

Protecting First Food: Breastfeeding Policy Development in Indian Country

2021 NIHB
TRIBAL PUBLIC
HEALTH SUMMIT

April 29, 2021



MISSOURI BREAKS
Creating Opportunities for Health



ADVANCING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS THROUGH
PARTNERSHIPS, DATA & UNDERSTANDING



PUBLIC HEALTH
LAW CENTER
at Mitchell Hamline School of Law

4/22/2021

1

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OBJECTIVES FOR TODAY'S WORKSHOP

- 1) Explain the components of sustainable, health promoting Tribal community breastfeeding policy
- 2) Demonstrate the process for developing Tribal policies to support breastfeeding from initial engagement through navigating implementation challenges and securing leadership approval

Workshop agenda:

1. Background & importance of breastfeeding policies
2. Policy assessment example
3. Policy advocacy example
4. Indigenous breastfeeding toolkit resource & discussion

THE PUBLIC HEALTH LAW CENTER



**Access to healthy,
affordable, and
culturally relevant
foods**

**Safe, culturally
appropriate
opportunities to
be physically
active**

**Being free of the
harms of
commercial
tobacco**

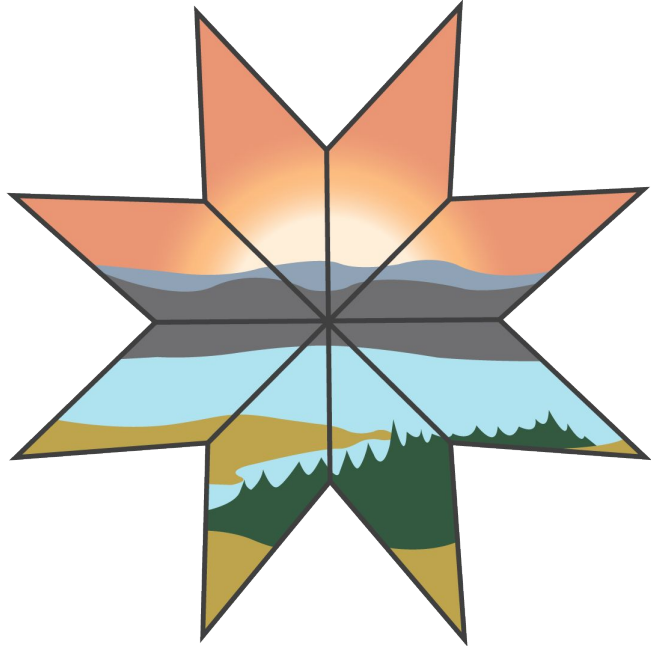


based on work for First Nations Health Authority at Gathering Wisdom VI Drawing
CHANGE

Image credit: Sam Bradd <https://drawingchange.com/gathering-wisdom-visuals-for-a-healthy-future/>

MISSOURI BREAKS

Creating Opportunities for Health



ADVANCING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS THROUGH
PARTNERSHIPS, DATA & UNDERSTANDING

- Health research and public health initiatives
- Strong Heart Study
- 4 office locations
 - Eagle Butte, SD on Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
 - Kyle and Manderson, SD on Oglala Sioux Tribe
 - Ft. Totten, ND on Spirit Lake Nation
 - Rapid City, SD

Background

- Breastfeeding recommendations (AAP)
 - Exclusive for 6 months
 - Continued with appropriate food for 12+ months
- Few Native women breastfeed for the recommended time in some regions
- Returning to work is a primary factor for women who don't reach their breastfeeding goals



The importance of breastfeeding policies



- Benefits to baby
 - Immune support
 - Protective against bacterial and viral infections
 - Reduces risk of SIDS
 - Associated with less obesity and disease

The importance of breastfeeding policies

- Benefits to mothers
 - Promotes emotional health
 - Reduces risk of postpartum depression
 - Lower rates of diabetes, cancer, osteoporosis



The importance of breastfeeding policies



- Benefits to employers
 - Better recruitment and retention of people of childbearing age
 - Breastfeeding mothers who are supported at work...
 - are more productive
 - have fewer distractions
 - less absenteeism
 - have more loyalty to the business
 - have improved job satisfaction

PAUSE & POLL

First Food Policy and Legal Scan (PALS) Project

Breastfeeding policies in six settings—federally recognized Tribes in the IHS Bemidji Service Area



Tribal government/code



Early care and education (child care/
Early Head Start)



