

BLACK BREASTFEEDING VILLAGE OF PITTSBURGH REACHES INTO REACH COMMUNITIES

A lot of people thought breastfeeding was nasty or it hurts or just embarrassing. But none of that mattered to me, because I knew the rewards of breastfeeding were far more important than the opinions of people. People eventually understood. Not only is it the healthiest milk for your baby it creates a strong bond. ~Kelli Shakur



- 130** Moms & Children Attended Breastfeeding Circle Meeting
- 15** Moms Enrolled in Breastfeeding Classes
- 5** Breastfeeding Peer Champions
- 80** Lactation Assessments

The Healthy Start Center for Urban Breastfeeding (CUB) and the Pittsburgh Black Breastfeeding Circle (PBBC) expanded breastfeeding support and care to families in four REACH priority communities in Year Two. More than 60 mothers and 70 children participated in PBBC's in-person circles pre-pandemic. Since COVID-19 occurred, PBBC has engaged with families through virtual meetings and socially distanced meetups with giveaways, such as food bucks, breastfeeding supplies and PPE. Five women became peer champions.

Breastfeeding Week, CUB curated a virtual extravaganza that included conversations around workplace rights for pumping mamas.

Together, CUB and PBBC registered 14 people to attend the Black Mothers Breastfeeding Association's Virtual Breastfeeding Conference. The REACH communications and marketing team also captured images of Black women breastfeeding in an effort to celebrate and normalize nursing.

CUB now offers 24/7 in-home and virtual breastfeeding support for Black women. What is generally upwards of \$200 per visit, participants receive the same level of lactation support from Certified Lactation Counselors at no cost to them. The CUB serves as a safe place for mothers to ask questions and receive support throughout the first year of their breastfeeding journey. Staff provided nearly 80 lactation assessments and delivered prenatal breastfeeding instruction to 15 expectant mothers. Additionally, CUB secured funding to create a formal linkage agreement with Magee Women's Hospital of Pittsburgh. To celebrate National Breastfeeding Month and Black



Breastfeeding is the most natural thing a mother can do. Through this journey of breastfeeding I have found a confidence within myself to be unapologetic in how I raise my son. In the beginning a lot of people were telling me to give him formula because it would be easier. I was aware of the challenges, but I wanted to do what was best for my son. ~Kesha Silver

