



The Breastfeeding Committee for Canada
The National Authority for the WHO/UNICEF
Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in Canada

History and Accomplishments

The Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC) was established in 1991, as a Health Canada initiative, following the World Summit for Children. The BCC has a broad membership of professional and consumer organizations including representatives from the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada, Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses, Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program, Canadian Association of Midwives, Canadian Healthcare Association, Canadian Institute of Child Health, Canadian Lactation Consultant Association, Canadian Nurses Association, Canadian Paediatric Society, Canadian Perinatal Programs Coalition, Canadian Pharmacists Association, Canadian Public Health Association, College of Family Physicians of Canada, Dietitians of Canada, Federal/Provincial/Territorial Group on Nutrition, Health Canada - Childhood and Youth Division, INFACT Canada, La Leche League Canada, Ligue La Leche, Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada, UNICEF Canada, and individual breastfeeding experts. The vision of the BCC is to establish breastfeeding as the cultural norm for infant feeding within Canada.

1996

- The BCC identified the WHO/UNICEF Baby-Friendly™ Hospital Initiative (BFHI) as a primary strategy for the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding. The WHO/UNICEF guidelines for the BFHI state that each country must identify a BFHI Authority to facilitate the assessment and monitoring of the progress of the BFHI within its borders. The Breastfeeding Committee for Canada is identified as the National Authority for the Baby-Friendly™ Initiative (BFI) in Canada which it is working to implement through provincial and territorial action.
- In the fall, the BCC published the first issue of its newsletter *Breastfeeding Canada*.

1997

- **A Survey of Breastfeeding Support Groups to Assess the Current Status of BFHI/BFI Activities in Canada and to Determine Future Needs** was undertaken between April and November 1997 with funding from Health Canada. Virtually 100% of respondents supported the concept of BFI.
- In November the BCC confirmed its commitment to the Baby-Friendly™ Initiative and developed the BFI Action Plan for the next two years.

1998

- In March the BCC developed a Strategic Plan for the years 1998-2001 into which the BFI Action Plan was incorporated.
- With funding from Health Canada, a partnership development meeting was held in April between representatives of the BCC and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) to develop common goals for the implementation of the BFI at the community level. A partnership agreement and Action Plan for the years 1998-2000 were developed.
- Health Canada funded a series of three meetings held in Toronto, Calgary and Quebec City in May to which provincial and territorial Ministers of Health or their designates were invited for a briefing on the BFI. Each province was encouraged to assist in the formation of a Provincial/Territorial BFI Implementation Committee and to send a representative to the national BFI launch and conference **Breastfeeding: Stepping Into Baby-Friendly™** held in Vancouver in November.

1999

- Canada's first Baby-Friendly™ Hospital was designated on July 1,-- Brome-Missisquoi-Perkins Hospital, Cowansville QC.
- In March, the BCC received a grant from Population Health, Health Canada for a three year project to **Implement and Evaluate the Baby-Friendly™ Hospital Initiative in Canada**. Funding from this project was used to develop a series of documents defining the benefits and process of BFI designation in Canada which were printed for distribution across Canada and posted on the BCC's newly established website. Beginning in the fall BCC members and the BFI Coordinator facilitated a total of 62 meetings across Canada in nine provinces and two territories with BFI representatives and other key breastfeeding stakeholders. A total of 1,161 individuals participated in these meetings over a three year period 1999-2001.
- In the spring the BCC was invited to send a representative to the annual meeting of the Canadian Pediatric Society's Nutrition Committee.

2000

- BFI documents were translated to French, printed and posted on the BCC website.
- The BCC established a BFI Community Committee which began work on the development of a BFI designation process for community health services in Canada.
- BCC bylaws were developed
- The BCC was registered as a national not-for-profit corporation.

2001

- In March the BCC developed a new Strategic Plan for 2001-2004.
- In May, the BCC partnered with the New Brunswick Department of Health and Wellness and the New Brunswick Breastfeeding Advisory Committee to hold a national conference **Breastfeeding NOW: Nurturing Opportunities for Wellness** in Moncton.
- A survey of provinces and territories regarding BFI implementation was undertaken as part of the evaluation of the three-year BFHI Implementation and Evaluation project.
- In June, Marilyn Sanders, National BCC Coordinator, represented the BCC at a meeting of BFI coordinators from industrialized countries held in London, England.

2002

- The BCC received a grant in March from the Canadian Diabetes Strategy Prevention and Promotion Contribution Program, Health Canada to fund a two-year project focused on **Breastfeeding, Healthy Eating and Active Living: Natural Tools for Diabetes Prevention**. The BCC partnered with the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program and the Canadian Diabetes Association in this intervention project which took place in two Canadian communities and included a programme for women living in conditions of risk and education for health care professionals.
- Childhood Services, Health Canada also provided funding to support the cost of bringing representatives from the provinces and territories together with the BCC Board in Ottawa in March. The two day meeting was designed to facilitate communication between the Provincial/Territorial (P/T) committees and the BCC, to discuss the successes and barriers to BFI implementation at the P/T level, and to develop strategies to move BFI forward in Canada. A BCC Provincial/Territorial Committee was formed at that meeting.
- The English version of the BCC's document *The Baby-Friendly Initiative in Community Health Services: A Canadian Implementation Guide* was published in March and posted on the BCC's website at <http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/pdf/webdoc50.pdf>
- In June the BCC received a grant from Population Health, Health Canada for a two year project to **Implement and Evaluate the Baby-Friendly™ Initiative in Community Health Services**. This funding was used to continue the development of BFI documents (including assessment tools), continue work with the provinces and territories and train assessor candidates from across Canada.
- The Breastfeeding Position Statement of the BCC was revised and posted on the website at <http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/pdf/webdoc5.pdf>
- The BCC received the National Breastfeeding Seminar Award of Excellence at the 12th Annual Humber College conference in Toronto in June.

