

Butler County Partnership to Reduce Infant Mortality (PRIM)

(Hosted by the Butler County Health Department) Status Report, April, 2015

In 2014, Ohio was the worst state in the nation for black infant mortality, and the 5th worst for white infant mortality. Butler County is among the 10 worst urban areas in Ohio for infant mortality. In 2013, the Butler County Health Department joined the Ohio Institute for Equity in Birth Outcomes (OEI) to begin a three-year process to look at ways to address this unacceptable situation. From there, the Butler County Partnership to Reduce Infant Mortality (PRIM) developed with a Lead Team of 9, and a community-based team of 150 concerned agencies and individuals.

PRIM's Lead Team receives ongoing training from CityMatCH, a national group successful in reducing infant mortality in urban areas across the country. CityMatCH and OEI asked us to 1) gather extensive statistical information to understand infant mortality in our county, 2) develop two data driven projects utilizing evidence-based interventions to address our unique infant mortality needs, 3) implement our community-based projects.

During 2013-14 we learned about what has worked in other cities, studied our own data, identified priority areas, and chose two projects based on our analysis and the needs identified by our community. Our two evidence-based projects are: Smoking Cessation and Centering Pregnancy.

In 2014, PRIM helped to implement pilot Smoking Cessation programs in Butler County (5A's, Baby and Me Tobacco Free, Not on Tobacco, and Tobacco Treatment Specialist). In 2015, the number of sites providing Baby and Me Tobacco Free services to pregnant women will be expanded to include clients of: WIC, Centering, High Hopes, Help Me Grow, Early Intervention, and Sojourner perinatal drug rehabilitation.

In 2015, under PRIM's leadership, the first Centering Pregnancy site was established in our county. This program targets women with the highest infant mortality rates and will be up and running by Fall, 2015. In 2016, we hope to expand Centering to 1-2 additional practice sites.

Also in 2015 PRIM began a Safe Sleep Ambassador program involving First Responders who provide Safe Sleep education when in the homes of county residents. This education effort will be expanded to include day cares and church nurseries in 2015-16. The Ohio Department of Health donated 485 portable cribs (Pack-N-Plays) along with Safe Sleep information. Eleven agencies have signed on to help get these cribs into the hands of families that lack a safe place for their baby to sleep. Three new work groups are in development: Teen Pregnancy Reduction, Father Involvement, and Breast Feeding Support. We are open to new groups forming as additional needs and interests come to light. In addition to these formal projects, the formation of PRIM has really gotten the community talking and looking for ways they can help one another!

Preliminary data for infant mortality rates shows that after an increase in rates since 2010, Butler County experienced a decline in the number of infant deaths from 2013 to 2014. While it is best to look at trends over a longer period than just one year, we are pleased that we are on the downward slope at the moment, and we hope that through the continued hard work of our entire community we will see that trend continue!

We are now entering the third year of our project, and we have accomplished much! Our work will not end with the completion of this three year project, indeed, it has only just begun! We look forward to continuing this work, alongside organizations such as yours, to build a better Butler County, and help our babies reach their 1st birthdays... and beyond!

Please feel free to contact us for further information, questions, or comments:

Jenny Bailer, Butler County Health Department, PRIM Co-Lead, 513-887-5251
Cindy Meale, Butler County WIC, PRIM Co-Lead, 513-896-7022

Our Vision: To inspire change and empower families so all babies reach their 1st birthday... and beyond.

Our Mission: Helping Butler County babies survive and thrive through education, advocacy, collaboration, and action.