



Texas Communities Putting Prevention to Work
Component II Special High Impact Initiative:

Lessons Learned from the Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite Policy Initiative and Implications for Future Action

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT: February 4, 2010-August 3, 2012



Family friendly. Worker friendly. Business friendly.

2012

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Acknowledgements

By working together, Texans can develop systems to implement evidence-based strategies that reduce barriers and increase support for breastfeeding in Texas. The Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) Mother-Friendly Worksite Program would like to thank the following stakeholders for assisting with the planning and implementation of the Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite Initiative:

Mother-Friendly Employer Technical Assistance Pilot Sites

Texas Breastfeeding Coalition and Local Breastfeeding Coalitions across Texas

Texas Association of Local WIC Directors

Texas Worksite Wellness Advisory Committee

CDC CPPW State-to-State Breastfeeding Networking Group Members

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Thank you for your invaluable contributions and support to this effort

Executive Summary

Breastfeeding support is among the most cost effective public health interventions and is a primary prevention strategy for both acute and chronic diseases impacting mothers and their children.¹ Maximum risk reduction is observed with six months of exclusive breastfeeding and a year or more of full breastfeeding.

Among working women, factors related to return to work are noted as the primary reason that women do not initiate breastfeeding or discontinue any or exclusive breastfeeding prematurely.² Mothers who return to work for more than 10 hours a week in the first year of their infant's lives are significantly less likely to report that they were able to breastfeed for as long as they wanted.³ Participation by employees in worksite lactation programs has been shown to significantly improve breastfeeding outcomes, improve infant health outcomes, and result in a significant return on investment for employers.⁴

In 1995, the Texas Legislature recognized “a mother’s responsibility to both her job and her child” and charged the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) with the development and maintenance of the Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite Program (MFWP), which recognizes organizations as “mother friendly” when they have voluntarily established and submitted to DSHS a worksite breastfeeding support policy in line with the program’s minimum criteria.

Initiative Program Overview

Recognizing the chance to expand the MFWP in a way that would have long-lasting impact, DSHS pursued a national funding opportunity to increase the capacity and reach of the program. In February 2010, DSHS received a competitive American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC’s) Communities Putting Prevention to Work – State and Territory Initiative – Component II Special High Impact Initiative (CPPW) to increase the reach and impact of the MFWP through the Mother-Friendly Worksite Policy Initiative (MFWPI).

The overall aim of the MFWPI is to bring the MFWP from a small-scale employer recognition program to a full-scale technical assistance and recognition program capable of reaching Texas employers across multiple sectors and geographic regions, developing their interests in establishing comprehensive, effective, and sustainable worksite lactation support policies and programs for their employees, and providing information, guidance and turn-key tools, to support and recognize their efforts. MFWPI is a multifaceted endeavor that applies the tenets of

¹ See Ip S, Chung M, Raman G, Chew P, et al. Breastfeeding and maternal and infant health outcomes in developed countries: evidence report/ technology assessment no. 153. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; 2007. AHRQ Publication No. 07-E007; American Academy of Pediatrics. Position statement: Breastfeeding and the use of human milk. *Pediatrics*. 2012; 129(3), e827–41.

² DSHS. Texas WIC Infant Feeding Practices Survey. 2009.

³ Stagg J, Saxton D, Mirchandani, G, Schiefelbein E, Erickson, T. The role of hospital and workplace support in meeting WIC Participant breastfeeding goals: from the Birthplace to the Workplace-- Texas, 2009. Poster Presentation, *Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Conference*, San Antonio, TX, 2010.

⁴ Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). (2008). The business case for breastfeeding: steps for creating a breastfeeding friendly worksite: bottom line benefits. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, HRSA.

social marketing to its strategies for sparking behavioral and cultural change: understanding audiences, demonstrating value to motivate specific behavioral changes, and minimizing barriers and competing demands. Figure 1 depicts the five major components of MFWPI:

- 1) An in-depth state-wide formative assessment with the key audiences (employers, mothers and their partners, and outreach partners) conducted through interviews and focus groups to explore needs, barriers, and perceived costs as well as assets, opportunities, and perceived benefits related to worksite lactation support.
- 2) An employer technical assistance pilot program process, involving 30 employers across the state, to develop, test, and refine tools and technical assistance for employers prior to a state wide roll out.
- 3) A targeted statewide media/communications campaign to increase community and employer awareness and interest in MFWP and other state resources to support working, breastfeeding mothers.
- 4) Programmatic enhancements including changes to the program’s administrative policy and development of new strategies, partnerships and tools to extend the capacity and reach of the MFWP to support employers in developing comprehensive worksite lactation support policies and programs.
- 5) Developing and strengthening strategic partnerships to ensure widespread impact and sustainability of the MFWPI.

