



For Immediate Release

New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition

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THE NEW JERSEY BREASTFEEDING COALITION COMMENDS THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FOR ITS RELEASE OF THE 2022-2027 NEW JERSEY BREASTFEEDING STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NJBC

September 29, 2022 – The New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition (NJBC) applauds the New Jersey Department of Health for its recent [release of the 2022-2027 New Jersey Breastfeeding Strategic Plan](#), developed in partnership with the NJBC and the Central Jersey Family Health Consortium. (See link below.)

The 2022-2027 New Jersey Breastfeeding Strategic Plan (NJBSP) is the result of a multi-year of effort among these partners to create a blueprint to coordinate government efforts, prioritize actions and mobilize diverse stakeholders in government, the healthcare sector, businesses, insurance, education and the community to create an environment that normalizes breastfeeding.

“The New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition is thrilled about the release of the 2022-2027 New Jersey Breastfeeding Strategic Plan. The evidence is clear that supporting human milk feeding is a public health imperative. The actions set forth in the plan are not only necessary to help more families reach their lactation goals, but also to help address unacceptable racial disparities in infant and maternal health and mortality,” said Chanelle Andrews, IBCLC, president of the NJBC.

Research shows that breastfeeding not only saves infant lives and promotes optimal infant health, but it also supports maternal health, reduces maternal mortality and reduces the risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, breast cancer and others that lead to poorer overall health outcomes for Black women. Human milk is also the most safe, secure and sustainable infant food every day, and especially during natural and public health emergencies. However, creating stronger lactation support is an often-overlooked issue in healthcare policy making and lactation is often not recognized as an integral part of the reproductive health process.

The Breastfeeding Strategic Plan, which aligns with and bolsters the vision of the Nurture New Jersey Strategic Plan to address maternal health inequities, includes eight goals for 2022-2027:

- Provide families the support they need to breastfeed their babies
- Ensure that maternity practices are fully supportive of breastfeeding and lactation and are free of bias
- Ensure that employers and childcare providers accommodate lactation
- Strengthen existing capacity and develop future capacity for conducting research and surveillance on breastfeeding and lactation
- Increase state infrastructure and policy making in support of lactation
- Improve and institutionalize emergency preparedness measures for pregnant and breastfeeding persons that ensure access to breastfeeding supports and services during public health crises and emergencies
- Strengthen maternal and child health social services among communities with highest risk of poor health outcomes associated with public health crises
- Support, protect, and promote breastfeeding as the biological norm and optimal way to feed infants during global health pandemics and public health crises

“Research and experience show that many families do not reach their lactation goals because of widespread societal, healthcare, workplace, insurance and environmental barriers that prevent them from getting the information and support they need. Implementing the 2022-2027 New Jersey Breastfeeding Strategic Plan will be a powerful step in changing the culture and the environment in (the) our state to allow all families to choose optimal health,” said Ellen Maughan, JD, IBCLC, who is a NJBC Trustee and was the project manager for the NJBSP.

The NJBSP also recognizes that the efforts of many diverse stakeholders will be critical in making the changes necessary to fostering optimal lactation support. With the expertise of its membership that consists of lactation support providers, physicians, lactation advocates and others, the NJBC is ready to support implementation of the Plan.

“The New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition looks forward to working with the New Jersey Department of Health, First Lady Tammy Murphy and her staff, other state agencies and numerous state stakeholders to implement the New Jersey Breastfeeding Strategic Plan to help all families reach their lactation goals, to normalize breastfeeding and to foster the vision of the Nurture New Jersey Strategic Plan to make New Jersey the safest place to give birth in the nation,” said Chanelle Andrews.

The New Jersey Department of Health press release regarding release of the NJBSP can be found here:

<https://www.nj.gov/health/news/2022/approved/20220922a.shtml#:~:text=TRENTON%20%E2%80%93%20The%20New%20Jersey%20Department,reduce%20inequitable%20infant%20health%20outcomes>.

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