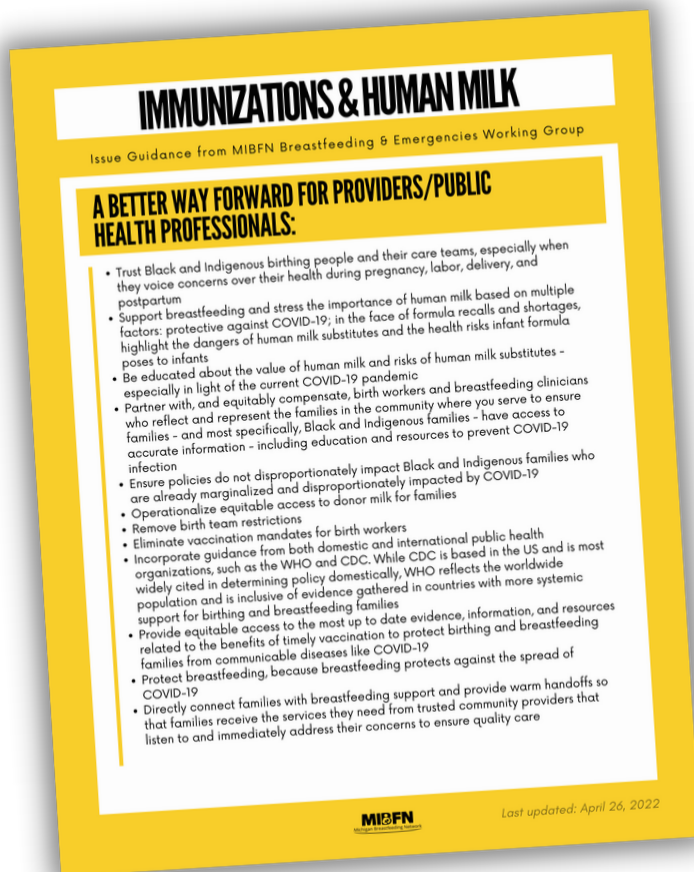
SUCCESSSES

**IMMUNIZATIONS
GUIDANCE**

IMMUNIZATIONS GUIDANCE

In solidarity with the CORE Cohort, Local Breastfeeding Supporters, and Breastfeeding and Emergencies Working Group, we co-created and published a resource to support birth and breastfeeding supporters, medical providers, public health providers, and families in equitably supporting birthing and breastfeeding families to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and corresponding social marketing campaign.

The guidance and campaign served as the common messaging our teams used and will continue to use to serve alongside families, and reduce the spread of COVID-19, in ways that respect and honor the cultural practices and constraints of the Black and Indigenous families who are currently most marginalized by the systems in place. We have also heard the input from community stakeholders not directly involved in this project that these messages resonate in their community and have value as they work to mitigate the harms of the COVID-19 crisis and ongoing pandemic.



IMMUNIZATIONS & HUMAN MILK

Issue Guidance from MIBFN Breastfeeding & Emergencies Working Group

ACROSS HEALTH CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH, WE MUST:

- Understand that current evidence suggests pregnant and recently pregnant persons are more likely to suffer severe illness and complications from COVID-19 infections compared to people who are not pregnant
- Understand that severe infections and death caused by COVID-19 have disproportionately impacted Black and Indigenous communities
- Advocate for culture change and guidance that explicitly protects birthing folks and their support systems within our hospital and public health organizations
- Ensure we, and the families we serve, are clear on the role of doulas, birth workers, and lactation supporters, in supporting families and their role in saving Black and Indigenous lives: Birth and breastfeeding supporters serve families by providing emotional, physical, spiritual, clinical and educational support. Black and Indigenous birth workers center Black and Indigenous cultural humility, trust, experience and safety
- Serve alongside families as advocates, educators, and birth workers with the clear understanding that it is up to the patients/clients to determine their own course of action

IMMUNIZATIONS & HUMAN MILK

Issue Guidance from MIBFN Breastfeeding & Emergencies Working Group

A BETTER WAY FORWARD FOR PROVIDERS/PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS:

- Trust Black and Indigenous birthing people and their care teams, especially when they voice concerns over their health during pregnancy, labor, delivery, and postpartum
- Support breastfeeding and stress the importance of human milk based on multiple factors: protective against COVID-19; in the face of formula recalls and shortages, highlight the dangers of human milk substitutes and the health risks infant formula poses to infants
- Be educated about the value of human milk and risks of human milk substitutes - especially in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic
- Partner with, and equitably compensate, birth workers and breastfeeding clinicians who reflect and represent the families in the community where you serve to ensure families - and most specifically, Black and Indigenous families - have access to accurate information - including education and resources to prevent COVID-19 infection
- Ensure policies do not disproportionately impact Black and Indigenous families who are already marginalized and disproportionately impacted by COVID-19
- Operationalize equitable access to donor milk for families
- Remove birth team restrictions
- Eliminate vaccination mandates for birth workers
- Incorporate guidance from both domestic and international public health organizations, such as the WHO and CDC. While CDC is based in the US and is most widely cited in determining policy domestically, WHO reflects the worldwide population and is inclusive of evidence gathered in countries with more systemic support for birthing and breastfeeding families
- Provide equitable access to the most up to date evidence, information, and resources related to the benefits of timely vaccination to protect birthing and breastfeeding families from communicable diseases like COVID-19
- Protect breastfeeding, because breastfeeding protects against the spread of COVID-19
- Directly connect families with breastfeeding support and provide warm handoffs so that families receive the services they need from trusted community providers that listen to and immediately address their concerns to ensure quality care

IMMUNIZATIONS & HUMAN MILK

Issue Guidance from MIBFN Breastfeeding & Emergencies Working Group

A BETTER WAY FORWARD FOR FAMILIES:

