Best Babies Zone:
A Place-Based Approach to Transforming Communities and Improving Birth Outcomes Across the Life Course

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Where You Live Affects Your Health

Place Matters
Infant Mortality Matters
Life Course Matters

Disinvested Communities
• Limited/Unsafe Parks
• Crime
• Fast Food Restaurants
• Liquor Stores
• Poor Performing Schools
• Pollution and Toxic Exposure
• Limited Public Transportation
• Absence of High Quality Financial Institutions
• Predatory Lenders

Poor Health Status

Communities of Opportunity
• Parks
• Safe/Walkable Streets
• Grocery Stores
• Good Schools
• Clean Air
• Public Transportation
• Good Jobs
• Strong Local Businesses
• Financial Institutions

Good Health Status
In Jefferson County, life expectancy can vary by as much as 20 years on average across census tracts.

In 2011, more than 13% of households in Jefferson County had annual incomes below the federal poverty level.

In 2010, the infant mortality rate in Jefferson County was 2.5 times higher for black mothers than white mothers at 16.1 per 1,000 live births vs. 6.4 per 1,000 live births, respectively.

Infant Mortality Rate Rankings by Country

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>Croatia</td>
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Data adapted from CIA World Factbook, “Country Comparison: Infant Mortality Rate”, 2012

On an Average Day in the United States...

• 11,686 babies are born
• 1,487 babies are born preterm
  (less than 37 weeks gestation completed)
• 964 babies are born low birth weight
  (less than 2,500 grams, or 5.5 pounds)
• 329 babies are born with a birth defect*

• 237 babies are born very preterm
  (less than 32 weeks gestation completed)
• 173 babies are born very low birth weight
  (less than 1,500 grams, or 3.33 pounds)
• 78 babies die before reaching their first birthday

*Based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates of at least 120,000 babies born annually with major structural birth defects.

Prepared by the March of Dimes Perinatal Data Center, 2009.
INFANT MORTALITY IS COMPLEX

It is not one thing. There is no one solution. No one person, group or sector can fix it. Hard to change quickly.

NATIONAL INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE BIRTH OUTCOMES

Policy Initiatives
- Secretary's Advisory Committee on Infant Mortality
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- National Initiative on Preconception Health and Health Care
- Centers for Disease Control
- Regional Collaborative and Innovative Networks (COIINs)
- Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau

Program Initiatives
Traditional Perinatal Care Continuum

Life Course Perspective
The Life Course Perspective is a way of looking at life, not as disconnected stages, but as an integrated continuum.

Life Course is a perspective that seeks to understand, explain, and improve health and disease patterns across population groups.

The Life Course Perspective
Two Key Questions To Consider

- Why do health disparities exist and persist across population groups?
- What are the factors (protective and risk factors) that influence the capacity of individuals or populations to reach their full potential for health and well-being?

BBZ Vision and Mission:

All babies are born healthy, into communities that enable them to thrive and reach their full potential.

To give every baby born in a Best Babies Zone the best chance in life.
**THE BIG IDEA**

When it comes to reducing infant mortality, health means more than health care. Health is the product of one's environment, opportunities and experiences. We believe that to address these interrelated conditions, a holistic, neighborhood-based approach is needed.

**WHAT WE DO**

Using a place-based, Collective Impact approach, we engage residents and local community organizations in small neighborhood zones to identify opportunities for collaborative action to improve neighborhood health so that babies, mothers and families thrive.

**OUR VALUES**

Community  Equity  Flexibility  Integrity  Optimism  Respect

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**.attributes**

Community Voice  Innovation  Collaboration  Concentrated Effort  Movement Building

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**how we do it**

We are a catalyst and a convener, bringing together resources with community vision to foster neighborhood-led initiatives that link health services, early care and education, economic development and community systems.

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**attributes**

Community Voice  Innovation  Collaboration  Concentrated Effort  Movement Building
What Are Our Strategies?

1. Identify a defined geographic region where change is greatly needed and resources are aligned to produce and measure impact.

What Are Our Strategies?

