

RESOLUTION OF THE
NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE

23rd NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL -- Fourth Year, 2018

AN ACTION

RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES, NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEES; SUPPORTING INCREASING THE AWARENESS OF THE BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING FOR BOTH MOTHERS AND CHILDREN OF THE NAVAJO NATION AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE

WHEREAS:

SECTION ONE. AUTHORITY

- A. The Health, Education and Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council has legislative authority and oversight over all matters related to health on the Navajo Nation. 2 N.N.C. § 401 (C).
- B. The Naabik'íyáti' Committee of the Navajo Nation Council has the legislative authority to assist the development of needed programs designed to serve the Navajo People. 2 N.N.C. § 701(A)(7).

SECTION TWO. FINDINGS

- A. Breastfeeding provides numerous health benefits including higher quality of nutrient composition from mother's milk, bonding between breastfed babies and their mothers; and the cost is minimal to zero. See **Exhibit A**.
- B. Navajo women have always breastfed their children, with practices passed down through generations.
- C. Seven Indian Health Service hospitals, on the Navajo Nation are "Baby Friendly" hospitals, which promote breastfeeding as a first choice for all infants delivered in their facilities, it being initiated during the first hour after birth.
- D. Many working mothers are not aware of the Navajo Nation Healthy Start Act of 2008, which allows mothers to provide nursing milk for their child at the worksite.

- E. The Navajo WIC Nutrition Program has only three Breastfeeding Peer Counselor positions to cover the entire 27,245 square miles of the Navajo Nation.
- F. Navajo WIC has a few certified lactation counselors, but there is, overall, a limited number of certified lactation counselors across the Navajo Nation.
- G. The Navajo Nation Council finds it to be in the best interest of the Navajo Nation and its children to support increasing the awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding on the Navajo Nation and advocate for:
 - 1. Increased Congressional funding;
 - 2. Advocate to the States of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah for breastfeeding counselors and operational expenses;
 - 3. Transition the regulation and enforcement of the Navajo Nation Healthy Start Act of 2008 to the Navajo Department of Health;
 - 4. Amend the Navajo Nation Healthy Start Act of 2008 to include non-working mothers conducting business in public facilities;
 - 5. The Navajo Nation Council to provide necessary needed recurring General Funds and mandate education to promote breastfeeding to Navajo Nation employees and to research breastfeeding on the Navajo Nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

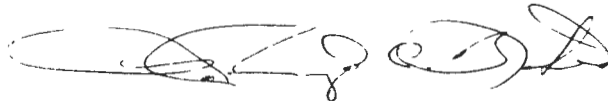
The Navajo Nation hereby supports increasing the awareness of the benefits of breast feeding on the Navajo Nation and hereby advocates for:

- 1. Increased Congressional funding;
- 2. Advocate to the States of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah for breastfeeding counselors and operational expenses;
- 3. Transition the regulation and enforcement of the Navajo Nation Healthy Start Act of 2008 to the Navajo Department of Health;

4. Amend the Navajo Nation Healthy Start Act of 2008 to include non-working mothers conducting business in public facilities;
5. The Navajo Nation Council to provide necessary needed recurring General Funds and mandate education to promote breastfeeding to Navajo Nation employees and to research breastfeeding on the Navajo Nation.

CERTIFICATION

I, hereby, certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Naabik'íyáti' Committee of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council at a duly called meeting in Window Rock, Navajo Nation (Arizona), at which a quorum was present and that the same was passed by a vote of 10 in Favor, and 00 Opposed, on this 09th day of November 2018.



LoRenzo C. Bates, Chairman
Naabik'íyáti' Committee

Motioned: Honorable Herman M. Daniels
Second : Honorable Lee Jack, Sr.

Chairman LoRenzo C. Bates not voting

Pursuant to § 700 (D), A quorum of the committee shall be satisfied by the presence of two (2) members of each Standing Committee or a majority of delegates of the Navajo Nation Council.