- Understand that COVID-19 guidance has evolved throughout the pandemic as new information has become available. At present, there is consensus among the major public health organizations (WHO and CDC included) that COVID-19 vaccines are a safe and effective tool to protect pregnant and breastfeeding people against COVID-19
- Consult with birth and breastfeeding supporters to find a skilled care team that reflects your values and works within their scope of practice to ensure your family receives safe and quality care. Obtain and review references
- Ask trusted healthcare providers who reflect your family's values and cultural traditions about the vaccines that are available for you and your baby, including vaccines to protect against COVID-19, influenza, and pertussis
- Practical day-to-day tips for birthing and breastfeeding families to consider to lower risk of COVID-19:
 - Hold a virtual or drive-by baby shower, or something held outdoors if a gathering is preferred
 - Create a visitor plan before you bring baby home and communicate to family and friends who may be coming to visit baby
 - For hospital births, only allow baby to be removed from the room for procedures that absolutely must be performed outside of your hospital room
 - Seek out a support person who can assist with decision-making and advocacy and supports your choices for your baby
 - Screen and/or limit visitors and who is allowed to hold baby
 - Require visitors/healthcare providers to wear a mask
 - Provide human milk for your baby
 - Do not let others kiss your baby
 - Babywear to keep your baby close to you
 - Invest in a postpartum doula
 - If you decide to provide your baby with formula, ask for support and education on what you can do with your milk once your milk comes in
 - Share evidence-based information with the people you care about
- Raise your concerns with providers before, during, and after pregnancy to address benefit to risk behavior. Medical guidance can change as situations & information changes

How to choose a Doula

Doula: trained professional that provides emotional and physical support to a birthing person and their partner during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period. Doulas are a confidant and an advocate ensuring that your voice is heard and your wishes are respected.



Information to help guide you to decide who's best for you!

Tips for interviewing Doulas

- What matters most to you about your birthing experience?
.....*
- Make a list of your family's needs and compare it to what they offer.
.....*
- Interview doulas with your partner/support person.
.....*
- Ask questions about what the doula offers prenatally and postpartum.
.....*
- Ask about what other experience the doula has.
.....*

Potential Doula interview questions

- How do you provide culturally sensitive care?
.....*
- Are you connected with other birth and breastfeeding workers?
.....*
- How do you collaborate with community organizations?
.....*
- Are you connected with any local support groups?
.....*
- Do you have a diverse list of resources for referrals?
.....*



Connect with diverse birth and breastfeeding workers who serve across Michigan at: Mibreastfeeding.org/core-cohort/



Potential Doula interview questions continued

What trainings or certifications do you have?

.....

Do you have hospital and home birth experience?

.....

What is your background and experience?

.....

How much do you charge?

.....

Do you offer childbirth/breastfeeding classes?

.....

How can you help me with breastfeeding?

.....

Do you use a backup doula? Who?

.....

How do you help with pain management?

.....

When do you arrive when labor starts?

.....

How long do you stay after the birth?

.....

What does your doula package include?

.....

How to Pay for a Doula?

- **Health insurance plan**
- **Flex or health spending account (HSA/FSA)**
- **Baby registry**
- **Payment plan**
- **Sliding scale**

"IT MATTERS TO ME TO SUPPORT THE WORKING GROUP BY PUBLISHING THEIR GUIDANCE IN A WAY THAT IS USABLE. AS A NEW MOM MYSELF, I KNOW HOW FAMILIES - ESPECIALLY BIRTHING FOLKS OF COLOR - HAVE BEEN TREATED AS SECONDARY THROUGHOUT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. KNOWING THAT I HELP PROVIDERS TO SERVE FAMILIES BETTER FEELS IMPORTANT AND MOTIVATES ME TO KEEP GOING."

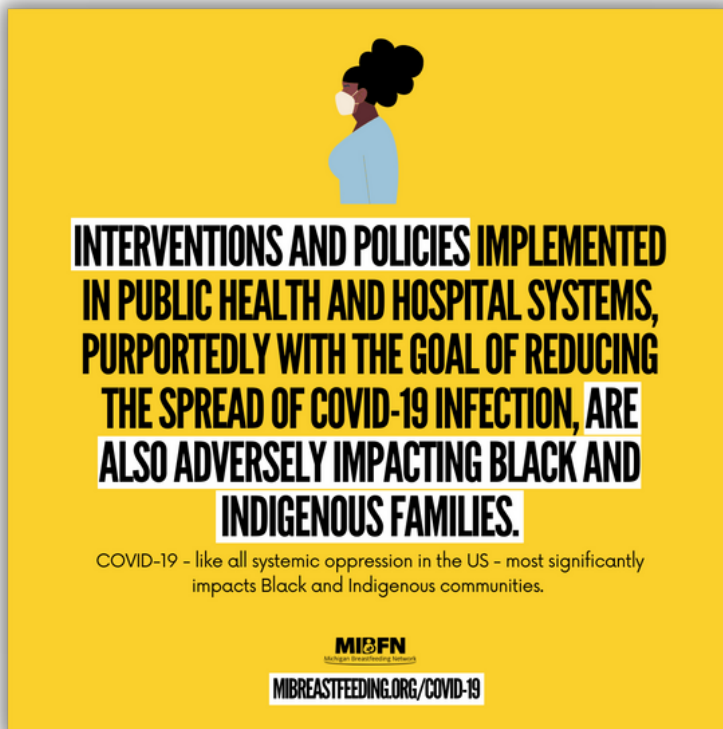
KAITLYN BOWEN, MS, RD, CLC, MIBFN COMMUNICATIONS AND DATA MANAGER AND LOCAL BREASTFEEDING SUPPORTER IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

SUCCESSSES

**IMMUNIZATIONS
SOCIAL MARKETING
CAMPAIGN**

SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN

After publishing the Immunizations Issue Guidance, we released 21 unique social media posts to disseminate the messaging to our wider audience on MIBFN's Facebook (5100 followers), Instagram (1308 followers), and Twitter (1176 followers).



INTERVENTIONS AND POLICIES IMPLEMENTED IN PUBLIC HEALTH AND HOSPITAL SYSTEMS, PURPORTEDLY WITH THE GOAL OF REDUCING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 INFECTION, ARE ALSO ADVERSELY IMPACTING BLACK AND INDIGENOUS FAMILIES.

