

# ▶ 2015 Annual Report of the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act (LB 692)

**Health Department:** ▶Sarpy/Cass Department of Health and Wellness

All local public health departments receiving funds under the Act are required to report on the activities related to the core public health functions carried out during the fiscal year July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015.

Please respond to the questions and provide specific examples and outcomes wherever possible. You may not be able to respond to every question but be as complete as possible.

This report is due to the Office of Community Health & Performance Management by **October 1, 2015**. Please e-mail to Pat DeLancey ([patti.delancey@nebraska.gov](mailto:patti.delancey@nebraska.gov)) and Colleen Svoboda ([colleen.svoboda@nebraska.gov](mailto:colleen.svoboda@nebraska.gov))

# 2015 Annual Report of the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act (LB 692)

## **1. Monitor health status and understand health issues facing the community.**

- a. How do you collect and maintain data that provide information on conditions of public health importance and on the health status of the population?

The Department collects and maintains different types of data for different purposes. Primarily, we collect and share data with the public regarding the health of our community. Our Department completes a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) approximately every three years. In the spring of 2015, the Department began planning for our new CHNA, partnering with other metropolitan local health departments and hospital systems. Results of the CHNA are expected in October of 2015.

The Department maintains a Network of Care website featuring health information of importance to the residents of our two counties. The link to the Network of Care website is found on the Department's main website. Network of Care provides information including chronic disease, health risk factors, injury and violence, maternal and child health issues, and the physical environment. The Network of Care website averages over 250 visitors per month.

In addition to collecting and providing information to the general public, Department staff also collect health data from schools and individuals. This information is kept private and reported to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) through the Guardian website. Personal health data is collected for the purpose of disease investigations and Tuberculosis case management. Data is collected via phone calls to physician offices, laboratories, personal interviewing, electronic record reviewing and collaboration with other State and local health departments.

School absentee data is collected by Department staff each Wednesday during the school year from 68 local school buildings. The information is shared with DHHS through the Guardian website. A database is maintained in the Department which provides specific numerical data on the total absent, average absentee rate, total number ill for five syndromes (flue-like, rash/fever, gastrointestinal, strep and asthma) and the percentage of illnesses due to each syndrome.

This past fiscal year, the Department's School Health Coordinator completed 212 nutrition assessments for children enrolled in the Sarpy County Head Start program.

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The assessment included a 24-hour dietary recall, food preference list (by food group) and weight for height percentile based on the CDC growth charts. Iron status is also assessed based on the hemoglobin/hematocrit lab results. Dietary recommendations were made based upon the Nebraska WIC Nutrition Program guidelines. A copy of the assessment and feedback was mailed to parents. During the year, 140 nutrition assessments were also completed for the Cass County Head Start program. This included Plattsmouth, Weeping Water and Conestoga school districts.

After the assessments were completed, identified health concerns were discussed with the Health Manager at the Head Start Office. These concerns included: very low or high weight for height percentiles, food allergies or intolerances, special medical diets or conditions, any unusual dietary patterns detected in the assessment and any parental comments or concerns. The Department's dietitian provided educational handouts to parents requiring additional information.

b. What major problems or trends have you identified in the past year?

- Inadequate mental health resources and community awareness related to postpartum mental health.
- Shortage of family and parenting resources for those who live above the poverty line and need assistance.
- Inadequate access to Women, Infant and Children (WIC) services for residents of Sarpy and Cass counties.
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's) being reported by Offutt Air Force Base and no follow-up education or data collection provided by SCDHW.
- Low percentage of children consistently wearing helmets while bike riding.
- Because of the awareness to test for Hepatitis C, numbers remain significant across the nation and in Nebraska. CDC continues to recommend all Baby Boomers receive a one-time Hepatitis C test to protect and save lives. The Department followed up on 78 Hepatitis C cases in 2014.
- High expense of Shingles vaccination results in low vaccination rates among seniors.
- Basic foot care for seniors.

c. If you updated your community health assessment during the past year, describe the process and the major outcomes.