ISSUE: Enhance Breastfeeding on the Navajo Nation

BACKGROUND:

The Navajo Nation is a federally recognized Native American Indian Tribe. Navajo Nation has a land base covering approximately 27,245 square miles in the States of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. It is one of the largest tribal governments in the United States. The population is over 300,000 with about 50% living on the Navajo Nation and the rest residing off the reservation and across the United States. The Navajo Nation has treaties with the United States government, therefore is a sovereign Nation. As such, it administers its own financial, personnel, legal system, and many supportive services. It has a three branch governmental system with Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches. Navajo Department of Health is under the Executive Branch having oversight of the Navajo WIC Program.

Over a five-year period, between 2013 and 2017, the average breastfeeding rate was approximately 82.6%. Infants being breastfed up to 3 months is 55.6%; 6 months at 39%; 12 months at 28% and 18 months at 21%. Infants who are exclusively breastfed at 3 months are at 33.6% and 6 months is 11.4%.¹

Seven Indian Health Services hospitals on the Navajo Nation are “Baby Friendly” hospitals. Baby Friendly facilities promote breastfeeding as a first choice for all infants delivered in their facilities. At these hospitals, breastfeeding is initiated during the first hour after birth. Infant formulas replacing natural mother’s milk is not promoted. Formula enhanced feeding is only authorized by a physician. Evidence based research indicates breastfed infants are better nourished than infants who are fed simulated milk (infant formula). The health benefits of breastfeeding outweigh simulated nourishment.

IMPACT:

Breastfed infants have numerous health benefits including higher quality of nutrient composition from their mother’s milk, bonding between breastfed babies and their mothers; the cost of mother’s milk is minimal to zero, and other good benefits. Navajos have always breastfed their children. Breastfeeding practices have been passed down through the generations. Breastfeeding practices need to be promoted as a more acceptable way of life.

There are more health risks associated with infant formula since they do not provide the high quality and quantity of nourishment as mother’s milk. Infant formulas are high cost expenses for the family. Working moms are not aware of Navajo Nation Healthy Start Act of 2008, which would allow them to continue to provide their milk for their babies at worksites. Navajo WIC Nutrition Program has only three Breastfeeding Peer Counselor positions that cover the Navajo Nation. NWIC has a few certified lactation counselors; however there is limited number of certified lactation counselors across the Navajo Nation, including governmental and non-governmental health care providers.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- Advocate to U.S. Congress to increase funding for breastfeeding across the country, including the Navajo Nation.
- Advocate to the States of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah for breastfeeding counselors and operational expenses.
- Transition regulation and enforcement of the Navajo Nation Healthy Start Act of 2008 to the Navajo Department of Health.
- Amend the Navajo Nation Healthy Start Act of 2008 to include non-working mothers conducting business in public facilities.
- Advocate to Navajo Nation Council to provide recurring Navajo Nation General Funds and mandate education to promote breastfeeding to Navajo Nation employees.
- Navajo Nation Council to provide recurring Navajo Nation General Funds to research breastfeeding on the Navajo population.

¹ Healthy and Nutrition Data System. (August 17, 2018). Navajo Nation WIC Program, Breastfeeding Statistics State Summary, Report Years 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017.

NAVAJO NATION

RCS# 1097

11/9/2018

Naa'bik'iyati Committee

12:39:07 PM

Amd# to Amd#	Legislation 0319-18: Supporting	PASSED
MOT Daniels	Increasing the Awareness of the	
SEC Jack	Benefits of Breastfeeding for	
	Both Mothers and Children of...	

Yea : 10

Nay : 0

Excused : 1

Not Voting : 12

Yea : 10

Begay, K
Bennett
Brown

Crotty
Daniels
Hale

Jack
Pete

Slim
Tso

Nay : 0

Excused : 1

BeGaye, N

Not Voting : 12

Bates
Begay, NM
Chee

Damon
Filfred
Kieyoomia

Perry
Phelps
Shepherd

Smith
Tsosie
Yazzie