COVID-19 - like all systemic oppression in the US - most significantly impacts Black and Indigenous communities.

MIBFN
MILK INFECTION BREASTFEEDING NUTRITION FOUNDATION

[MIBRESTFEEDING.ORG/COVID-19](https://mibrestfeeding.org/covid-19)



CONSULT WITH BIRTH AND BREASTFEEDING SUPPORTERS TO FIND A SKILLED CARE TEAM THAT REFLECTS YOUR VALUES AND WORRIES WITHIN THEIR SCOPE OF PRACTICE TO ENSURE YOUR FAMILY RECEIVES SAFE AND QUALITY CARE.

SUPPORT BREASTFEEDING AND STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN MILK.

DIRECTLY CONNECT FAMILIES WITH BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT AND PROVIDE THEM HANDBOOKS SO THAT FAMILIES RECEIVE THE SERVICES THEY NEED FROM TRUSTED COMMUNITY PROVIDERS THAT LISTEN TO AND IMMEDIATELY ADDRESS THEIR CONCERNS TO ENSURE QUALITY CARE.

ASK TRUSTED HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS WHO REFLECT YOUR FAMILY'S VALUES AND CULTURAL TRADITIONS ABOUT THE VACCINES THAT ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY, INCLUDING VACCINES TO PROTECT AGAINST COVID-19, INFLUENZA, AND PERTUSSIS.

TRUST BLACK AND INDIGENOUS BIRTHING PEOPLE AND THEIR CARE TEAMS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY VOICE CONCERNS OVER THEIR HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY, LABOR, DELIVERY, AND POSTPARTUM.

PROVIDE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO THE MOST UP TO DATE EVIDENCE, INFORMATION, AND RESOURCES RELATED TO THE BENEFITS OF TIMELY VACCINATION TO PROTECT BIRTHING AND BREASTFEEDING FAMILIES FROM COMMUNICABLE DISEASES LIKE COVID-19.

RAISE YOUR CONCERNS WITH PROVIDERS BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER PREGNANCY TO ADDRESS BENEFIT TO RISK BEHAVIOR.

WE MUST SERVE ALONGSIDE FAMILIES AS ADVOCATES, EDUCATORS, AND BIRTH WORKERS WITH THE CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT IT IS UP TO THE PATIENTS/CLIENTS TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN COURSE OF ACTION.

PROTECT BREASTFEEDING, BECAUSE BREASTFEEDING PROTECTS AGAINST THE SPREAD OF COVID-19.

BLACK AND INDIGENOUS DOULAS ARE IN THE HOSPITAL TO SAVE LIVES. THERE NEED TO BE SOLUTIONS, NOT BARRIERS, TO DOULA CARE.

WE MUST ADVOCATE FOR CULTURE CHANGE AND GUIDANCE THAT EXPLICITLY PROTECTS BIRTHING FOLKS AND THEIR SUPPORT SYSTEMS WITHIN OUR HOSPITAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS.

ENSURE POLICIES DO NOT DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACT BLACK AND INDIGENOUS FAMILIES WHO ARE ALREADY MARGINALIZED AND DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED BY COVID-19.

CURRENT EVIDENCE SUGGESTS PREGNANT AND RECENTLY PREGNANT PERSONS ARE MORE LIKELY TO SUFFER SEVERE ILLNESS AND COMPLICATIONS FROM COVID-19 INFECTIONS COMPARED TO PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT PREGNANT.

"AS SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN PREGNANT DURING COVID, I WAS AFRAID TO GET THE VACCINE BECAUSE I WAS NOT BEING GIVEN ENOUGH INFORMATION. ULTIMATELY, I DECIDED TO BE VACCINATED AFTER SHE WAS BORN AND I STILL HAVE WORRIES - DID I DO THE RIGHT THING?"

SEVERE INFECTIONS AND DEATH CAUSED BY COVID-19 HAVE DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED BLACK AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES.

PARTNER WITH, AND EQUITABLY COMPENSATE, BIRTH WORKERS AND BREASTFEEDING CLINICIANS WHO REFLECT AND REPRESENT THE FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY WHERE YOU SERVE.

AT PRESENT, THERE IS CONSENSUS AMONG THE MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS THAT COVID-19 VACCINES ARE A SAFE AND EFFECTIVE TOOL TO PROTECT PREGNANT & BREASTFEEDING PEOPLE AGAINST COVID-19.

WE MUST BE CLEAR ON THE ROLE OF DOULAS, BIRTH WORKERS, AND LACTATION SUPPORTERS, IN SUPPORTING FAMILIES AND THEIR ROLE IN SAVING BLACK AND INDIGENOUS LIVES.

INCORPORATE GUIDANCE FROM BOTH DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS THE WHO AND CDC.

"I FOUND THE IMMUNIZATIONS SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN DIGESTIBLE AND USEFUL TO ME AS A LACTATION SUPPORTER. NO ONE IS TALKING ABOUT HUMAN MILK AND IMMUNIZATIONS IN THIS WAY. IN MY PRACTICE, IT MADE IT EASIER FOR ME TO BE ABLE TO TALK TO FAMILIES IN A WAY THAT FELT HELPFUL AND HONEST."

MISTEL DE VARONA, IBCLC, PMH-C, BERRIEN COUNTY WIC, BERRIEN COUNTY BREASTFEEDING COALITION, MIBFN WORKING GROUP MEMBER, LOCAL BREASTFEEDING SUPPORTER IN DOWAGIAC, MICHIGAN

"IT WAS IMPORTANT TO ME TO SUPPORT THE CREATION OF GUIDANCE FOR FAMILIES IN MULTIPLE FORMATS - ALWAYS CENTERING THEIR NEEDS AND MAKING SURE THE GUIDANCE CONNECTS WITH THEM IN THE WAYS THEY NEED TO RECEIVE IT. I ALSO KNOW HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS TO LIVE OUT THEIR COMMITMENTS TO REDUCE HARM TO FAMILIES IN LIGHT OF THIS ONGOING CRISIS. I THINK WE ACHIEVED THAT AND I'M PROUD TO HAVE BEEN PART OF THIS PROCESS."

