

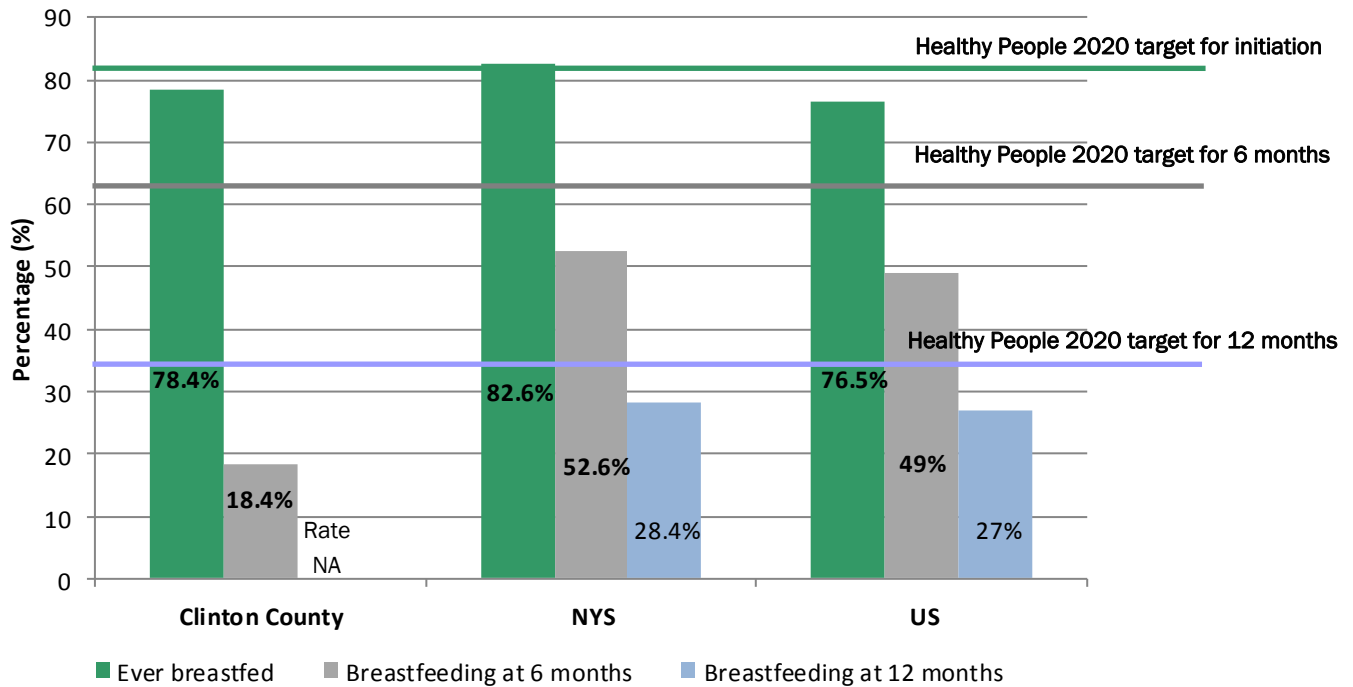
BREASTFEEDING IN CLINTON COUNTY

Children deserve the healthiest start in life. For all infants, breastfeeding provides the most natural source of nutrition and offers many health benefits to the mom and baby. However, for a large portion of the last century, mothers were led away from breastfeeding, rates fell dramatically and reliance on formulas became commonplace. As medical research has shown the benefits of breastfeeding, the push to raise awareness and provide support for families who choose to breastfeed is growing. In response, breastfeeding rates are slowly increasing. However, initiation and

duration rates continue to lag behind state and national goals. Many mothers continue to receive misinformation and have inadequate support systems to ensure successful and positive breastfeeding experiences.

Both the NYSDOH and CDC have identified breastfeeding initiation, continuation and exclusivity as priority areas for improvement. Much can be done to improve breastfeeding rates and support breastfeeding mothers. Doing so stands to decrease risk for infant morbidity and mortality as well as improve maternal health.