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In the spring of 2015, the Department partnered with two metropolitan local health departments, three hospital systems, and two community agencies to conduct a new Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Results of the CHNA are expected in October of 2015.

Funding Source: Both LB 692 & LB 1060

## **2. Protect people from health problems and health hazards.**

- a. What key activities did you complete in the past year to prevent, minimize, and contain adverse health events and conditions resulting from communicable diseases; food-, water-, and vector-borne outbreaks; chronic diseases; environmental hazards; injuries; and health disparities?

West Nile Virus (WNV) surveillance began in early June. As of September 18, 2015, the Department had submitted two birds to DHHS for WNV testing. One of the two birds tested positive for the virus. Over 2,500 packages of mosquito repellent, 50 activity books, and 80 infant mosquito nets were distributed throughout the community. Thirteen mini-grants were awarded to cities within our service area to provide WNV-related prevention activities, including mosquito prevention, city-wide junk clean-up days, and public education.

The Department conducted inspections of public swimming pools in Sarpy County. Under the guidance of the DHHS Swimming Pool Program, Department staff inspected 48 swimming pools for compliance with Nebraska Regulation Title 178 Chapter 2: Operation and Management of Public Swimming Pools.

Department disease investigators conducted several outbreak investigations this past year. In each event, guidance was given on a daily basis as needed, and observation letters, prophylactic letters and fact sheets were issued as needed.

Outbreaks have included:

- Pertussis outbreaks at local schools
- Norovirus outbreak at a local school
- Norovirus outbreaks at assisted living facilities
- Influenza outbreak at a local long term care facility

Upon notification of Class B1 (clinically active tuberculosis) and Class B2 (clinically inactive tuberculosis) immigrants entering our jurisdiction and needing documentation of follow up care, the Department's public health nurse collaborated with local civil surgeons to set up appointments for Tuberculosis evaluations. The

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public health nurse also coordinated payment for services via State Tuberculosis Program dependent upon insurance status of the immigrant.

Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass, housed out of the Department, provided numerous safety presentations to parent groups, elementary schools, daycare centers, and camp groups. Presentations included (with number of persons educated):

- Bike Safety (1,058)
- Fire Safety (86)
- Pedestrian Safety (143)
- Playground Safety (34)
- Poison Safety (98)
- Stranger Danger (165)
- Sun Safety (339)
- Handwashing (749)

The Department's Senior CARE (Community, Advocacy, Resources and Education) program Coordinator served a total of 947 seniors, including 263 participants in the wellness clinics, 638 attendees at community discussions, and provided 26 in-home visits. Seniors received information focused on chronic diseases, improving health, preventing injuries, and identifying and connecting seniors with necessary community services.

- b. What activities did you complete for emergency preparedness (e.g., planning, exercises, response activities) in the past year?

The activities completed for emergency preparedness are conducted under the PHEP and CRI funding sources. However, LB692 funds would be utilized to cover emergency preparedness activities such as staff training on emergency response plans and exercises.

Emergency preparedness activities funded by LB692 focused on Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) planning and response. The Department's Emergency Preparedness staff, public health nurses, and management personnel were actively involved in the EVD response by meeting with community partners to develop a response plan, creating and disseminating EVD-related information to the public, and by monitoring individuals post-travel from an Ebola- affected country.

Funding Source: LB 692

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### **3. Give people information they need to make healthy choices.**

- a. Provide two to three examples of key information that was provided to the public related to physical, behavioral, environmental, social, economic, and other issues affecting health.

The Department provided health and safety information to the public through our website and Facebook page. The Department's website provides extensive information on current news releases, rules and regulations, disease fact sheets, and emergency planning. The website is updated almost daily to ensure the most current information remains available to the public at all times. During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, 9,340 visits were made to the website, with over 22,500 viewed pages. Information is posted on the Department's Facebook page multiple times each week to update the community about current events and relevant health-related information. The Department's page had a yearly post reach total of 5,100, up from 2,280 during the previous fiscal year.

