

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Baby-Friendly USA receives grant to help birthing facilities increase breastfeeding**

*For Immediate Release*

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ALBANY, N.Y. (February 7, 2012) Baby-Friendly, USA Inc. has received a \$150,000 grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. The funds will be used to expand maternity care practices that increase the initiation and duration of breastfeeding. The grant period runs through November 2012.

“Helping to establish breastfeeding, the cornerstone of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, is an important aspect of the care provided by hospitals and other birthing facilities,” said Patricia MacEnroe, Executive Director of Baby-Friendly, USA. Numerous studies point to the fact that maternity care practices directly relate to establishing breastfeeding success. “Birthing facilities provide a unique and critical link to the breastfeeding support needed by mothers, both prior to and after delivery,” said MacEnroe.

The overall goal of the grant is to increase access to information and strategies regarding the implementation of practices that support the “*Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding*” thus allowing more babies to be born in birthing facilities designated as “Baby-Friendly.”

Currently, approximately 5% of babies born in the United States are born in Baby-Friendly designated hospitals; a fact not lost on the United States Surgeon General, who specifically mentioned the connection between breastfeeding, improved health outcomes, the Ten Steps and the Baby-Friendly designation in the *2011 Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding*, published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The “Ten Steps” uses evidenced-based research practices to provide facilities with a framework that allows them to make the institutional changes necessary to assist mothers achieve their breastfeeding goals. In the course of evaluating their maternity care practices, implementing new measures, and adopting policies and procedures, facilities are preparing for an on-site assessment which determines how well they have integrated the “*Ten Steps*” into their practice for healthy newborns.

The “Ten Steps” are endorsed and promoted by major maternal and child health authorities in the United States. Medical groups including The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Family Physicians, as well as professional groups such as La Leche League, United States Breastfeeding Committee, International Lactation Consultant Association and National Alliance for Breastfeeding Advocacy, all recognize the value of the “Ten Steps.”

According to MacEnroe, “this grant comes at a perfect time since the national focus on breastfeeding continues to grow. Increased technical assistance will allow more birthing facilities, breastfeeding coalitions and public health entities to work together to ensure that greater numbers of mothers and babies have access to high quality maternity care.”

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The grant will increase website functionality allowing hospitals and other interested parties to download tools and forms via portals; increase telecommunications and desk-top connectivity for training and user groups; and develop a new business solution to track breastfeeding outcomes and measures.

**About W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, established in 1930, supports children, families and communities as they strengthen and create conditions that propel vulnerable children to achieve success as individuals and as contributors to the larger community and society. Grants are concentrated in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean, and southern Africa. For further information on the foundation, please visit [www.wkkf.org](http://www.wkkf.org).

**About Baby-Friendly, USA Inc.**

Baby-Friendly, USA, Inc., established in 1997, is a not-for-profit, 501(c)3 corporation. Baby-Friendly, USA is the national authority recognized by UNICEF/WHO to designate hospitals as “Baby-Friendly,” and lead the global Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in this country. They recently moved their administrative office to Albany, NY. For further information, please visit [www.babyfriendlyusa.org](http://www.babyfriendlyusa.org). To date, 125 hospitals throughout the United States have been awarded the Baby-Friendly designation.