CONNECTION, COMMUNITY, AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

WHAT WE'RE HEARING ACROSS MICHIGAN

ACCESS TO LACTATION SUPPORT REMAINS A SYSTEMS ISSUE.

Participants raised concerns about the Western Upper Peninsula, where the only IBCLC is reportedly retiring and few other lactation professionals are available. Reimbursement requirements also continue to limit who can provide and receive payment for breastfeeding support.

COMMUNITY ORGS CONTINUE CREATING SOLUTIONS.

Updates highlighted Black breastfeeding support in Kent County, expanded lactation services in West Michigan, connections between breastfeeding and disability advocacy, and ongoing Indigenous Milk Medicine and birth education work.

STATEWIDE PLANNING NEEDS COMMUNITY VOICES.

Participants expressed interest in shaping Michigan's breastfeeding priorities through community conversations, data interpretation, and strategies that connect planning to implementation.

WHAT THIS COMMUNITY MEANS

Participants described these meetings as a source of connection, shared learning, advocacy, and renewed energy:

"THE BURST OF JOY AND ENERGY I GET FROM BEING SURROUNDED BY CHANGE MAKERS HAS BEEN REMARKABLE."

"THIS SPACE IS A CIRCLE OF CARE WHERE WE SHARE RESOURCES, SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER, AND CARRY THE WORK OF SYSTEMS CHANGE TOGETHER."

"COMMUNITY FOR MYSELF, AND WITNESSING HOW MUCH WORK IS BEING DONE HAS GIVEN ME HOPE IN THE FRUSTRATION."

CARRY THIS INTO YOUR WORK

Across healthcare, public health, childcare, education, and community services, ask:

- Who provides breastfeeding support locally, and where are families experiencing gaps?
- Are people with community knowledge included in planning and decision-making?
- How can your organization connect, support, and compensate the people doing this work?



A PAUSE, NOT AN ENDING

September marked our final monthly Local Breastfeeding Supporter Meeting of 2026. Due to current funding circumstances, meetings are pausing while MIBFN works toward a sustainable model for the Local Breastfeeding Supporter Fund. Additional funding is needed to sustain these spaces for connection, mentorship, and collective advocacy. As Shannon shared: "The monthly Zoom meeting was never the movement itself. It was one place where the movement could gather."

Thank you to everyone who brought your knowledge, relationships, resources, humor, and whole selves to this space. The meeting is pausing. The work continues.

MIBFN
Michigan Breastfeeding Network

THIS REPORT WAS GENERATED FROM DISCUSSION AT THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2026 LOCAL BREASTFEEDING SUPPORTER MEETING.
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE MEETINGS, VISIT MIBREASTFEEDING.ORG/LOCAL-MEETINGS.