The Department's Environmental Health Coordinator participated in the NET panel discussion titled "Radon Awareness" on July 24, 2014. The half-hour discussion was aired throughout the month of September and archived online at [netnebraska.org](http://netnebraska.org). The panel consisted of radon professionals and educators in Nebraska, as well as a lung cancer survivor and a homeowner who mitigated her home for radon. The discussion brought awareness to radon, the dangers of exposure to elevated radon levels, and the testing and mitigation process.

Department public health nurses provide education to patients, families, physicians and schools during disease investigations. Disease-specific fact sheets are offered to assist individuals in learning about the organism causing the illness, how it is contracted, and steps to prevent further spread in the home, at work or school or in the community. In cases involving outbreaks at daycare centers, group homes, or schools, the Department public health nurses work with administrators and facility nurses to distribute letters to residents and/or guardians with instructions for observation and/or treatment.

The Department's Senior CARE program Coordinator arranged a series of three presentations concerning diabetes care and prevention at area senior centers and community centers. The series was facilitated by a Certified Diabetes Educator.

- b. Provide two to three examples of health promotion programs that were implemented to address identified health problems.

This past fiscal year, the Department's Sharing and Caring program implemented the following programs aimed at pregnant women and new parents:

- Weekly community parenting and breastfeeding support group
- Lactation support in-office at the Department free of charge
- Tobacco-free pregnancy education

The National Certified Child Passenger Technicians at the Department performed 62 Child Passenger Safety Seat inspections this year, and gave away 42 seats to families who could not otherwise afford seats. These seats were purchased by the Department with grant funds.

This past fiscal year, the Senior CARE program Coordinator expanded the basic foot care and blood pressure clinics from the five senior center clinics to include independent living communities for seniors and the home visitation program for homebound seniors.

During the summer and fall of 2014, the Department dietitian worked with two local convenience stores to pilot test a new Snack & Go initiative to promote healthy snacking. The program helped store owners to identify healthy snack options at their site and provided Snack & Go signage to promote healthy snacks to consumers. After initially meeting with store owners or managers to provide them with information about the program, the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition completed an in-store assessment to identify existing healthy products which align with the USDA Smarter Snack Standards. The Department dietitian worked with store managers to set up end cap displays, shelf talker signage and placement for the window clings to promote healthy items. Recommendations were also made to add healthy items such as fresh fruit, fruit cups, healthy cereals (single serve) and low fat milk to the store inventory. The Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition conducted an evaluation of the program in November 2014. The following results were summarized in their evaluation report: the healthy snacks were displayed in highly visible, designated areas of the store as well as throughout the store. Through observations in customer purchases and the increased demand to restock the healthy snacks, store owners responded that Snack & Go items had been consistent sellers. Despite these good results, both stores reported a decline in fresh fruit sales during the winter months. Experience that has been gained during this pilot test will be useful for implementing Snack & Go in a school setting.

Funding Source: Both LB 692 & LB 1060

#### **4. Engage the community to identify and solve health problems.**

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- a. Describe the process for developing your community health improvement plan (CHIP) and/or implementing your work plan.

The Department's 2011 CHNA identified childhood obesity as a major health concern for our jurisdiction. In 2014, the Department partnered with Midlands Hospital (a partner on the CHNA) to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to address childhood obesity. CHI Health had already implemented an evidence-based program called Healthy Families at several sites in the area. Midlands Hospital had community funding available to expand on the program and to implement it in Sarpy County. The department dietitian partnered with the Sarpy YMCA, CHI Health Midlands Hospital and the Douglas/Sarpy County Extension to implement the Healthy Families program in Sarpy County. Healthy Families is a free family-based community intervention that is focused on improving the health behaviors of overweight and obese youth and their families. Families with one or more children between the ages of 6 to 18 years old and having a BMI in the 85th percentile or higher qualified for the program. The eight week program consisted of 90 minute lessons and physical activity per week led by a team of health professionals. Healthy Family sessions were offered twice in Sarpy County during the past fiscal year.

- b. Describe other efforts where your department engaged with the public health system and community in identifying and addressing health problems through collaborative processes.
- What were the evidence-based strategies that were implemented?

Our Department, through a grant from Tobacco Free Sarpy, provided educational resources and information to pregnant women at Essential Pregnancy Services in Bellevue about the risks of tobacco use during pregnancy.

