



Rhode Island Breastfeeding Coalition History

ORIGINS

1992-93

Chairperson: Deb White, CNM Tollgate OB-GYN
Secretary: Becky Bessette, MS, RD State WIC Nutrition Coordinator
Meeting Coordinator: Cindi Zembo, RN, RD, IBCLC, lactation educator, HEALTH

Mission

A multidisciplinary group of health professionals and community organizations working to promote, protect, and support successful breastfeeding practices in RI. We are nurses, nutritionists, childbirth educators, physicians and breastfeeding counselors working in hospitals, private offices, neighborhood health centers, community agencies and the state health department.

Structure

Monthly meetings held the third Friday of the month from 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

ACTIVITIES

1992

- ✓ Statewide breastfeeding needs assessment by HEALTH found multiple barriers to successful breastfeeding: (Spring)
 - lack of current and consistent breastfeeding protocols in hospitals and clinics
 - lack of current and accurate lactation management resource materials in physicians offices
 - need for professional education of health care providers (MD, RN, etc.) regarding breastfeeding promotion and lactation management
- ✓ First meeting of the RI Breastfeeding Taskforce. Group identifies Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) as priority agenda item (August)
- ✓ Began looking to other Health Departments in the US for their statements on breastfeeding support and promotion. Drafted a RIBC position paper on breastfeeding. Partnered with HEALTH to include awareness of the importance of breastfeeding to health initiatives. (Fall)
- ✓ Sent a letter to Dr. Barry Lester at Women & Infants Hospital regarding a promotion for a study on colic / excessive crying in babies in which formula was being endorsed as a cure for fussy babies. (Fall)
- ✓ Taskforce adopts official name: Rhode Island Breastfeeding Coalition (RIBC). Disseminates information on BFHI to 8 OB hospitals. (Fall)

1993

- ✓ RIBC Position Paper approved at monthly meeting
- ✓ Governor Bruce Sunderland declares August 1-8 World Breastfeeding Week in RI

1994

- ✓ Addressed an article in the Wall Street Journal regarding "hospitals weaning from formula makers' freebies"

1995

- ✓ Published first RIBC Breastfeeding Resource Director for Health Care Professionals
- ✓ Organized a panel of health insurance representatives & Dr. Richard Ohnmacht to

discuss coverage issues for breastfeeding mothers regarding LC visits, pumps, etc. The Blue Cross representatives formed a work group to address these concerns.

- 1996**
 - ✓ Second printing of RIBC Breastfeeding Resource Director for Health Care Professionals
 - ✓ RIBC and HEALTH sponsor "Breastfeeding: Strategies for Successful Outcomes" conference at the Quidnessett Country Club in North Kingstown (September 24)
- 1998**
 - ✓ State law enacted to protect mothers breastfeeding in public from disorderly conduct laws (RI Gen Laws 11-45-1)
- 1999**
 - ✓ RIBC and HEALTH, with the support of Michael Jordan's mother, launch statewide campaign in Newport during World Breastfeeding Week to promote breastfeeding as the Gold Standard of infant nutrition (August)
- 2000**
 - ✓ South County Hospital is first Rhode Island hospital to receive Baby-Friendly designation, Surgeon General David Satcher presents award and unveils DHHS Blueprint for Action on Breastfeeding at state-sponsored celebration
- 2001**
 - ✓ RI Breastfeeding Resource Directory reprinted
 - ✓ Campaign members to personally deliver Physicians Resource Packets to 105 physician's offices
 - ✓ Kathy Moren sets up Electronic Data Systems breastfeeding workplace program
 - ✓ Inception and first meeting of Physicians' Committee for Breastfeeding in RI
- 2002**
 - ✓ Walkathon at Roger Williams Zoo for World Breastfeeding week
 - ✓ Continue to update coverage of breast pumps and breastfeeding services with insurers
- 2003**
 - ✓ Physicians' Committee for Breastfeeding in RI successfully advocates for passage of Nursing Working Mothers law to facilitate breastfeeding in the workplace (RI Gen Laws 23-13.2-1)
 - ✓ Reprinting of RI Breastfeeding Resource Directory
 - ✓ World Breastfeeding Week picnic at Lincoln Woods (August)
 - ✓ RIBC officially incorporated with the IRS and the State of RI (October)
 - ✓ Newport Hospital receives Baby-Friendly designation (December)
 - ✓ Rhode Island WIC Program receives US Department of Agriculture "Using Loving Support to Build a Breastfeeding-Friendly Community" grant with RIBC serving as grant advisory board (Phase I: \$75,000, Phase II \$25,000)
 - ✓ Rhode Island WIC Program receives US Department of Health and Human Services grant to conduct community outreach to assist in launching National Breastfeeding Awareness Campaign as a Community Demonstration Project (Phase I: \$25,000, Phase II: \$10,000, Mini-Grant: \$5,000)
- 2004**
 - ✓ 50 health care providers from across the state attend 2-day "Using Loving Support to Build a Breastfeeding-Friendly Community" community-building training (February)
 - ✓ 22 health care providers attend CLC training in Attleboro, MA (April)
 - ✓ Rhode Island launches US Department of Health and Human Services "National Breastfeeding Awareness Campaign" as designated Community Demonstration

