NYS Prevention Agenda Goal

- To improve health status and reduce health disparities across each of the five priority areas.

- People with disabilities, among other groups, have been specifically identified as a population of focus in this reduction of disparities.

- People with disabilities have the highest rate of health disparities out of any subgroup in the U.S.
Other Disparities & Breastfeeding

• Low and decreasing breastfeeding rates among low-income women and women of color persist.

• Adopt strategies and models for culturally appropriate promotion of breastfeeding.

• Strategies for the promotion of breastfeeding should be based on an awareness of the sociocultural barriers to breastfeeding in a particular community.
Considerations for Mothers & Infants with Disabilities

Engaging in positive parenting behaviors, such as breastfeeding, which support the health of both mother and child, is possible when a mother and/or her infant has one or more disabilities.
Mothers with Disabilities

- Generally, mothers with disabilities find that breastfeeding is more convenient than bottle feeding.

- Those close mother with disabilities may be concerned that they shouldn’t breastfeed due to perceived/actual limitations & impact of increased fatigue caused by breastfeeding.

- These mothers need compassionate breastfeeding support and guidance just as mothers without limitations do, and perhaps even more so, successfully breastfeed their infants.
Recommendations: Mothers with & Mothers & Families of Infants with Disabilities

1: Ensure access to appropriate equipment needed for breastfeeding assistance (e.g., supplemental nursing systems, pumps, latex-free equipment).
Recommendations: Mothers with & Mothers & Families of Infants with Disabilities

Seek community organizational help and services (e.g., hospitals, WIC, La Leche, insurance companies) to learn and provide breastfeeding equipment options to meet individual needs of the mother or infant with a disability (e.g., different types of propping pillows, nipples, bottles, pumps, latex-free equipment, supplemental nursing systems).
Recommendations: Mothers with & Mothers & Families of Infants with Disabilities

Ensure mothers with disabilities and families of infants with disabilities have access to free, low cost, or loaner equipment (e.g., supplemental nursing equipment) to assist with breastfeeding both in the hospital and when they return home.
Recommendations: Mothers with & Mothers & Families of Infants with Disabilities

Community programs (e.g., hospitals, WIC, La Leche League, case management programs, healthy start) should collaborate with disability organizations to provide free or low-cost loaner breastfeeding equipment (e.g., supplemental nursing equipment) for mothers with disabilities and families of infants with disabilities.
2: Ensure mothers with disabilities and infants with disabilities receive skilled breastfeeding support from healthcare professionals and community organizations.
Recommendations: Mothers with & Mothers & Families of Infants with Disabilities

 Include individualized support for diverse mothers with disabilities and families of infants with disabilities for breastfeeding as a standard of care for healthcare professionals (e.g., certified lactation consultant, dietitians, midwives, doulas, obstetricians, family physicians, nurse practitioners, pediatricians, occupational therapists, community nutritionists) pre/post-partum.
Community organizations should collaborate and facilitate peer support systems to provide mothers with disabilities and mothers of infants with disabilities support and encouragement to breastfeed (e.g., WIC, La Leche League, early intervention, specialty clinics, centers for independent living, family support programs).
Recommendations: Mothers with & Mothers & Families of Infants with Disabilities

Ensure staff have basic disability awareness training and can accurately provide information to parents with disabilities, and parents of infants with disabilities, regarding disability and breastfeeding.
Resources

La Leche League
www.lalecheleague.org/llleaderweb/lv/lvfebmar00p5.html

Through the Looking Glass
lookingglass.org/home

Rocking the Cradle: Ensuring the Rights of Parents with Disabilities and Their Children
www.ncd.gov/publications/2012/Sep272012/

www.ilca.org/i4a/ams/amsstore/itemview.cfm?ID=736