Nurturing Station Aims to Normalize Breastfeeding in New London County

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Summary
Thanks to local business support, a new Nurturing Station, where parents can breastfeed their children in a quiet, supportive atmosphere has debuted at a local Farmers' Market. Increased duration of breastfeeding correlates with a dramatic reduction in life-long chronic diseases. Supporting the normalization of breastfeeding in New London County, the Station supplies information on the tremendous benefits of breastfeeding for both mothers and babies. The Nurturing Station is available for all community agencies to borrow for community events.

Challenge
Breastfeeding is the first way parents can support healthy opportunities for their children. As a chronic disease prevention strategy, breastfeeding decreases the risk of obesity, diabetes, asthma, and SIDS. According to the 2014 CDC Breastfeeding Report Card, in Connecticut, 83.3 % of infants are ever breastfed. However, only 19.2% of infants reach the current American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation of being breastfed exclusively for 6 months. Two of the biggest barriers attributed to this huge drop-off in our breastfeeding duration rates are a mother’s lack of support and a return to work.

Breastfeeding used to be the only way to feed a newborn, but with the advent of formula, the feeding paradigm shifted. However, studies continue to support breastfeeding as the optimal way to feed our children and set them up for a healthy future.

Solution
Endorsed by all the major health organizations, breastfeeding is a leading strategy in the prevention of chronic disease. With today's childhood obesity and diabetes rates continuing to climb, supporting breastfeeding interventions is an affordable solution to decreasing chronic disease rates for children and their mothers.

To shift the baby feeding paradigm back to breastfeeding, we need to re-normalize it. Starting positive community conversations around breastfeeding can empower women to breastfeed wherever their baby needs. By supporting families to feel comfortable breastfeeding in public, we are supporting moms in reaching their breastfeeding goals.

Your Involvement is Key
The easiest thing for any of us to do is to make sure breastfeeding moms feel comfortable wherever they are feeding or pumping. To become more involved in creating more supports for breastfeeding families in New London County, follow TVCCA’s New London County Health Families Partnership on Facebook, or join our email distribution list to learn about future meetings. For more information, or to borrow our Nurturing Station, please contact Jessica Seyfried - jseyfried@tvcca.org.
Results

Through community donations, New London County Healthy Families Partnership was able to assemble a Nurturing Station. This portable tent, which has sides, along with two comfortable chairs, a baby changing pad and signage to advertise the space, encourages moms to feel comfortable breastfeeding in public. The traveling station, which includes educational resources, shows that our county supports breastfeeding anywhere, anytime.

The nurturing station is available for local agencies hosting a community event to borrow. By having this tent at local events, more families are talking about breastfeeding, as well as utilizing our free educational resources at the entrance of the tent. So far the tent has had at least one mom utilize the station to feed their baby at each event.

""My daughter was so nervous to breastfeed in public. When I saw the Nurturing Station at my local Farmers’ Market, I told my daughter- she was so relieved and excited to have a semi-private space as she worked on becoming comfortable breastfeeding.""

- Grandma S

Sustainable Success

As we work to create a more Breastfeeding Friendly New London County, we hope to see our Nurturing Station at many of our community's events. By May of 2017, we plan to have established more breastfeeding support groups, increase access to lactation services, and have 10 new county businesses certified as Breastfeeding Friendly Worksites. By normalizing breastfeeding in our community, we hope to reduce the rates of chronic disease, and empower our families to make healthy choices.

Contact

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Success Stories

http://nccd.cdc.gov/nccdsuccessstories/