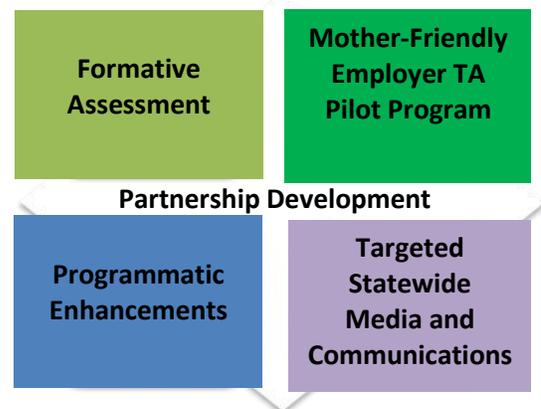


Figure 1 Major Components of MFWPI

The following goals and objectives were established to guide the MFWPI processes:

Goal 1: Increase the number of Texas Mother-Friendly Worksites that implement best-practice administrative policy and environmental changes to increase worksite support of breastfeeding.

- **Objective 1:** By March 2012, engage 20 or more Texas employers to implement best-practice worksite lactation support policy and program changes through the provision of a technical assistance program for MFWP. These employers should each represent multiple worksites, and include Texas state agencies and universities, public hospital districts, local public health departments, and the Texas Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Local Agencies.
- **Objective 2:** By March 2012, have at least 20 MFWPI pilot worksites report changes in organizational culture related to the implementation of their mother-friendly policies and programs.
- **Objective 3:** By August 2012, increase both statewide employer participation in the MFWP and the capacity of the MFWP, through the implementation of five or more targeted outreach, education, and assessment activities and/or programmatic changes.

Goal 2: Sustain and spread policy change efforts by increasing the capacity of Texas employers to support women in combining working and breastfeeding through MFWP improvements and expansion as indicated by formative assessment.

- **Objective 4:** By March 2012, develop, enhance, test, and refine five or more MFWPI tools, messages, strategies, and/or resources – in response to technical assistance needs identified through the MFWPI pilot worksite technical assistance program – to support Texas employers in planning, implementing, and/or evaluating worksite lactation support policies and programs in preparation for statewide outreach and MFWP worksite support. Ensure that there are open channels of communication between pilot sites and the DSHS MFWPI to allow direct, ongoing discussion of pilot site challenges and requests for customized assistance as needs arise.
- **Objective 5:** By August 2012, develop three or more MFWP strategy and program process enhancements to address needs and barriers to worksite lactation support in Texas as identified by key target audiences through social marketing research focus groups and in-depth interviews.

Goal 3: Increase exposure to and interest in the MFWP in a wide variety of employment sectors through the development and implementation of a targeted and sustainable communication strategy and social marketing that leverages untapped communication networks, partnerships, and mechanisms.

- **Objective 6:** By August 2012, develop a comprehensive communication strategy with key messages, a target audience perceived “cost-benefit” analysis, and an analysis of competing media. By October 2012, increase awareness, exposure, and interest in the MFWP and the benefits of mother-friendly business practices, as measured by 1,000,000 or more impressions in online, print, and outdoor advertising and a 200% increase in designated Mother-Friendly Worksites (February 3, 2010 Baseline = 233).

Key Target Audiences. Texas employers are the primary audience of the MFWPI. Important secondary audiences are mothers, families, and MFWP outreach partners, and tertiary audiences include working mothers’ co-workers and general community members. MFWPI activities are designed to reach these audiences with targeted messages and strategies to increase motivation and reduce barriers for employers to develop worksite programs, policies, and environments that are supportive of breastfeeding.

Key Partners. Engaging partners both within and outside of DSHS is an integral core component of the MFWPI. Throughout the project period, leveraging existing—and developing new—partnerships has served several important functions. First, MFWPI staff has engaged in active communication with key partners to gain their ongoing input, feedback, and expert guidance in order to inform and shape the initiative design, implementation, and evaluation processes. Second, partners have extended DSHS’ capacity to communicate about the MFWPI by passing information forward through their networks to promote awareness about the initiative and to disseminate successes. Finally, several partners have adopted and integrated MFWPI strategies into their own work by educating and informing mothers and employers in their communities, hosting media events, or developing small- or large-scale local initiatives to actively recruit and assist employers to become designated as Texas-Mother-Friendly Worksites.

Key partners included DSHS' family and community health and chronic disease prevention programs; state and local breastfeeding, chronic disease prevention, health and wellness, and perinatal health coalitions, organizations, and associations; WIC Local Agency directors, breastfeeding coordinators, and peer counselors; chronic disease prevention and maternal and child health staff within regional and local health departments; state agency and university wellness coordinators; Texas Association of Local WIC Directors; Texas Worksite Wellness Advisory Board; hospitals participating in the Texas Ten Step program; staff of worksite lactation support initiatives in other states; and representatives from designated Texas Mother-Friendly Worksites.