Health agencies/ community
health centers



BIE schools



Gaming facilities



Tribal colleges and universities

Tribal Responses– 61 policies shared from 31 Tribes

Location	Setting	Policy Type		
		Informal	Formal	Totals
Michigan	Health	1	4	5
	Gaming	2	1	3
	Education	0	2	2
	Child care/ECE	1	2	3
	Code/ government	0	3	3
	Subtotals		4	12
Minnesota	Health	1	4	5
	Gaming	8	0	8
	Education	2	1	3
	Child care/ECE	1	3	4
	Code/ government	1	0	1
	Subtotals		13	8
Wisconsin	Health	2	4	6
	Gaming	5	0	5
	Education	1	0	1
	Child care/ ECE	2	1	3
	Code/government	2	7	9
	Subtotals		12	12

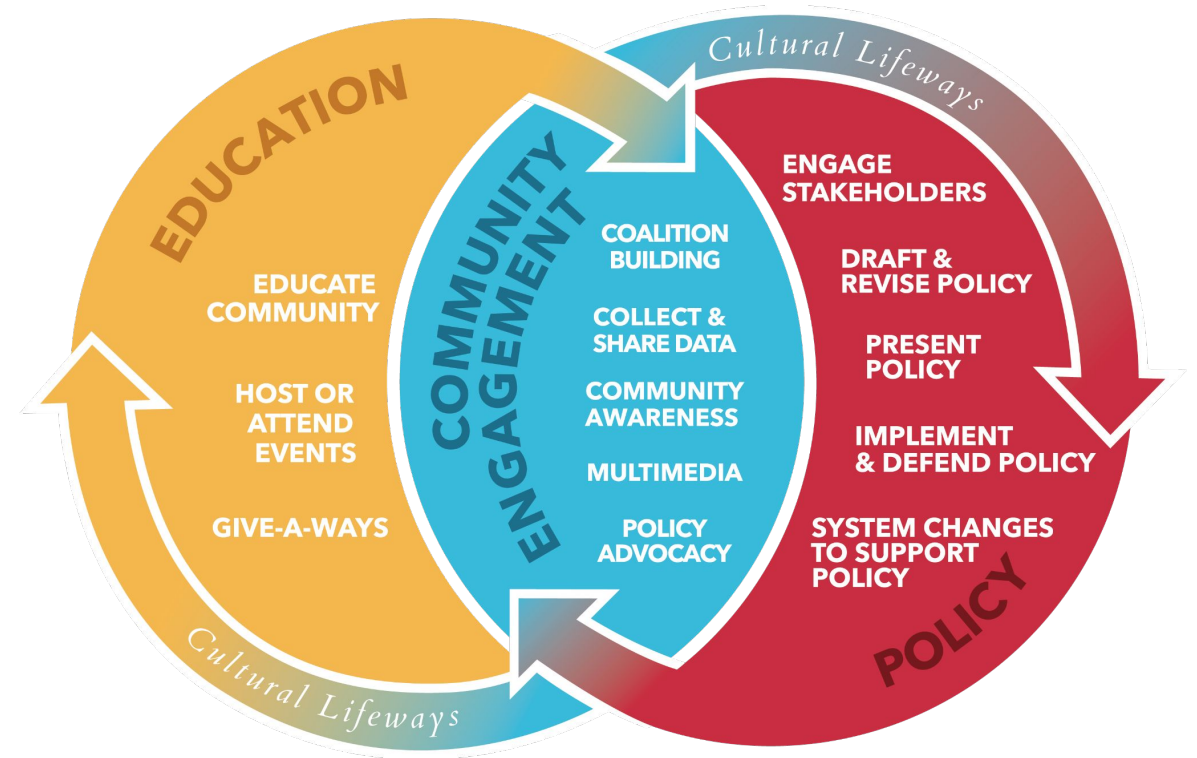


Report coming in May--
<https://www.glitc.org/programs/epidemiology-and-education/great-lakes-inter-tribal-epidemiology-center/epicenter-publications/>



