



W.K.
KELLOGG
FOUNDATION™

FIRST FOOD

Breastfeeding gives children a healthy start

WHY FIRST FOOD?

All children deserve a healthy start in life. Medical studies show that babies who receive only breast milk for the first six months of their lives have better health, educational and emotional outcomes. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) believes that a mother's breast milk is the optimal first food to give children the best start to a lifetime of good health.

As part of our commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable children, the Kellogg Foundation is pursuing a first food strategy to ensure more babies benefit from breast milk as their first food experience. Our strategy builds on the foundation's legacy of supporting access to healthy food and improving maternal and child health. It also aligns with the foundation's focus on whole child development from the prenatal months to age 8.

FIRST FOOD APPROACH

WKKF believes we can dramatically improve children's health, as well as our country's health, by making strategic investments to ensure more babies benefit from breast milk as their first food experience. Ultimately, breastfeeding success is up to all of us.

Real change will require a variety of efforts from offering breastfeeding education to promoting "baby friendly" practices in hospitals to making workplaces more supportive. All of us can help accelerate a cultural shift in the acceptance of breastfeeding. WKKF's approach emphasizes working with communities where health disparities are high, and where mothers and children will benefit the most from increased breastfeeding. Specifically, WKKF invests in organizations that:

- Expand community supports for mothers and families
- Improve hospital and workplace environments to make breastfeeding easier
- Encourage new social norms and behaviors around breastfeeding
- Strengthen the network of groups working together to increase breastfeeding rates

FIRST FOOD GRANTS

The Kellogg Foundation partners with a number of national, state and local organizations across the United States committed to supporting mothers and families who want to breastfeed so that more babies benefit from breast milk as their first food experience. These investments support an emerging network interested in giving children the healthiest start possible. Several examples include:

- **Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine** researches persistent racial and geographical gaps in policies and practices, and shares ideas for addressing inequities. They also publish the *Breastfeeding Medicine* journal.
- **Birthing Project USA** is a national African American maternal and child health program encouraging better birth outcomes and providing practical support to women during pregnancy and for one year after a child's birth.
- **HealthConnect One** works to strengthen the community health worker workforce and increase support for thousands of vulnerable families during pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and early parenting.
- **St. John Hospital and Medical Center (Detroit)** is developing an innovative breastfeeding program, the St. John Mother Nurture Project, to offer new support services for mothers, including a nurture club, lactation consultants in the OB clinic, prenatal breastfeeding education and a NICU follow-up clinic.

FOR MORE INFO

For more information about the Kellogg Foundation's first food work, please contact Diana N. Derige, program officer, at dnd@wkkf.org.