VICKI WOOD, CLC, CLS, MIBFN FUND DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, UP BREASTFEEDING NETWORK, MARQUETTE BREASTFEEDING COALITION, AND LOCAL BREASTFEEDING SUPPORTER IN MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN

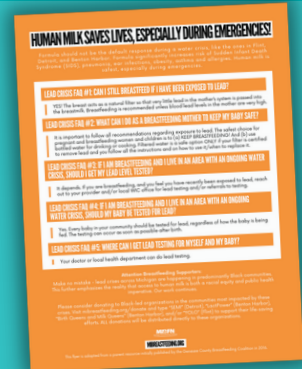
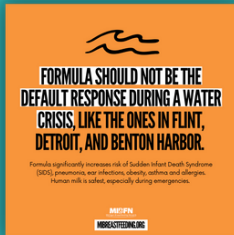
SUCCESSSES

**ADDITIONAL CRISES
ADDRESSED**

ADDITIONAL CRISES ADDRESSED

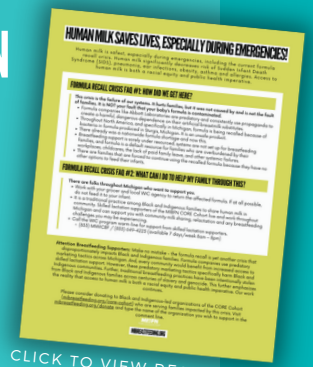
Throughout the grant period, additional threats to breastfeeding continued presenting themselves. These crises included lead contamination crises in multiple cities across Michigan, disproportionately impacting Black and brown families, and the formula recall and shortage crisis. In an effort to continue protecting breastfeeding as a strategy to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, we also created and disseminated breastfeeding-supportive resources and issue guidance in solidarity with the Breastfeeding and Emergencies Working Group, the CORE Cohort, and the local breastfeeding supporters.

LEAD GUIDANCE AND SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN



[CLICK TO VIEW RESOURCE](#)

FORMULA RECALL GUIDANCE AND SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN



[CLICK TO VIEW RESOURCE](#)

"MY MILK, MY RIGHT TO SHARE IT" SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN



HUMAN MILK SAVES LIVES, ESPECIALLY DURING EMERGENCIES!

Formula should not be the default response during a water crisis, like the ones in Flint, Detroit, and Benton Harbor. Formula is associated with significantly increasing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), pneumonia, ear infections, obesity, asthma and allergies. Human milk is safest, especially during emergencies.

LEAD CRISIS FAQ #1: CAN I STILL BREASTFEED IF I HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO LEAD?

YES! The breast acts as a natural filter so that very little lead in the mother's system is passed into the breastmilk. Breastfeeding is recommended unless blood lead levels in the mother are very high.

LEAD CRISIS FAQ #2: WHAT CAN I DO AS A BREASTFEEDING MOTHER TO KEEP MY BABY SAFE?

It is important to follow all recommendations regarding exposure to lead. The safest choice for pregnant and breastfeeding women and children is to (a) KEEP BREASTFEEDING! And (b) use bottled water for drinking or cooking. Filtered water is a safe option ONLY if your filter is certified to remove lead and you follow all the instructions and on how to use it/when to replace it.

LEAD CRISIS FAQ #3: IF I AM BREASTFEEDING AND I LIVE IN AN AREA WITH AN ONGOING WATER CRISIS, SHOULD I GET MY LEAD LEVEL TESTED?

It depends. If you are breastfeeding, and you feel you have recently been exposed to lead, reach out to your provider and/or local WIC office for lead testing and/or referrals to testing.

LEAD CRISIS FAQ #4: IF I AM BREASTFEEDING AND I LIVE IN AN AREA WITH AN ONGOING WATER CRISIS, SHOULD MY BABY BE TESTED FOR LEAD?

Yes. Every baby in your community should be tested for lead, regardless of how the baby is being fed. The testing can occur as soon as possible after birth.

LEAD CRISIS FAQ #5: WHERE CAN I GET LEAD TESTING FOR MYSELF AND MY BABY?

Your doctor or local health department can do lead testing.

Attention Breastfeeding Supporters:

Make no mistake - lead crises across Michigan are happening in predominantly Black communities. This further emphasizes the reality that access to human milk is both a racial equity and public health imperative. Our work continues.

Please consider donating to Black-led organizations in the communities most impacted by these crises. Visit mibreastfeeding.org/donate and type "SEMI" (Detroit), "LactPower" (Benton Harbor), "Birth Queens and Milk Queens" (Benton Harbor), and/or "YOLO" (Flint) to support their life-saving efforts. ALL donations will be distributed directly to these organizations.

MIBFN
Michigan Breastfeeding Network

MIBREASTFEEDING.ORG

This flyer is adapted from a parent resource initially published by the Genesee County Breastfeeding Coalition in 2016.

HUMAN MILK SAVES LIVES, ESPECIALLY DURING EMERGENCIES!

Human milk is safest, especially during emergencies, including the current formula recall crisis. Breastfeeding/human milk is associated with significantly decreasing risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), pneumonia, ear infections, obesity, asthma and allergies. Access to human milk is both a racial equity and public health imperative.

FORMULA RECALL CRISIS FAQ #1: HOW DID WE GET HERE?

This crisis is the failure of our systems. It hurts families, but it was not caused by and is not the fault of families. It is NOT your fault that your baby's formula is contaminated.

- Formula companies like Abbott Laboratories are predatory and consistently use propaganda to create a harmful, dangerous dependence on their artificial breastmilk substitutes.
- Throughout North America, and specifically in Michigan, formula is being recalled because of bacteria in formula produced in Sturgis, Michigan. It is an unsafe product.
- There already was a nationwide formula shortage and now this.
- Breastfeeding support is sorely under resourced, systems are not set up for breastfeeding families, and formula is a default resource for families who are overburdened by their workplaces, childcares, the lack of paid family leave, and other systemic failures.
- There are families that are forced to continue using the recalled formula because they have no other options to feed their infants.