Our Department is currently working with the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) administrative staff at the Douglas County Health Department in gathering data on WIC services from current enrollees and the community to establish ways of making WIC more accessible to the residents of Sarpy County.

Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass holds monthly meetings in both Sarpy and Cass Counties in which local partners discuss current health and safety problems and how we can collaborate to make a difference.

The Department's Senior CARE program Coordinator partnered with the Papillion Senior Center to offer a health fair at the Papillion Farmer's Market to bring awareness about physical activity and healthy eating for seniors. The program Coordinator also partnered with the Creighton School of Pharmacy to offer health-

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related presentations, facilitated by pharmacy students, to the senior centers in Cass and Sarpy counties.

The Department dietitian worked with a local school nurse to develop a focus group project for middle schools students in an after school program. The students were asked to develop a fun catch phrase to promote the Snack & Go program. The students also completed a survey about Snack & Go consumer messaging. A total of 18 surveys were completed. The results of the surveys are being used to develop new promotional materials that can be pilot tested in school stores and concession stands to promote healthy snacks.

Funding Source: Both LB 692 & LB 1060

## **5. Develop public health policies and plans.**

- a. What policies have you proposed, supported, and implemented that improve population health and/or reduce disparities?

The Department was active in the Friends of Public Health group again this year. During the legislative session, Friends worked to educate State Senators about local health department funding and the need for a permanent funding increase. The Department's Board of Health strongly supported these efforts.

- b. Describe your efforts to develop and implement a quality improvement plan for your department.

The Department drafted a quality improvement plan in 2014. Key staff were then identified to sit on the Quality Council. Implementation of the quality improvement plan is scheduled for the fall of 2015.

- c. What are your health department's top 3-5 community health priorities?

Following the completion of our Community Health Needs Assessment in 2011, the Department's Board of Health set the following priorities for the Department:

1. Develop a plan for improved senior care in Sarpy and Cass Counties
  2. Attain national public health accreditation by 2017
  3. Expand public health emergency preparedness
  4. Explore community partnerships to focus on risky behaviors.
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d. What are the top 3-5 community health challenges?

In the spring of 2015, the Department partnered with two metropolitan local health departments, three hospital systems, and two community agencies to conduct a new Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Results of the CHNA are expected in October of 2015. After reviewing the new data, Department staff and Board of Health will determine the top health challenges and set priorities to address them.

Funding Source: LB 692

**6. Enforce public health laws and regulations.**

- a. Describe your efforts to educate members of your community on public health laws, policies, regulations, and ordinances and how to comply with them.

The Department's Environmental Health Coordinator handled the intake of most inquiries concerning public health laws and regulations. Information regarding the law, as well as resources, were provided to the public. The Department worked with city and county code enforcement departments to ensure citizen concerns were addressed and handled.

The Department's public health nurses provide education to the community regarding Nebraska laws related to childhood immunizations and local school district policies regarding head lice, scabies, and bedbugs.

The Child Passenger Safety Technicians at the Department offer monthly safety seat inspection stations. In addition to teaching caregivers the proper way to install the safety seat, education is provided regarding child passenger safety laws in Nebraska.

- b. What laws and regulations have you helped enforce to protect the public's health?

The Department conducted inspections of public swimming pools in Sarpy County. Under the guidance of the DHHS Swimming Pool Program, Department staff inspected 48 swimming pools for compliance with Nebraska Regulation Title 178 Chapter 2: Operation and Management of Public Swimming Pools.

The Department responded to complaints of violations of the Nebraska Clean Indoor Air Act, Title 178 Chapter 7. The Environmental Health Coordinator visited three

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businesses to discuss the complaint and provide the owner with information regarding the act.

Department public health nurses helped to enforce Nebraska Regulation Title 173: Communicable Diseases. Communicable disease investigations, Tuberculosis case management, school health, and immunizations were all addressed and enforced by Department staff.

The Department utilized our Quarantine and Isolation (Q & I) regulations this year to ensure the public was protected from Ebola Virus Disease. As residents returned from Ebola-affected countries, Department staff monitored client travel and medical conditions per the regulations and Department protocol.