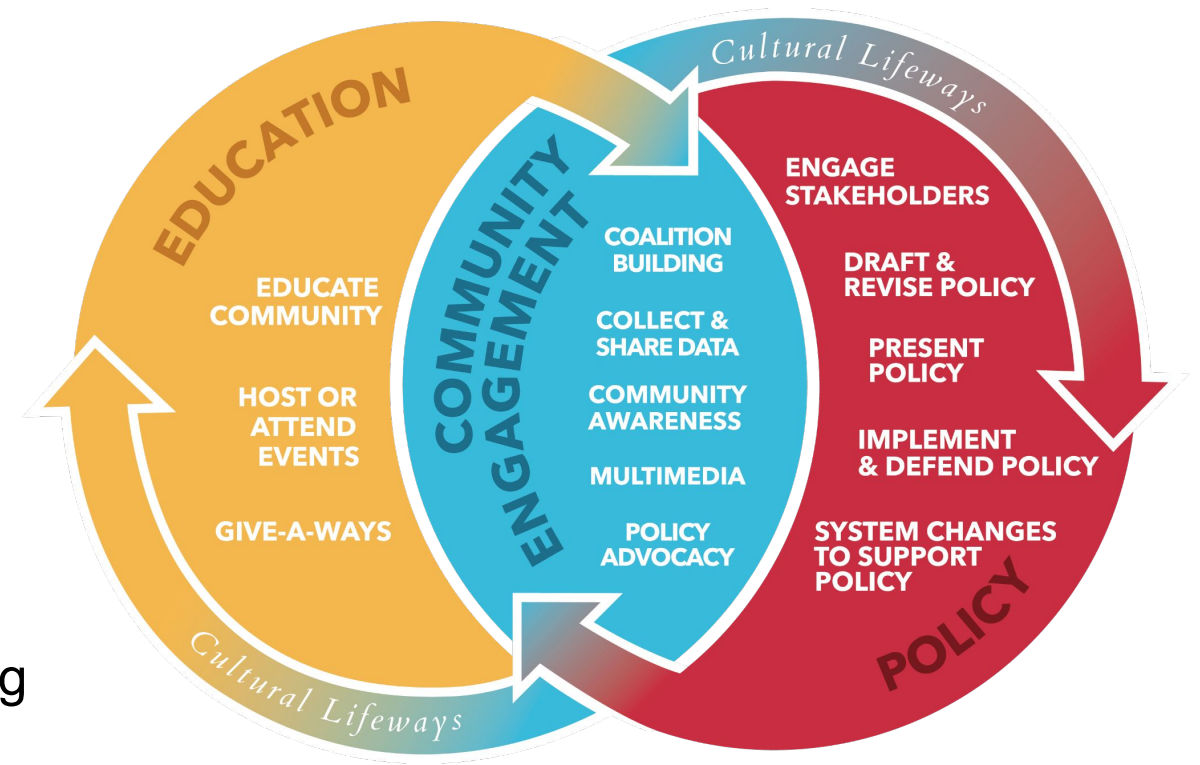
CRST Breastfeeding Policy Advocacy

- Engage stakeholders
 - Introduced the idea
 - Listened to employees about past experiences and present needs
 - Surveyed tribal decision makers to gauge interest