FORMULA RECALL CRISIS FAQ #2: WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MY FAMILY THROUGH THIS?

There are folks throughout Michigan who want to support you.

- Work with your grocer and local WIC agency to return the affected formula. If at all possible, do not feed it to your infant.
- It is a traditional practice among Black and Indigenous families to share human milk in community. Skilled lactation supporters of the MIBFN CORE Cohort live and work throughout Michigan and can support you with community milk sharing, relactation and any breastfeeding challenges you may be experiencing.
- Call the WIC program warm-line for support from skilled lactation supporters.
 - (833) MIWICBF / (833) 649-4223 (available 7 days/week 8am – 8pm)

Attention Breastfeeding Supporters: Make no mistake - the formula recall is yet another crisis that disproportionately impacts Black and Indigenous families. Formula companies use predatory marketing tactics across Michigan. And, every community would benefit from increased access to skilled lactation support. However, these predatory marketing tactics specifically harm Black and Indigenous communities. Further, traditional breastfeeding practices have been intentionally stolen from Black and Indigenous families across centuries of slavery and genocide. This further emphasizes the reality that access to human milk is both a racial equity and public health imperative. Our work continues.

Please consider donating to Black and Indigenous-led organizations of the CORE Cohort (mibreastfeeding.org/core-cohort) who are serving families impacted by this crisis. Visit mibreastfeeding.org/donate and type the name of the organization you wish to support in the comment line.

MIBFN
Michigan Breastfeeding Network

MIBREASTFEEDING.ORG

**"THIS WAS A TIMELY
GROUP THAT ROSE
TO THE CHALLENGE
OF THE PANDEMIC,
WE BROUGHT THE
FOCUS TO THE
FAMILIES, AND WE
CHALLENGED THE
STATUS QUO."**

**BONITA AGEE, BS, CLC, WORKING GROUP PARTICIPANT
AND LOCAL BREASTFEEDING SUPPORTER IN GRAND
RAPIDS, MICHIGAN**

SUCCESSSES

EDUCATION

PANEL DISCUSSION/TRAPCHAT

There was a panel discussion/TrapChat on breastfeeding and immunizations in partnership with You Overcoming Lactation Obstacles (YOLO) in Flint and Southeast Michigan IBCLCs of Color in metro-Detroit. During these conversations, panelists discussed:

- How human milk serves as protection against COVID-19 and other illnesses
- Working with trusted providers who center your goals to help you in making informed decisions about immunizations and breastfeeding
- Risks and benefits of breastfeeding and immunizations
- Keeping self and baby safe if families choose not to vaccinate
- Concerns and vaccine hesitancy due to systemic racism, a universal experience for Black families, regardless of income
- Intersections among the poisoning of Flint families by the State of Michigan via the ongoing failure to ensure safe drinking water and the distrust among Flint families of State of Michigan-driven public health messaging regarding vaccine safety and efficacy



153 VIEWS



WHAT IS TRAPCHAT?

TrapChat is presented on the YOLO Facebook page via Facebook Live every Friday evening and is an authentic space for families and birthing parents to tune in, connect, and contribute based on their own comfort level. YOLO develops the topics and then connects with panelists who meet the criteria of being relatable, honest, and equipped to talk about the subject matter through a lens of evidence and equity. Topics are often an expansion of and deeper dive into recent Great Lakes Breastfeeding Webinars, ranging from fatherhood, doulas, miscarriage, COVID, formula shortage, and so on.



GREAT LAKES BREASTFEEDING WEBINAR



"HUMAN MILK AND IMMUNIZATIONS" PRESENTED BY TAMEKA JACKSON-DYER, BASC, IBCLC, CHW AND SHONTE' TERHUNE-SMITH, BS, IBCLC, CLS, BD

Description: Due to the historical abuse and misuse of Black bodies by the healthcare system, the distrust of medical providers runs deep in the Black community. In the midst of the current pandemic, the disproportionate death rate for Black families and lack of timely access to care has increased this distrust. Public health messaging around the COVID-19 vaccine has not taken these realities into account and thus has fallen short of reaching the families that are most at risk.

Approved for 1 L-CERP, 1 nurse's contact hour, 1 social work CE hour, 1 dietitian CPEU, 1 community health worker CEU, 1 certified health education specialist CECH, and 1 CME.

"I REALLY APPRECIATED HOW EXAMPLES OF HISTORICAL LIES, COVERUPS, AND MISTREATMENT OF PEOPLE OF COLOR IN THE US WERE TIED INTO THE PRESENTATION TO GIVE SOME BACKGROUND OF THE DISTRUST THAT IS PRESENT TODAY. AS A WHITE WOMAN, THIS REALLY OPENED MY EYES INTO INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCES THAT I NEVER HAD PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED."

WEBINAR PARTICIPANT



1302 REGISTRANTS



4.25/5 WEBINAR RATING

This webinar is available for free continuing education until May 17, 2023.

SUCCESES:

DIRECT SERVICES

DIRECT BIRTH AND BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT TO BIPOC FAMILIES

This project served as an extension of the work started with the MIBFN Core Cohort. The MIBFN Core Cohort is comprised of Black and Indigenous breastfeeding supporters and organizations who have chosen collaboration over competition. They were initially awarded mini-grants in 2021 through MDHHS and Michigan Breastfeeding Network to advance their work, centering Black and Indigenous families in the reclamation and restoration of traditional birth and breast/bodyfeeding practices that have sustained families for centuries. Their work began focused in the areas of COVID-19, young mothers and fathers, and child care. They work collaboratively in sisterhood (not cis-terhood) to network, incubate, take action, and achieve outcomes in solidarity with the families in their communities. This current project served as an extension of that work as we keep on - even in light of formula crises, a pandemic, and ongoing lead water poisoning - being responsive to the needs of families and ensuring that families receive equity-centered, timely lactation support.



LEVERAGING THIS INITIAL GRANT AWARD, ADDITIONAL EXTERNAL FUNDING WAS SECURED FOR 2 CORE COHORT ORGANIZATIONS SO THEY COULD CONTINUE THEIR LIFE-SAVING WORK.