Project (June)

- ✓ Release of HEALTH childcare resources “Support Breastfeeding Mothers” and “Preparing and Storing Breastmilk: Tips for Childcare Providers” (August)
- ✓ Statewide media blitz for World Breastfeeding Week in movie theaters, busses, and at McCoy Stadium (August)
- ✓ Over 200 healthcare and child care providers attend “Using Loving Support to Build a Breastfeeding-Friendly Community” provider training (December 1 & 2)
- ✓ Release of “Breastfeeding Pocket Guide to Help You Help Your Patient” (December)
- ✓ 1st Lactation Consultant Sharing Event at Radisson Airport Hotel (December 2)
- ✓ RIBC partners with WIC to develop client and provider resources
- ✓ Renewed collaboration with RI health insurers

2005

- ✓ RIBC creates bumper stickers and license plate frames to sell for fundraising
- ✓ RIBC information included on newly launched HEALTH breastfeeding website at www.health.ri.gov/family/breastfeeding
- ✓ RIBC and HEALTH send letter encouraging RI birthing hospitals to adopt BFHI (June)
- ✓ Redesign and reprinting of Rhode Island Breastfeeding Resource Directory (Summer)
- ✓ Development of Breastfeeding Law Wallet Cards
- ✓ Breastfeeding displays posted in branch libraries for World Breastfeeding Week (August)
- ✓ RI WIC Program sponsors 75 RI health care providers to attend Certified Lactation Counselor Certificate Training Program in South County (November 28-December 2)

2006

- ✓ RIBC representatives participate in 1st United States Breastfeeding Coalition Conference in Alexandria, VA (January)
- ✓ 2nd Lactation Consultant Sharing Day at Airport Radisson Hotel (March 2)
- ✓ Development of RIBC vision, mission statement and goal
- ✓ Redesign of RIBC logo and letterhead
- ✓ RIBC learns that Women & Infants Hospital wants to pilot non-formula discharge bag for breastfeeding moms and coordinates with HEALTH to support this effort with a \$5,000 matching grant funded through the state CDC-sponsored obesity initiative
- ✓ Collaboration with 3 major health insurance companies to enhance breastfeeding benefits to low-income mothers
- ✓ UnitedHealthcare extends electric breast pump benefits to low income mothers returning to work and school
- ✓ HEALTH sponsors 5 VNA nurses to sit for IBCLC exam through Loving Support funds (July)
- ✓ Physicians’ Committee for Breastfeeding in RI develops Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace recognition mechanism and hosts first annual Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace Awards at EDS in Warwick (August)
- ✓ Movie theater advertising for World Breastfeeding Week (August)
- ✓ Collaboration with Healthy Eating & Active Living Collaborative to address breastfeeding objectives in state plan
- ✓ Distributed and promoted the use of appropriate breastfeeding pharmacology resources to primary health care providers and pharmacists

- ✓ Revision of Breastfeeding Pocket Guide to Help You Help Your Patient (November)
 - ✓ RI WIC Program and Women & Infants Hospital of RI co-sponsor 75 RI health care providers to attend Certified Lactation Counselor Certificate Training Program in South County (December 4-8)
 - ✓ Completion of USDA “Using *Loving Support* to Build a Breastfeeding-Friendly Community” grant
 - ✓ Westerly Hospital files Certificate of Intent to adopt BFHI
- 2007**
- ✓ Printing of 2007-2008 edition of Rhode Island Breastfeeding Resource Directory
 - ✓ 103 health care providers attend RIBC-sponsored conference “Breastfeeding the Near-Term Infant” with Molly Pessl, RN, IBCLC (October 9)
 - ✓ RIBC is one of ten United States breastfeeding coalitions to receive \$10,000 for initial “Business Case for Breastfeeding” grant from US Department of Health and Human Services (November)
 - ✓ HEALTH and RIBC send letter encouraging non-BFHI hospitals to adopt BFHI and offering for HEALTH to pay Certificate of Intent fee plus letter signed by multiple partners encouraging hospitals to stop promoting infant formula
 - ✓ Westerly Hospital receives Baby-Friendly designation (December)
- 2008**
- ✓ RIBC representatives participate in 2nd United States Breastfeeding Coalition Conference and “The Business Case for Breastfeeding” Train-the-Trainer program in Alexandria, VA (January)
 - ✓ Physicians’ Committee for Breastfeeding in RI successfully advocates for passage of new public breastfeeding law allowing a woman to breast or bottle-feed her child in any public place and providing remedies for denial of that right (RI Gen Laws 23-13.5)
 - ✓ RIBC rolls out promotion of “The Business Case for Breastfeeding” to local employers
 - ✓ Physicians’ Committee for Breastfeeding in RI develops “Breastfeeding Prescription”
 - ✓ RIBC sponsors 62 participants to attend Certified Lactation Counselor Certificate Training Program in Warwick (November 10-14)
- 2009**
- ✓ Women & Infants Hospital eliminates distribution of formula discharge bags for all patients after successfully piloting distribution of hospital discharge bags for breastfeeding moms (January)
 - ✓ RIBC representative invited by Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition to facilitate first meeting of Massachusetts Baby Friendly Collaborative and share Rhode Island’s experience with implementing BFHI (March 16)
 - ✓ Physicians’ Committee for Breastfeeding in RI and HEALTH develop Breast Pump Selection Criteria recommendations
 - ✓ Printing of 2009-2010 edition of Rhode Island Breastfeeding Resource Directory
 - ✓ New public breastfeeding law (RI Gen Laws 23-13.5) enacted and promoted widely through state media (March 1)
 - ✓ Release of Spanish Breastfeeding and Going Back to Work or School Brochure
 - ✓ Initiative for a Healthy Weight awards RIBC \$10,000 per year 4-year grant (August 2009-June 2013) to sustain workplace breastfeeding support initiatives including the Business Case for Breastfeeding and the Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace Awards
 - ✓ 112 health care providers attend RIBC-sponsored conference “Baby-Led Breastfeeding: from Theory to Practice” with Christina Smillie, MD (September 23)