Funding Source: LB 692

## **7. Help people receive health services.**

- a. Describe the gaps that your department has identified in personal health services for your jurisdiction.
  - There is a shortage of resources for uninsured adults in Sarpy County.
  - There is a lack of support for those attempting to navigate the health care system, particularly for immigrants or those who do not speak or understand English well.
  - There is a need for a local public health clinic for those who do not have insurance, or those whose insurance is too costly.
  - There is a need for a STD education and prevention program.
  - There is a need for a program that can help families become physically healthy.
  
- b. Describe the strategies and services that you have supported and implemented to increase access to health care and establish systems of personal health services, including preventive and health promotion services, in partnership with the community.
  - The Department's Maternal Child Health nurses have established partnerships with Early Head Start programs in Sarpy and Cass counties, as well as with Eagle for their early childhood grant, to provide services to their enrollees.

- Department staff partner with many community groups to increase awareness of available services and resources for those we service, such as: Essential Pregnancy Services, Cass County Inter-Agency group, Papillion-La Vista and Bellevue Early Childhood Regional Planning Committees, Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Assault (CASDA) of Sarpy, the Nebraska Breastfeeding Coalition, Sarpy and Cass County Head Start programs.
- Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass utilizes different Child Passenger Car Seat grant opportunities to ensure seats are available to those families who could not otherwise afford a safe seat.
- The Department’s Senior CARE basic foot care and blood pressure clinics provide low or no cost services to seniors in the community. The Senior CARE program Coordinator partners with health professionals and students to provide free presentations on a variety of health topics.
- The Department also partners with the American Cancer Society to intake no-cost colorectal cancer screening kits throughout the year.

Funding Source: LB 692

## **8. Maintain a competent public health workforce.**

- a. Describe your efforts to encourage the development of a sufficient number of qualified public health workers (e.g., provide internship opportunities or presentations to promote public health as a career).

In 2014, Department staff completed the “Council on Linkages Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals” to assess staff competency in public health and to guide professional development. Based on the results of the Core Competency assessment, agency-specific training was identified and assigned to staff monthly for the first year. Staff will repeat the Core Competency assessment annually, with quarterly trainings assigned from that point on.

Over the past several years, the Department has welcomed Nursing students from several of the local colleges who have been assigned a project with a local health department. The students rotate among the Department public health nurses, gaining perspectives on maternal and child health nursing, senior care nursing, Safe Kids, and disease investigations. Many of these students have gone farther with the Department and given presentations on senior topics and represented the Department at health fairs and events.

- b. Describe the activities that you have completed to establish and implement a workforce development plan.

A Workforce Development Plan was finalized and implemented in the winter of 2014. Department staff will repeat the Core Competency assessment annually, with quarterly trainings assigned from that point on.

Funding Source: LB 692

## **9. Evaluate and improve programs and interventions.**

- a. Provide at least two examples of your evaluation activities related to evidence-based public health programs.

This year, Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass improved our presentation evaluation to include some key questions. The evaluation is left at each presentation site along with a self-addressed stamped envelope for the convenience of the host. The new questions will provide more precise data to make improvements in the presentations.

Policy and environmental interventions that make access to healthy food choices easier are more likely to achieve the greatest benefits and broadest reach when it comes to obesity prevention. Healthy corner stores have demonstrated success in increasing availability and sales of healthier foods (grocery items). The Snack & Go program was implemented to help convenient store owners increase availability and promoting of snacks that meet the USDA Healthy Snack Guidelines. Healthy snacks were displayed in highly visible, designated areas of the store as well as throughout the store. Through observations in customer purchases and the increased demand to restock the healthy snacks, store owners responded that Snack & Go items had been consistent sellers. Evaluation of the Snack & Go (healthy snack) program was provided by the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition.