M MILK LIKE MINE

S SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN IBCLCS OF COLOR

HELPING TO REDUCE THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON BLACK AND/OR INDIGENOUS BIRTHING AND BREASTFEEDING FAMILIES BY PROVIDING BIRTH AND BREASTFEEDING-SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

Birth and breastfeeding workers who reflect and represent the communities they serve are trusted and effective to serve families with young children. Vaccine hesitancy could be directly addressed when people could regularly see and talk to a provider they trust at no cost for families. A trusted provider could also counter the inherent racism and capitalism of the healthcare system, especially for BIPOC families already at a disadvantage at the hands of such a harmful system.

Services provided included:

- Lactation support (latching, positioning, etc.)
- Full spectrum postpartum care
- Facilitating healing with nourishing
- Pregnancy loss support
- Community milk sharing
- Addressing COVID-19 vaccine hesitancies
- Education on COVID-19 and human milk
- Lactation support groups with special guests on immunizations
- Referrals to providers who administer COVID-19 vaccine and testing sites
- Hosting community events to provide breastfeeding and immunization education



MORE FAMILIES DECIDED TO BREASTFEED AFTER LEARNING ABOUT THE IMMUNOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING DURING THE PANDEMIC.



VACCINE HESITANCY AND FEARS WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH A VARIETY OF PLATFORMS AND REFERRALS MADE TO PROVIDERS WHO ADMINISTER VACCINE.

BIRTH QUEENS AND MILK QUEENS

AT A GLANCE

Leadership: Bianca Nash-Miot
Facebook: Birth Queens and Milk Queens
Email: birthqueensmilkqueens@gmail.com
Service Area: All of Prosperity Region 8
Primary population served: Milk Queens proudly offers comprehensive Birth Doula and Lactation Counselor services for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Mothers

ABOUT

Birth Queens and Milk Queens offers comprehensive birth doula and lactation counselor services for pregnant and breastfeeding families, focusing on advancing health equity for Black communities. Relationship building and trust is at the heart of our services. Through partnerships and community groups, we reach families of color in many counties throughout southwestern Michigan.



Provided 30 in-person and virtual lactation support consultations for families where COVID-19 and breastfeeding were discussed



Equitable compensation provided to Bianca for each visit



Leveraged donated pumps to provide to families from previous MDHHS in-kind donation



Supported with clinical hours for pathway 3 program in preparation to sit for IBLCE exam

"SUPPORTING BLACK AND BROWN BODIES IS AN ACT IN HEALING THEIR INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA. THAT REQUIRES FUNDING."

BIANCA NASH-MIOT, CLC, BD, CPST



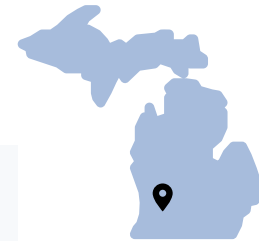
BUMP TO BIRTH DOULA SERVICES

AT A GLANCE

Leadership: Kiara Baskin, CLC, CD
Website: bumpbirthdoulaservices.com
Facebook: Bump to Birth Doula Services
Instagram: @bumpbirthdoula
Youtube: Birth Doula Kiara
Email: bumpbirthdoulagrr@gmail.com
Phone: 616-202-6450
Service Area: Kent County
Primary population served: Black and/or people of color

ABOUT

Bump to Birth Doula Services provides Labor Support, Postpartum & Infant Care, Lactation & Infant Feeding, and Car Seat Concierge support in the greater Grand Rapids area.



Held a neighborhood night at local church and distributed 10 boxes with breastfeeding essentials and COVID-19 resource materials



Spoke to 7 folx at Grand Valley State University sorority event about doula support and their roles in supporting families, including during COVID-19



Read books ("Mama's Chocolate Milk" and "Anti-Racist Baby") and did feeding demos with 9 children at Baxter Community Center during Reading Month



Created and maintained 47-person Grand Rapids Milk Sharing Facebook Group for community milk sharing in light of COVID-19 and formula crises



Developed and released breastfeeding education TikTok series that has reached over 187K people



"HAVING THE SPACE OF THE CORE COHORT BEING ABLE TO TALK WITH OTHER PEOPLE. IT ALLOWED ME TO GET TO KNOW OTHER PEOPLE. BIANCA SINCE THEN HAS COME TO PROVIDE BREASTFEEDING EDUCATOR TRAINING FOR OUR DOULAS HERE AT DAY ONE DOULA COLLECTIVE. THE MIBFN CORE COHORT WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN MAKING THAT CONNECTION."

KIARA BASKIN, CLC, CD, BUMP TO BIRTH DOULA SERVICES

FULL CIRCLE DOULA SERVICES

AT A GLANCE

Leadership: Anesha Stanley, CD, PCD, BD
Website: keysofhopefoundation.com/fullcircledoula
Facebook: Full Circle Doula Services, LLC
Instagram: @fullcircledoulaservicesllc
Email: keysofhopefoundation@gmail.com
Service Area: Great Lakes Bay region, including Saginaw, Bay City, Midland, Frankenmuth, and surrounding cities
Primary population served: Black and/or Indigenous females ages 15 to 21, low-income level of \$25,000 or less, currently enrolled in or recently graduated high school/alternative education with a diploma or GED attainment, single marital status

ABOUT

Full Circle Doula Services provides birth, bereavement, and postpartum doula services, as well as childbirth education and placenta services, centering Black families from preconception through the postpartum period.



Held 8 in-person and virtual support groups for families to share space with one another and discuss concerns related to COVID-19, immunizations, and human milk feeding



Created and published resource on latching to promote feeding at the breast



Provided information on COVID-19 testing sites to families

"A LOT OF MY CLIENTS ARE YOUNG BLACK MOTHERS AND THEY FEEL SAFE WITH ME. I UNDERSTAND WHY TRUST IS SO IMPORTANT SO THAT THEY AREN'T ON THEIR OWN. THEY FELT MORE COMFORTABLE TALKING WITH ME."