2010

- ✓ RIBC representatives participate in 3rd United States Breastfeeding Coalition Conference in Alexandria, VA and lead sessions on “Engaging Insurers to Enhance Breastfeeding Promotion and Insurance Benefits” and “Workplace Breastfeeding Promotion in Rhode Island” (January)
- ✓ WIC and Healthy Babies, Happy Moms Inc. launch WIC breast pump loan program for WIC participants who are fully breastfeeding, underinsured, and returning to work or school (March)
- ✓ Passage of National Health Care Reform requires employers to provide reasonable break time for nursing mothers (March 23) www.dol.gov/whd/nursingmothers
- ✓ Development and release of Business Case for Breastfeeding mini-grant for employers to establish or enhance workplace lactation programs
- ✓ MomDocFamily approaches RIBC to help address difficulties of physician residents in identifying lactation accommodations in Rhode Island teaching hospitals
- ✓ RIBC partners with MomDocFamily and Lifespan to research and develop list of lactation accommodations for physicians and employees in all Rhode Island hospitals
- ✓ RIBC partners with URI to promote the Business Case for Breastfeeding to Rhode Island institutions of higher learning
- ✓ RIBC offers breastfeeding education support and resources to state nursing schools
- ✓ Revision of English Breastfeeding and Going Back to Work or School Brochure
- ✓ RIBC representatives join the Obesity Prevention in Early Child Care Steering Committee of the Eat Smart Move More Network
- ✓ RIBC sponsors 50 participants to attend Certified Lactation Counselor Certificate Training Program in Warwick (December 6-10)
- ✓ Coordinated and sent collective letter to BCBS re: termination of prenatal class coverage, resulting in RIBC expert consulting with BCBS on IBCLC home visit reimbursement (December)

2011

- ✓ RIBC and HEALTH convene coalition to improve maternity care practices (January)
- ✓ US Surgeon General releases revised Call to Action on Breastfeeding (January)
- ✓ IRS allows medical tax deduction and reimbursement by flexible health spending accounts for breastfeeding equipment (February)
- ✓ Michelle Obama promotes breastfeeding (February)
- ✓ Sent out two member surveys to collect feedback on RIBC (March & April)
- ✓ Release of 2011-2012 edition of Rhode Island Breastfeeding Resource Directory
- ✓ RIBC invited to participate in DHHS breastfeeding workplace panel in Washington, DC to present MomDocFamily initiative (May)
- ✓ IOM recommends to DHHS that lactation support and rental equipment be covered by insurance without copays or out of pocket expenses
- ✓ RIBC, HEALTH, and Women & Infants Hospital host Ob/Gyn Grand Rounds, Pediatric Grand Rounds, and a CME dinner talk entitled “Yes we can! Empowering mothers and infants in your practice to achieve their breastfeeding goals” with Ob/Gyn Alison Stuebe, MD (August 4 & 5)
- ✓ Rhode Island becomes the first bag-free state in the nation by eliminating the distribution of free formula discharge bags in all birthing hospitals (November)
- ✓ State house event with First Lady, Lieutenant Governor, Director of Health, and Marsha Walker to celebrate Rhode Island’s status as first “bag-free” state in nation

(November 28)

2012

- ✓ Launch of first independent website at www.ribreastfeeding.org (February 14)
- ✓ DHHS Office on Women's Health awards RIBC grant to help gather success stories from employers with solutions to accommodate breastfeeding hourly workers (March)
- ✓ RIBC shared banning the bags history on national CDC teleconference (March 21)
- ✓ RIBC and Women & Infants Hospital host "Breastfeeding Out of the Bag" conference for health care professionals (March 28)
- ✓ A DHHS Office on Women's Health representative conducts two-day visit to learn about successes of MomDocFamily initiative in Rhode Island hospitals and URI's lactation program (April)