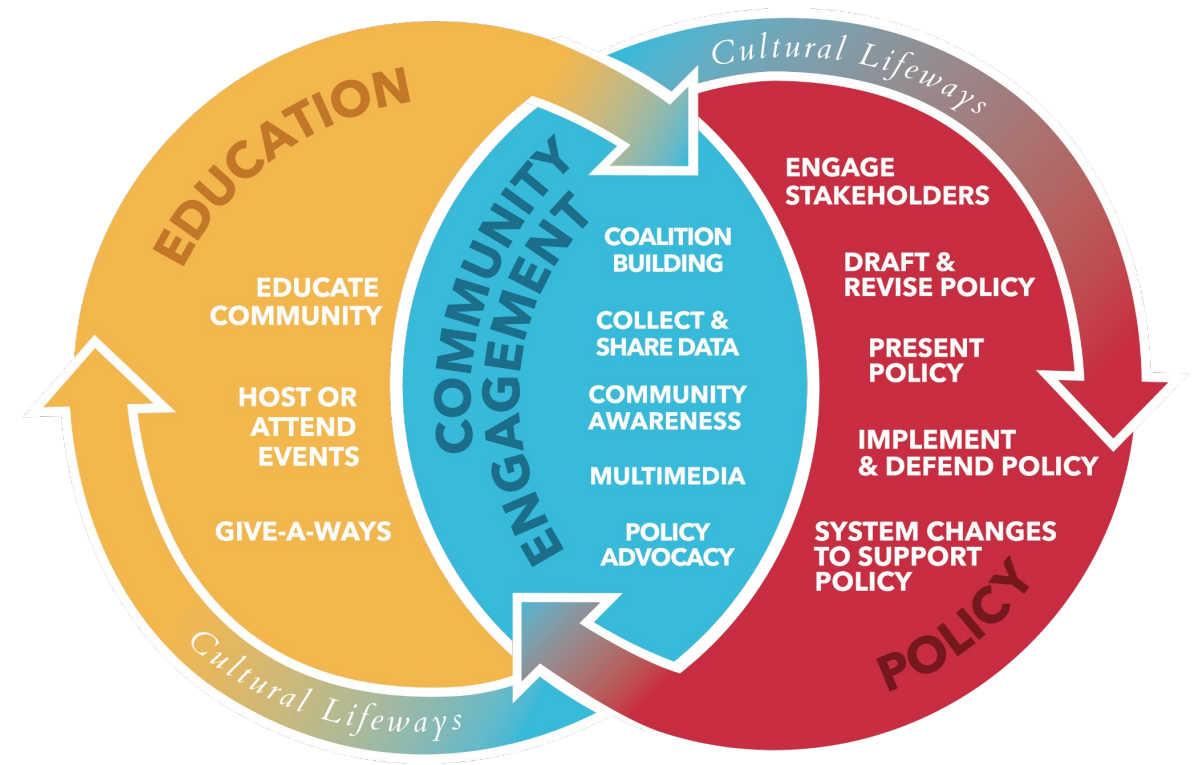
CRST Breastfeeding Policy Advocacy

- Draft & revise policy
 - Created an outline and gathered resources/references
 - Partnered with PHLC
 - Revised policy
- Policy sections
 - Findings & intent
 - Purpose
 - Definitions
 - Protections for breastfeeding & pumping
 - Right to breastfeed
 - Enforcement



CRST Breastfeeding Policy Advocacy

- Implement & defend
 - Celebrate publicly
 - Regular reminders
 - Monitor compliance and threats
- System changes to support policy
 - Mothers' rooms
 - Workplace education
 -



CRST Mother's Rooms



MISSOURI BREAKS
Breastfeeding support is available on CRST! All you have to do is ask for help at IHS or the WIC Office.



First Food Indigenous Breastfeeding Policy Toolkit Components

- Why is first food policy important?
- What kinds of policies can be developed and implemented?
- Implementation - putting policy change into action
- Community engagement
- Strategies for enforcement
- Media campaigns and raising awareness
- Measuring progress
- Stories of policy change
 - Tribal community-based breastfeeding policy
 - Tribal community workplace breastfeeding policy
 - Indigenous Breastfeeding Coalition Resolution



Engagement in Resource Development

- Informational Interviews
 - Indigenous Breastfeeding Coalition members
 - Non-profit staff
 - WIC breastfeeding support staff
 - Indian Health Service staff
 - Urban and Tribal workplace settings
- Coalition meetings
- Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country
- National Native conferences and meetings

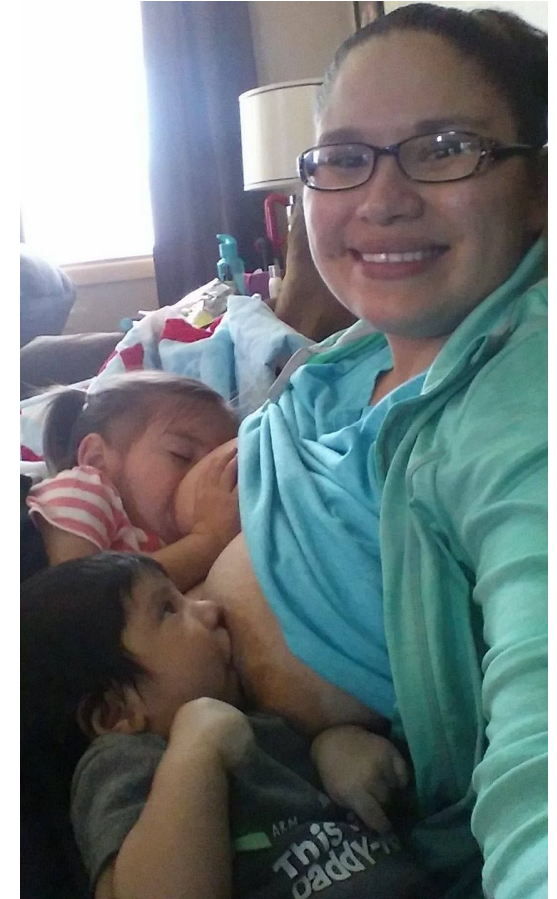




What types of policies are needed in your communities?

What are some barriers to getting buy-in for policy change?

Share one idea or one thing that stood out to you from your conversations



Resources and Closing

- [Breastfeeding and Expressing Human Milk at Work Webinar, May 5th](#)
- [Drafting Effective Tribal Public Health Laws and Policies](#)
- [Reclaiming Indigenous Food Relationships - Improving Food with Culture](#)
- [Mother's Milk is Medicine](#)
- [Breastfeeding in the American Indian Workplace Toolkit](#)
- [GPTLHB breastfeeding posters](#)
- [Model policy from CRST](#)
- [Breastfeeding RED Talk Video](#)



CONTACT US



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