BREASTFEEDING INITIATION AND DURATION RATES IN CLINTON COUNTY

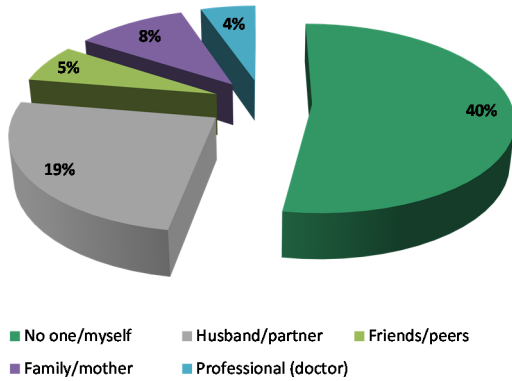


Source: www.health.ny.gov (2011 data) & healthypeople.gov

- Rates of breastfeeding initiation in Clinton County are comparable to state and national rates but all are below Healthy People 2020 targets.
- Clinton County duration rates of breastfeeding at 6 months are significantly below state and national rates.
- Lower breastfeeding rates are seen in disparate populations, including mothers of lower socioeconomic status.



WHO INFLUENCES FEEDING DECISIONS IN CLINTON COUNTY



For a new mother, deciding how to feed her infant is an important decision. Local data shows feeding determination most often occurs before pregnancy and is influenced by those closest to the mother, including family and partners.

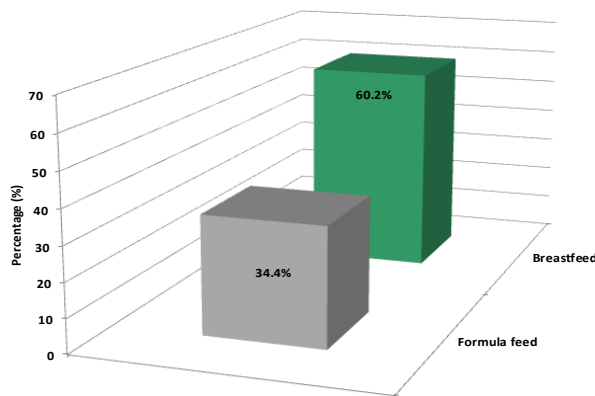
- A majority of surveyed mothers relied on their own knowledge and feelings towards breastfeeding when deciding how to feed their infant.
- Family provided decision support for approximately one out of 3 mothers.
- Mothers report low exposure to breastfeeding from healthcare providers.

Source: Clinton County Health Department Infant Feeding Survey, 2013

PERCEIVED TIME AND EFFORT TO BREASTFEED

In a recent survey, new mothers in Clinton County were asked if it takes more time and effort to feed a baby if they were breastfed or formula fed. Mothers were almost twice as likely to consider breastfeeding as more labor intensive despite the many conveniences breastfeeding affords busy mothers.

Mothers believe it takes more time to...



While breastfeeding may not seem the right choice for every parent, it is the best choice for every baby.

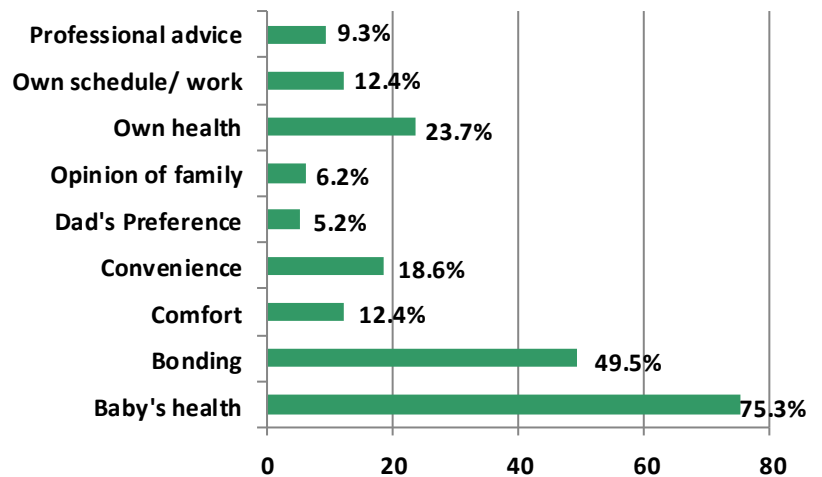
~ Amy Spangler, RN, IBCLC
(Author and Breastfeeding Expert)

Source: Clinton County Health Department Infant Feeding Survey, 2013

WHAT FACTORS ARE CONSIDERED WHEN MAKING A FEEDING DECISION

Knowing what factors a mother-to-be considers when deciding how to feed her infant can help families, health care providers, and communities better support breastfeeding education, awareness and duration.