Activities: Start up activities included soliciting, selecting and establishing contracts with vendors to extend DSHS' capacity by providing support for different components of the MFWPI. The MFWPI was supported by a contract for a graduate student intern program to provide staff support, and contracts for formative assessment, social marketing, and program evaluation support.

A social marketing firm conducted formative qualitative assessment activities, including interviews with outreach partners, MFWP participating and non-participating employers, and focus groups with mothers, fathers, and employers. Focus groups and interviews reached 221 individuals in 36 Texas cities and nine states outside of Texas. The firm also field-tested creative materials and key campaign messages via focus groups with 52 individuals in three Texas cities, and they conducted a portion of the focus groups with mothers, fathers, and field-testing participants in Spanish.

DSHS tested and finalized its tools, resources, and technical assistance approach for employers by engaging select employers from around the state to participate in a pilot program providing support, and for many participating sites, funding awards, to develop comprehensive worksite lactation policies and programs in line with MFWP criteria. DSHS strategically recruited 30 organizations for their potential to impact significant numbers of employees and to spread this impact to other organizations within their spheres of influence. The MFWPI provided participants with training and guided them through a multi-step worksite lactation support development process following established best-practices. MFWPI staff provided technical assistance and collected feedback through frequent and regular communications by webinar, phone calls, emails, and in many cases, face-to-face meetings. A social marketing firm also conducted a point-in-time qualitative assessment that included in-depth interviews with representatives from all pilot sites.

The MFWPI developed a media and communications campaign, as well as ongoing MFWP strategy, though an analysis of the costs and benefits that each target audience experienced in response to key messages about breastfeeding and mother-friendly work environments. Materials and key messages educated employers and empowered breastfeeding employees and included the following elements:

- A robust MFWP website – www.TexasMotherFriendly.org – housing key program information, role model business success stories, and comprehensive resources to aid employers in developing worksite lactation support programs and policies.

- Enhancements to the worksite section of www.Breastmilkcounts.com, an award winning website targeting mothers and families with breastfeeding support information.
- Print, outdoor, and online advertisements targeted at employers, mothers, and the general public.
- Outreach to business influencers through exhibits through employer-oriented conferences, phone calls, direct mail, and blogger engagement.
- An array of materials and resources, including an employer technical assistance toolkit, an outreach partner toolkit, a congratulatory communications toolkit for employers, and tools to support new mothers in planning for return to work.

Along with developing marketing and communication strategies and materials, program enhancement activities included implementation of several administrative policy changes during the project period to increase the appeal and reach of the MFWP, including: aligning MFWP minimum criteria for provision of space and frequency of breaks with the new “Reasonable Break Time for Nursing Mothers” provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act; adding additional levels of MFWP recognition for employers with more comprehensive support programs; and formally integrating MFWP activities into several other DSHS initiatives.

Settings. The MFWPI was a statewide initiative, and all components of the initiative—employer technical assistance with pilot worksites, formative qualitative interviews and focus groups, media and communications, program enhancements and partnership development—extended across all geographic regions of Texas.

Summary of Evaluation Questions and Methods

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Mother-Friendly Worksite Program, in consultation and communication with researchers from the DSHS Office of Program Decision Support, maintained oversight of the MFWPI evaluation. DSHS contracted with the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSC-SA) to facilitate development of an evaluation plan and to conduct assessment activities, including an employee survey within pilot employer worksites. DSHS contracted with SUMA Social Marketing for qualitative formative and summative research activities and for support with synthesis of evaluation findings to date. The DSHS and UTHSC-SA Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) approved the use of human subject participants in evaluation activities.

The MFWPI is envisioned as a five-year initiative. The current evaluation marks its midpoint and the conclusion of CPPW funding. The report as a whole evaluates the MFWPI work completed from February 2010 through July 2012, and as such contains only limited summative findings. The primary intended users of this evaluation report are the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), states, territories, and other public health entities. The aims of this evaluation report are to present a model of a comprehensive public health initiative for other states and entities to replicate, to highlight and acknowledge the contributions of all current partners and stakeholders, and to engage new MFWP supporters and further the work of the initiative.

To ascertain progress toward achievement of MFWPI goals, the MFWPI established indicators for each objective and collected data using a mixed-methods approach that analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data. The Initiative collected data through interviews, focus groups,

document review, surveys, and other methods to provide a comprehensive, rich context for analyses. Analyses focused on the following evaluation questions:

1. To what extent were mother-friendly worksites effectively implemented in participating pilot employer worksites?
2. By what processes were mother-friendly worksites effectively implemented in participating pilot employer worksites?
3. How can the technical assistance provided by MFWP be improved?
4. To what extent did employer and community engagement in MFWP increase?
5. In what ways did the MFWPI make a difference in state and local level administrative policy and environmental change?