2002 (con't)

- The BCC forwarded a submission to the Commission on the Future of Healthcare in Canada (Romanow Commission) titled **Affordable Healthcare Begins with Breastfeeding Support and the Use of Human Milk**. This submission is posted on the BCC website at <http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/pdf/webdoc47.pdf>

2003

- Canada's second Baby-Friendly™ Hospital – St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton- was designated on March 29.
- A two-day meeting of the BCC's Provincial/Territorial Committee was held in Toronto in May.
- The BCC's website domain name was changed to www.breastfeedingcanada.ca and work was begun on revision of the content and look of the website.
- Three workshops to train BFI assessors (for both hospitals and community health services) were held-- in February and October in Toronto and in December in Montreal (for French-speaking assessors).
- The BCC Provincial/Territorial Committee held a second face to face meeting in May 2003 in Toronto and also, with financial assistance from Health Canada, held telephone conference calls in March and October.
- The French-language version of the BCC's document *L'Initiative des amis des bébés^{MC} dans les services de santé communautaire: Guide canadien de mise en oeuvre* was published in June and posted on the website at <http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/html/frdoc50.html>
- In October the BCC published *BFI Practice Outcomes Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services* which are posted on the website at <http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/html/bfi.html>
- The final report of the three-year project to implement and evaluate the Baby-Friendly™ Hospital Initiative was published and posted on the BCC website.

2004

- The BCC's Provincial/Territorial Committee met by telephone conference call (with Health Canada funding) in February, June, September and November 2004.
- Marianne Brophy, Chair, BFI Assessment Committee, represented the BCC at a meeting of international BFI Coordinators held in Barcelona, Spain March 31 – April 3, 2004.
- The project **Breastfeeding, Healthy Eating and Active Living: Natural Tools for Diabetes Prevention** funded by the National Diabetes Strategy, Health Canada, ended March 31, 2004. A project extension for the women's programme in Miramichi, NB was approved for the period June 2004 to March 31, 2005.

2004 (con't)

- A series of BCC meetings were held in Toronto April 1-4, 2004, in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting, including two-day meetings of the Provincial/Territorial, Education and Infant Nutrition Committees and the BCC Board of Directors.
- In April the BCC Board approved the BCC's Breastfeeding Definitions and Data Collection Timeframes document, developed over the last year by the BCC's Provincial/Territorial Committee.
- Canada's third Baby-Friendly™ Hospital— le centre hospitalier Saint-Eustache, QC—was designated on May 27, 2004.
- The project to **Implement and Evaluate the Baby-Friendly™ Initiative in Community Health Services** funded by Population Health, Health Canada, ended June 30, 2004.
- Canada's first Baby-Friendly™ Community Health Service – CLSC d'Argenteuil, Lachute QC—was designated on November 17, 2004.
- Canada's first BFHI-designated hospital – Brome-Missisquoi-Perkins Hospital, Cowansville QC – was successfully reassessed and had its designated confirmed on November 12, 2004.

2005

- The BCC's Provincial/Territorial Committee met by telephone conference call (with Health Canada funding) in February, May and October 2005.
- Canada's first birthing centre – La Maison de Naissance Mimosa, Saint-Romuald QC—was designated on January 12, 2005 following successful assessment in December 2004.
- The project **Breastfeeding, Healthy Eating and Active Living: Natural Tools for Diabetes Prevention** extension funded by the National Diabetes Strategy, Health Canada, ended March 31, 2005.
- In March *Lignes directrices pour l'Initiative des amis des bébésMC (IAB) de l'OMS/UNICEF au Canada Normes de résultats des pratiques pour :les hôpitaux Amis des bébésMC (les Dix conditions) et les services de santé communautaire Amis des bébésMC (le Plan en sept étapes)* were posted on the website at http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/html/fr_bfi.html
- Canada's second Baby-Friendly™ Community Health Service – Mission communautaire du Centre de santé et de services sociaux du CLSC La Pommeraie, Cowansville QC—was designated on September 29, 2005.
- Board member Johanna Bergerman made a presentation on behalf of the BCC to the Federal Labour Standards Review Commission consultation in Regina SK on September 23, 2005 titled **Proposal to the Federal Labour Standards Review Commission to legislate paid breastfeeding breaks in the revised Canadian Labour Code**

2006

- The BCC Board approved the final version of the the BCC's Breastfeeding Definitions and Data Collection Timeframes document which is posted on the website at <http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/pdf/BCC%20Breastfeeding%20Def%20and%20Algorithms%20Jan%202006.pdf>

Prepared by the Executive Committee of the BCC Revised March 2006