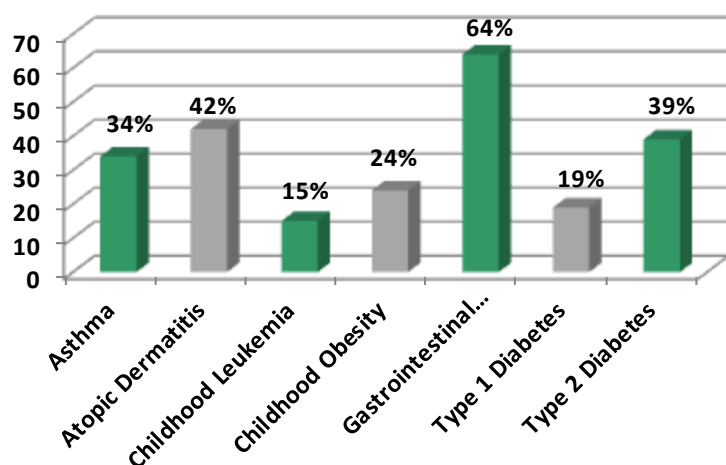
- Baby's health and opportunity for infant/ mother bonding far surpass all other factors in the feeding decision.
- Benefits, including mother's health and convenience, also rank highly as factors that could be highlighted to encourage breastfeeding.
- Many mothers must consider their own work schedules when making feeding decisions.



Source: Clinton County Health Department Infant Feeding Survey, 2013

BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH BREASTFEEDING

Infant/Child Percent Risk Reduction Attributed to Breastfeeding



Source: American Nurses Association 2010 ANA Issue Brief: *The Imperative of Breastfeeding*

Health Considerations

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality reports that formula feeding is associated with higher risks for major chronic diseases such as Type 2 Diabetes, asthma, and childhood obesity. All three chronic diseases have seen an increase in prevalence in U.S. children over the past three decades. Breastfeeding has also been linked to reduced risk for dermatitis, certain cancers, gastrointestinal infections and Type 1 diabetes in children who have been breastfed. Women who have breastfed have an easier time returning to a pre-pregnancy weight and reduce their risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, postpartum depression, osteoporosis, and breast cancer

Financial Considerations

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, a minimum of \$3.6 billion in medical expenses per year could be saved if 50% of infants were breastfed for the first six months of life.

MOBILIZING ACTION

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILIES, HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Families

- Provide loving support to family and friends who choose to breastfeed.
- Openly share positive personal experiences and attitudes towards breastfeeding.
- Offer to help breastfeeding mothers by attending to other children or needs.
- Be familiar with local resources available to breastfeeding mothers.
- Frequent breastfeeding friendly restaurants, shops and businesses.
- Participate in community events that promote breastfeeding and support families.

Healthcare Professionals

- Communicate the benefits of breastfeeding to all patients.
- Be familiar with local resources available to healthcare professionals and families.
- Seek education in breastfeeding and how to manage common challenges.
- Display positive images of breastfeeding in patient waiting areas.
- Encourage the elimination of practices that interfere with breastfeeding.
- Support breastfeeding research and advocate for positive media coverage about breastfeeding.

Community Leaders

- Collaborate with community agencies, developers and architects to include private, comfortable areas for breastfeeding.
- Support and promote worksites, hospitals and daycare providers that are working towards Baby Friendly certifications.
- Participate in community events that promote breastfeeding and support families.
- Back policies that promote and facilitate comprehensive preconception, prenatal and inter-conception health care for high-risk, low-income women.

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