

SHIP stories

Training and support is an important investment because breastfed babies are at a lower risk for many health problems, such as ear and respiratory infections, diarrhea, asthma and obesity, and mothers who breastfeed are less likely to develop diabetes or breast or ovarian cancer.

In its first two years, the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), helped 73 health care institutions increase support for breastfeeding.



Anoka public health nurses help create healthier beginnings

With the support of SHIP funding, Anoka County Community and Health Environmental Services Department (CHES) is working hard to support mothers and their new bundles of joy.

Following the American Academy of Pediatrics and Surgeon General's call to action to support breastfeeding, CHES, a health care leader in serving uninsured and underinsured families, immediately went to work.

Beginning in 2011, CHES enhanced its current family home visiting program with implementation of new breastfeeding practices based on the new recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Then CHES provided home visiting nurses with advanced breastfeeding specialist training. "The training was incredibly helpful. It gave us new ways

to motivate our clients, helping us go more in depth as to how the mother provides for her baby," commented Becky Marcoux, Public Health Nurse, RN.

As a result, the nurses provide the lactation support in the home and are available for phone support as well (all free of charge to the client, including an interpreter if needed). As of October 2012, 90 percent of public health nurses have received the advanced training, and these nurses also lead community breastfeeding classes for child care providers.

Beyond updating breastfeeding support during home visits, CHES also developed a stronger referral program with WIC to help mothers as soon as they found out they're expecting. "The training helped us be more proactive...we can address a problem early on," concluded Marcoux.

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The Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) works to improve health through better nutrition, increased physical activity and decreased commercial tobacco use and exposure. Find out more at www.health.state.mn.us/ship