ANESHA STANLEY, CD, PCD, BD



LACTPOWER

AT A GLANCE

Leadership: Tameka White, CLS
Facebook: LactPower
Service Area: Berrien County
Primary population served: Black families in Benton Harbor

ABOUT

LactPower is a community-based, equity centered breastfeeding support service program in Benton Harbor, focused on centering the needs of Black families while providing culturally responsive care by trusted providers that reside in and represent the community they serve.



Served 28 families in Benton Harbor, including having conversations about immunizations, debunking myths, answering questions, and discussing the natural immunological benefits of human milk



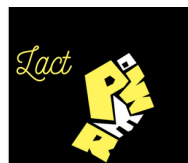
Fears were addressed and more families decided to breastfeed after hearing the benefits of human milk



Drafted and submitted August Breastfeeding Month proclamation which included language about immunological benefits of human milk

"IT IS CRUCIAL TO HAVE EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND TIME TO WEIGH IT OUT WITH PEOPLE YOU TRUST WHEN IT COMES TO DECISIONS ABOUT VACCINES AND THEIR IMPACT ON PREGNANT AND BREASTFEEDING PEOPLE."

TAMEKA WHITE, CLS



LEARN, LACTATE, GROW

AT A GLANCE

Leadership: Lori Walker, CCHW, CLC
Facebook: Learn Lactate Grow
Instagram: @learnlactategrow
Email: learnlactategrow@gmail.com
Service Area: Oakland County
Primary population served: Greater Pontiac Area and surrounding areas; the service area of support for LLG is over 90% Black and minority residents

ABOUT

Learn, Lactate, Grow - housed within the Learn, Play, Grow Child Care Center - centers Black and brown families in birth and breastfeeding care that is culturally relevant and evidence-based, regardless of age, education, or income level.



Shared vaccine resources, handouts, and information with Learn, Play, Grow families



Created and shared internal flyer on human milk and immunizations



Facilitated support groups and had guest speakers to discuss human milk and immunizations



"WE DIDN'T PUSH IMMUNIZATIONS, BUT RATHER, WE PROVIDED FACTUAL INFORMATION AND EDUCATION ABOUT ALL OF THE OPTIONS SO THAT FAMILIES COULD MAKE THE BEST DECISION THAT THEY COULD WITH HELPFUL INFORMATION."

LORI WALKER, CCHW, CLC

NEXT GENERATION LACTATION SERVICES

AT A GLANCE

Leadership: Natosha Sage-EL Bylsma, BA, IBCLC, CPST and Caroline Passariello BA, IBCLC

Website: lactationservice.com

Facebook: Next Generation Lactation Service

Instagram: @nextgenlactation

Email: info@lactationservice.com

Service Area: Ingham County

Note: NGLS is a geographic-based coalition and not part of the MIBFN Core Cohort

ABOUT

Next Generation Lactation Services' mission is to provide equitable access to breastfeeding support, to empower and educate the local communities in evidence-based breastfeeding practices and expand the paths available for IBCLC candidates beyond the RN/hospital pathway in our community to increase diversity within the field of lactation to represent the communities they serve.



Provided lactation consults to 10 Black and/or Indigenous birthing and breastfeeding families, including information and resources on COVID-19 and human milk as needed



Grew network and connections with BIPOC doulas to be able to ensure families in the community have access to support in light of COVID-19 visitor restrictions



Shared human milk and immunizations education and resources at Michigan State University event with 20 students, parents, and faculty

"IT HAS BEEN SUPER HELPFUL TO HAVE THE FINANCES TO BE ABLE TO SERVE THE FAMILIES THAT NEED IT THE MOST. WE'VE HAD VARIOUS CHALLENGES, AND FAMILIES HAVE BEEN MOST VULNERABLE, SO HAVING SOMEONE IN THEIR CORNER HAS BEEN SO NEEDED."

NATOSHA SAGE-EL BYLSMA, BA, IBCLC, CPST



PANORAMIC DOULA

AT A GLANCE

Leadership: Lindsey McGahey, IFSD, IBC, BE
Website: panoramicdoula.teachable.com
Facebook: @nourishingnations
Instagram: @panoramicdoula
Email: panoramicdoula@gmail.com
Service Area: Chippewa County, Bay Mills Chippewa Indian Community, and Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Primary population served: Indigenous people of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians and Bay Mills Chippewa Indian Community

ABOUT

Panoramic Doula provides community-based, equity-centered birth and breastfeeding services in Chippewa County, sharing the experience and knowledge of supporting people through and beyond their reproductive experiences while specializing in unique and comprehensive traditional, Indigenous postpartum care and lactation support.



Served 7 Indigenous families with lactation care and lactation-supportive practices, including postpartum meal support and lactation education



Published 2 slide decks to Panoramic Doula social media on the importance of breastfeeding as baby's first immunizations



Provided seamless and continuous access prenatally during the pandemic with virtual contact, delivering educational materials via email and responding to questions outside of prenatal class time frames

"THROUGH MY WORK, IT IS VERY CLEAR TO ME THAT FAMILIES WANT BIRTH AND BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT AND THAT THE BURDEN OF COMPENSATION MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR FAMILIES TO PURSUE THE CARE THEY SEEK IN THE CHIPPEWA COUNTY AREA."

LINDSEY MCGAHEY, IFSD, IBC, BE



POSTPARTUM HEALING LODGE

AT A GLANCE

Leadership: Raeanne Madison, MPH
Website: postpartumhealinglodge.com
Instagram: @postpartumhealinglodge
Email:
raeanne@postpartumhealinglodge.com
Service Area: Chippewa County, Michigan, home to both the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, the Bay Mills Indian Community, and other Indigenous nations
Primary population served:
Indigenous/Native American families

ABOUT

Postpartum Healing Lodge provides traditional birth, postpartum, and lactation care for indigenous families along with curating online courses for birth workers, community members, and professionals who serve Indigenous communities.