Key Findings, Achievements and Lessons Learned

At present, the MFWPI can describe several key results, accomplishments, and benchmarks that indicate progress toward widespread impact, and can make initial recommendations for improvement and future action.

As of Fall 2012, the MFWPI contributed to a stronger MFWP, including:

- A 481% increase—from 233 to 1120—in designated Mother-Friendly worksites.
- An array of vetted and branded tools, templates, and resources.
- A host of new partners and supporters in Texas state agencies, local public health departments, public hospitals, WIC Local Agencies, and beyond.
- The media campaign has resulted in more than 200-million impressions to raise the level of awareness of and support for workplace breastfeeding needs across Texas and to drive employers along the continuum of action, resulting in 33,721 unique visitors to TexasMotherFriendly.org since the full launch of media efforts in May, 2012.

At the time of this evaluation, sites participating in the Mother-Friendly Employer Technical Assistance Pilot Program were in the process of implementing their programs and beginning to track their impacts on employees. Together they have established policies that cover a total of 118,540 employees across the state. A point-in-time evaluation based on 108 in-depth interviews with representatives from all pilot sites revealed that sites appreciated the intentional flexibility, individual attention, and tools, templates, and trainings they have received to support their program planning and implementation efforts. In addition, active multidisciplinary worksite lactation support program development committees were successful in gaining organizational support for their programs.

Many pilot participants are using the momentum of the initiative as a launch pad for further breastfeeding support and health promotion outreach within their spheres of influence. Examples include:

- A public health department pilot site in San Antonio that initiated a mother-friendly policy and program for the entire City of San Antonio municipality.
- A pilot site representative at a state agency that established a mother-friendly policy for the entire Texas Health and Human Services Enterprise, consisting of five state agencies, and also established facility management procedures which stipulated that any new buildings housing over 75 employees must include a lactation room.

- A participating hospital that leveraged leadership’s engagement in the MFWPI to draw awareness, focus and support for other breastfeeding initiatives and achieved Texas Ten Step designation within two months of Mother-Friendly Worksite designation. They also established an infant feeding committee and set a goal to achieve Baby-Friendly Hospital designation within two years.

Partnership development has been a key tactic throughout the MFWPI to develop infrastructure that supports sustainability in the absence of fiscal resources. MFWP staff strengthened and expanded their bases of support through direct outreach and education (e.g., at a conference of human resources professionals), by enhancing the pilot sites’ capacities to be leaders and models, and by collaborating with other state and local public health endeavors to give the MFWP a platform for shared strategic and funding priorities. For example, at the municipal level, the City of Austin’s Healthy Places, Healthy People community transformation initiative to reduce preventable deaths due to tobacco and obesity includes worksite breastfeeding support as a key obesity prevention strategy, and is using tools developed during MFWPI to support employers in becoming Mother-Friendly Worksites. At the state level, Mother-Friendly Worksite activities were included as a component of *Healthy Texas Babies*, a statewide initiative to reduce infant mortality and poor birth outcomes and improve infant health outcomes.

The MFWP executed program rule amendments that improved the program in response to feedback from stakeholders, and to enhance long-term evaluation capabilities, the MFWP incorporated breastfeeding elements into two population-based surveys, including the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and the Texas WIC Infant Feeding Practices Study. DSHS continues to identify opportunities to sustain program interest, participation, and growth efficiently. As data collection continues, DSHS will be able to assess how easily employees are able to access mother-friendly accommodations, and ultimately, whether mothers feel empowered to meet their breastfeeding goals and whether public health is improved.

Recommendations and Next Steps

The current MFWPI evaluation provides important feedback to direct and focus DSHS’ future efforts to sustain its achievements. Strong partnerships have been an important element throughout MFWPI, and they remain the keys to continuing a sustainable momentum, expanding the program’s reach, and facilitating integration of the MFWP into existing and new structures. DSHS will continue to foster partnerships developed during the project period and has set targets for future partnership development. DSHS plans to continue communication efforts through a variety of channels identified through the MFWPI. These efforts will ensure that the MFWPI is widely disseminated to stakeholder audiences and that feedback is continually gathered to inform future activities. Assessment of MFWPI processes, reach, and impact will continue and have been built into several DSHS reporting structures to ensure regular review and accountability.

To date, the MFWPI accomplished a great deal in a relatively short period of time, engaging new organizations, partners, and supporters, while developing its capacity to ensure that this progress continues. These accomplishments – and this evaluation report – will be communicated to all involved in the initiative to highlight their important roles and the current known impacts. The infrastructure built by DSHS over the past two and one-half years has made the MFWP an exemplary program that can sustain itself as it continues to grow and develop.