

Understanding Breastfeeding Promotion, Initiation, and Support Across the United States: An Analysis

March 7, 2024

Adrienne Smith, PhD, MS, CHES

Director, Division of Policy and Performance Management (DPPM)

Office on Women's Health (OWH)

US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)



OASH

Office of the
Assistant Secretary
for Health

Office on Women's Health (OWH)

Vision

- All women and girls achieve the best possible health

Mission

- The Office on Women's Health provides national leadership and coordination to improve the health of women and girls through policy, education, and innovative programs.

Goals

- Inform and influence policies
- Engage and educate the public
- Engage and exchange information with health professionals
- Develop and expand innovative approaches
- Maintain a diverse, equitable and inclusive work environment

OWH's Functions

- ▶ Lead Policy Analysis, Development, and Implementation
- ▶ Provide Trusted Data and Information
- ▶ Convene Partners
- ▶ Conduct Demonstrations and Evaluations
- ▶ Develop Novel Initiatives
- ▶ Organize and Lead National Initiatives



Understanding Breastfeeding Promotion, Initiation, and Support Across the United States: An Analysis

The House Committee requested an evidence-based, non-partisan study on policies, programs, and investments to better understand the landscape of breastfeeding promotion, initiation, and support across the United States.

The overarching goal of this study is to provide evidence to increase initiation and exclusive breastfeeding for first 3-6 months; identify social determinants; and reduce disparities.

Study Tasks

- ✓ Analyze macroeconomic, social, and health costs and benefits of the current breastfeeding rates and goals in the United States
- ✓ Examine racial, geographic, and income-related breastfeeding disparities
- ✓ Build on known inequalities in breastfeeding rates
- ✓ Identify existing gaps in knowledge (areas for needed research)
- ✓ Discuss challenges in data collection to address gaps
- ✓ Offer policies and interventions for federal, state, local investments/support
- ✓ Propose recommendations for achieving the HP2030 breastfeeding goals (contributors to HP2020)
- ✓ Develop best practices for care, systems, workforce, employers, and community to support breastfeeding

OWH's Preliminary Work

- ✓ Consulted with federal stakeholders
- ✓ Added context to study tasks
- ✓ Provided federal sources
- ✓ Briefed HHS leadership

Federal Stakeholders

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Indian Health Services (IHS)
- Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP)
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

- Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

Analysis Completion

Report release – Spring 2025

Report production/dissemination – Summer 2025