- b. Provide two examples of quality improvement initiatives that have been completed or are in process.
- The Department's Sharing and Caring Program converted the home visitation documentation from paper to electronic, which will allow program and participant data to be continuously accessed.
  - The Department employs three staff members who are trained disease investigators. The investigators regularly provide quality control for the
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other investigators' cases by reading through the electronic investigation report and offering advice prior to finalizing the case. Additional training may result if common errors are found.

- c. Describe your efforts to measure the performance of the health department (i.e., implement a performance management system).

The Department drafted the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan in the fall of 2014. Implementation of the plan has yet to begin.

Funding Source: LB 692

## **10. Contribute to and apply the evidence base of public health.**

- a. Provide at least two examples of evidence-based programs your department is implementing.

The Department partnered with the Sarpy YMCA, CHI Health Midlands Hospital and the Douglas/Sarpy County Extension to implement the Healthy Families program. It is a free family-based community intervention that is focused on improving the health behaviors of overweight/obese youth and their families. Families with one or more children between the ages of 6 to 18 years old and having a BMI in the 85th percentile or higher qualified for the program. The program started on September 11, 2014 and lasted for 8 weeks. During that time, families also received a complimentary membership to the Sarpy YMCA. Families met once per week for lessons which consisted of 30 minutes of physical activity and one hour of classroom discussion including a healthy meal. The lessons were taught by a team of health professionals specializing in nutrition, physical fitness and behavioral health. Class topics included: healthy goal setting, overcoming barriers, healthy and affordable food choices, dealing with emotions, support networks, role modeling, sensible serving sizes, and label reading and limiting sugar. On week seven, families participated in a grocery store tour with a dietitian from Douglas/Sarpy Extension and the health department dietitian. Families learned about selecting fresh produce, unit pricing, label reading and selecting whole wheat products. Families used these new skills to develop a healthy meal for under \$10.00 that could feed a family of four. The final week of class, each family made one healthy food item and shared it at the potluck graduation party! Due to the popularity of this class, in February 2015 another Healthy Families session was offered in Sarpy County. The third session of Healthy Families began September 2015 in Sarpy County. The Department's dietitian is working to offer the program in Cass County as well.

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Sarpy County has been reported as having the nation's highest per capita incidence of Shaken Baby Syndrome. Because of this, the Department's Sharing and Caring program began implementing the evidence-based program The Period of PURPLE Crying in June of 2015.

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- b. Describe how you have collaborated with researchers to conduct any research studies (e.g., completed surveys, interviews, or focus groups).

In the spring of 2015, the Department partnered with two metropolitan local health departments, three hospital systems, and two community agencies to conduct a new Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). Results of the CHNA are expected in October of 2015. The results will be utilized to develop a new strategic plan and community health improvement plan.

Funding Source: LB 692

11. Indicate your status related to accreditation.
- Accredited
  - Applied – in process
  - Will apply within next two years
  - Will apply within next five years
  - Do not currently intend to apply

Will apply within the next two years

## **STORYTELLING**

Highlight at least one significant accomplishment or success story for your department during July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015. What was the impact of public health on individuals and families in your community? What did you accomplish? What outcomes or impact did you achieve? Did the success promote efficiency or effectiveness? Does the success link to or support a broader strategic plan, health

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improvement plan, or specific essential service? What new partnerships were established? (Please limit to 250 words)

The Department is proud to staff two Certified Lactation Counselors in our maternal and child health nursing program. The MCH nurses strive to improve breastfeeding success in our community by offering lactation support during home visits, in-office lactation counseling, and a weekly support group.

Our MCH nurses have assisted several mothers in being successful with breastfeeding after previous unsuccessful experiences. One mom has two older children who were formula-fed, but her now four-month-old is exclusively breastfed, and she attributes it to the support provided by her home visiting nurse. Another mom has a history of post-partum depression, and a baby with many food allergies/intolerances. She comes to our support group weekly, and at this point has a nine-month-old she has continued to breastfeed despite many challenges. She states that she feels empowered by the success she has had, and the support she receives. These women have also met via our support group, and have become excellent resources for each other in breastfeeding and parenting. Not only do these women have improved confidence from successful breastfeeding efforts, they also have knowledge of available support for breastfeeding women, and they are wonderful breastfeeding advocates in the community.