

Five-Year Progress Update on *The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding, 2011*

Highlights of Major Federal Activities

The following is a synopsis of "*Five-Year Progress Update on the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding, 2011*" published in the *Journal of Women's Health* in August of 2016.

What is the Office of the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding?

The *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding, 2011* (*Call to Action 2011*) aims to mobilize families, communities, clinicians, health care systems, and employers to take action to improve support for breastfeeding. It outlines 20 action steps to support breastfeeding mothers and infants across six strategic areas: mothers and families, communities, the health care system, employment, research and surveillance, and public health infrastructure. The *Call to Action 2011* has guided national efforts to meet Healthy People 2020 objectives and better support breastfeeding.

What is the purpose of this update?

The Five-Year Progress Update, published in the *Journal of Women's Health*, summarizes the federal government's major achievements to support breastfeeding in the first 5 years since the release of the *Call to Action 2011*. Here are the highlights for each strategic area:

Current Federal Actions to Improve Breastfeeding in the U.S.

- **Mothers and Families:** In 2011, the Office on Women's Health released updated versions of *Your Guide to Breastfeeding* and *Your Guide to Breastfeeding for African American Women*.
- **Communities:** In 2014, with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) awarded funding to 69 local health departments and community organizations to provide peer and professional lactation support to African American and underserved women and infants.
- **Health Care:** In 2014, CDC supported EMPower Breastfeeding: Enhancing Maternity Practices. The EMPower initiative helps hospitals implement evidence-based maternity care and achieve the Baby-Friendly designation. By the end of 2015, 94 US hospitals were participating in EMPower.
- **Employment:** The Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division enforces the "Break Time for Nursing Mothers" provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act, which sets standards for wages and working conditions for most private and public employees. This provision requires employers to provide a private, equipped space and enough time to express breast milk.
- **Research and Surveillance:** CDC authors completed a follow-up study of children participating in the Infant Feeding Practices Study II, the largest longitudinal study of infant feeding in the United States. Analyses examined the long-term outcomes of infant feeding practices and were published in a special *Pediatrics* supplement in 2014.
- **Public Health Infrastructure:** The United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC) is composed of representatives from relevant government departments, nongovernmental organizations, and health professional associations. USBC works with federal agencies such as CDC and serves as the lead national organization that promotes and supports breastfeeding activities across the United States.

More work remains to ensure that all mothers who want to breastfeed, especially those in communities with low breastfeeding rates, get the support they need. The *Call to Action 2011* is a long-term vision and provides a roadmap to continue to build on the accomplishments of the first 5 years.

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Mothers and Families

The Office on Women's Health updated easy-to-read [publications](#) with expert tips and illustrations.



Employment

[Break Time for Nursing Mothers](#) is a Department of Labor provision that requires employers to support breastfeeding mothers in the workplace.



Communities

CDC funds [community organizations](#) to provide peer and professional lactation support.



Health Care

CDC supports [EMPower](#), a hospital-based maternity care quality improvement initiative.



Research and Surveillance

CDC published [new data](#) on the long-term outcomes of infant feeding practices.



Public Health Infrastructure

[USBC](#) is a national organization that promotes and supports breastfeeding activities across the United States.



For more information, please visit: www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding

Citation

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<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27463691>.