Provided direct community service to strengthen care in Indian country

Support provided included:



Lactation care
(latching,
positioning)



Full spectrum
care



16 weeks of
postpartum
support



Facilitating
healing with
nourishing

MILK DROP OF KNOWLEDGE

La Cuarentena is an Indigenous traditional practice in which the birthing person stays home to rest and recover during the postpartum period. By staying home, they are supporting COVID-19 mitigation strategies. However, some Indigenous families rely on food assistance programs that require them to leave their homes in order to obtain their food. Not only does this put their family's health at risk during the pandemic, it also does not align with their traditional postpartum practices.

**POSTPARTUM
HEALING LODGE, LLC**

**"PEOPLE DESERVE
TO HAVE THE BEST
CARE. THE STORY
FOR HOW TO HEAL
POSTPARTUM IS
CHANGING RAPIDLY
IN OUR COMMUNITY."**

RAEANNE MADISON, MPH, POSTPARTUM HEALING LODGE

YOLO LACTATION AND DOULA SERVICES

AT A GLANCE

Leadership: Shonte' Terhune-Smith, BS, IBCLC

Website: yolobreastfeeding.org

Facebook: YOLO Breastfeeding

Instagram: @yolobreastfeeding

Email:

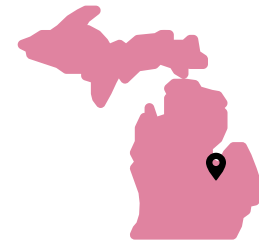
success.yolobreastfeeding@gmail.com

Service Area: Genesee County

Primary population served: Families in Genesee County while centering Black and Indigenous families

ABOUT

YOLO's mission is to inclusively service families throughout Genesee County while centering Black and Indigenous families as they reach their birth and breastfeeding goals.



Provided free lactation services to 22 families prenatally and postpartum



Educated families with plans to keep their families safe regardless of their decision to vaccinate



Discussed the benefits of human milk, including in light of COVID-19 pandemic

"IT IS IMPERATIVE TO HONOR BREASTFEEDING FAMILIES OF COLOR AND THEIR GENERATIONAL TRAUMA FROM THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WHILE PROVIDING EVIDENCE-BASED INFORMATION REGARDING IMMUNIZATIONS."

SHONTE' TERHUNE-SMITH, BS, IBCLC



"IT IS IMPERATIVE TO HONOR BREASTFEEDING FAMILIES OF COLOR AND THEIR GENERATIONAL TRAUMA FROM THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WHILE PROVIDING EVIDENCE-BASED INFORMATION REGARDING IMMUNIZATIONS."

SHONTE' TERHUNE-SMITH, IBCLC, CLS, YOLO

LEVERAGING FOUNDATIONAL WORK TO SECURE ADDITIONAL EXTERNAL FUNDING

Because of the work started with the initial CORE Cohort funding, additional external funding was secured for 2 CORE cohort organizations, including Southeast Michigan IBCLCs of Color in metro-Detroit and Milk Like Mine in Battle Creek, so they could continue their life-saving work.

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN IBCLCS OF COLOR



[CLICK TO VIEW RESOURCE](#)

\$20,000 Racial Equity in Breastfeeding and Immunizations Grant from United Way for Southeastern Michigan for "Holding Space: Breastfeeding and Mental Health Support During A Pandemic" support groups, prenatal and postpartum consults where COVID-19 was a topic of discussion, immunizations-specific TrapChat, co-creating the Immunizations Issuance Guidance social marketing campaign and toolkit, and presenting on the Great Lakes Breastfeeding Webinars.



[CLICK TO VIEW RESOURCE](#)

\$20,000 Racial Equity in Breastfeeding and Immunizations Grant from United Way for Southeastern Michigan specific to breastfeeding and immunizations, including creating educational materials, launching a social marketing campaign, facilitating a panel discussion, and conducting home visits with families.

MILK LIKE MINE



[CLICK TO VIEW RESOURCE](#)

\$5,000 Racial Equity in Breastfeeding and Immunizations Grant from United Way of Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region for prenatal and postpartum consults where COVID-19 was a topic of discussion, immunizations-specific TrapChat, and co-creating the Immunizations Issuance Guidance social marketing campaign and toolkit.

PURCHASING NECESSARY SUPPLIES AND TOOLS TO SERVE BLACK AND/OR INDIGENOUS BIRTHING AND BREASTFEEDING FAMILIES IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

It is common for birth and breastfeeding supporters to purchase supplies for families that they serve out of their own pockets to ensure families have what they need. This is not right. This project made it possible for birth and breastfeeding supporters to purchase supplies that directly helped the families they serve.

POSTPARTUM FOOD
AND PREPARATION TO
PROMOTE HEALING



SILICONE MILK
COLLECTORS

MENSTRUATION PADS

SYRINGES, FOLEY
CUPS



BREASTFEEDING AND
IMMUNIZATIONS
EDUCATIONAL
MATERIALS

ZOOM ACCESS FOR
VIRTUAL SUPPORT

PPE INCLUDING N95S,
GLOVES, AND
SANITATION SUPPLIES



NOURISHING SNACKS
FOR FAMILIES

BREAST PUMPS AND
PARTS



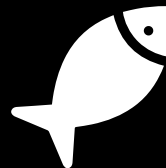
GAS FOR HOME VISITS

BREASTFEEDING
AND IMMUNITY
SUPPORTIVE
TRADITIONAL
MEDICINES

POSTPARTUM RECIPE
AND PLANNING BOOK
FOR FAMILIES

BREAST PADS
(DISPOSABLE,
REUSABLE)

COMPENSATION FOR
LOCAL HUNTERS AND
FISHERS



STIPENDS FOR
IMMUNIZATIONS
GUEST SPEAKERS
AND SUPPORT
PEOPLE

**WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE FINANCIAL
SUPPORT FROM MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES. HUMAN MILK
SAVES LIVES AND YOUR INVESTMENT IN THIS
WORK AND BIRTH AND BREASTFEEDING
SUPPORTERS THAT CENTER BLACK AND
INDIGENOUS FAMILIES IS SAVING LIVES, TOO.**