2. Establish a broad collaborative to work across four key sectors – health, economics, education and community.

What Are Our Strategies?

3. Cultivate a public health social movement within each city to rally community action aimed at improving the social determinants of health, birth outcomes, and ultimately the quality of life overall in the zone.

Three Pilot Zones

- Cincinnati, OH
- Oakland, CA
- New Orleans, LA

Cincinnati, Ohio

Lower and East Price Hill Neighborhoods
Within the border, there are several Federally Qualified Health Centers, parks and other outdoor spaces, and strong community partners

Price Hill Demographics

- Population\(^1\): 16,557
- Mean annual births\(^2\) 2009-2011: 355
- Racial Mix\(^1\):
  - 51% Non-Hispanic White
  - 37% Non-Hispanic Black
  - 7% Hispanic
- Poverty rate\(^3\)
  - All ages: 40.4%
  - Children: 55.7%

\(^1\)Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census of Population  
\(^2\)Ohio Department of Health, Office of Vital Statistics
Cincinnati
Lower and East Price Hill

38% of Lower Price Hill residents are experiencing unemployment
60% of Price Hill adolescents graduate from high school
42% of women in Lower and East Price Hill report entering prenatal care in the first trimester

BBZ Community Partners who bring the BBZ work together
- Transforming Early Childhood Community Systems (TECCS)
- Santa Maria Community Services
- Every Child Succeeds (ECS)

Monthly “Moms groups” Established To Promote Community Engagement

New Orleans, Louisiana
Hollygrove Neighborhood
Hollygrove has a well-established community development corporation, Healthy Start services, strong, cooperative community police force.

Hollygrove BBZ Community Snapshot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Orleans Parish, L.A</th>
<th>Best Baby Zone</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>368,200</td>
<td>4,997</td>
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<tr>
<td>People living in Poverty</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median household income</td>
<td>$56,363</td>
<td>$43,372</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No diploma</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of women 16 to 50 years old who had a birth in the past 12 months</td>
<td>8,760</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Birth Weight (&lt;2500g)</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>59.8%</td>
<td>93.4%</td>
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New Orleans
Hollygrove Neighborhood

1 in 5 infants are born low birth weight
49% of children are living in poverty
Many external community rebuilding projects after Hurricane Katrina have not met the needs of the community
Middle Belt Train Controversy

Vision For Hollygrove
Renewed hope, driven by neighbors who bring economic development, better health, and improved outcomes

Oakland, California
Castlemont Neighborhood
Castlemont has a strong presence of community service organizations, including:
- Youth Uprising
- Brighter Beginnings
- First 5 Alameda County

Castlemont Neighborhood
There is a 13 year difference in life expectancy between a child born in the Oakland hills and a child born in Castlemont.

Oakland
Castlemont Neighborhood
Leading cause of death for East Oakland residents ages 14-24: homicide
Almost 15% of all infants born in Castlemont are born pre-term
On a state-wide standardized exam, 80.2% of students from this neighborhood scored below proficient in English Language Arts and 96.4% in Math

BBZ Castlemont Approach
Short-term
- Small Wins
- Innovative Approaches
- Relationships
- Growing Momentum

Long-term
- Community Ownership and Leadership
- Systems are Listening and Responsive to Community
- Shared Measurement and Clear Roles
**Castlemont Focus Areas**

- Early Childhood Supports
- Building a Local Economy
- Resident Engagement
- Partner Engagement
- Foundational Work

**Resident Engagement**

- Summer Block Party
- Economic development chats and input sessions
- Castlemont Community Market: entrepreneur + shopper outreach
- Castlemont Community Cafes
- East Oakland Innovators
- Mini-grant Advisory Committee

**Some Overall Challenges**

- Too much momentum: coordinating work is difficult
- Convener role unclear
- Creating a collaborative vision
  - Asking agencies that typically compete to work together to create the correct bundle of care
- Internal alignment
- This work takes time

**A Few More Challenges**

Aiming for cohesive messaging – multiple projects are providing resources to the neighborhood
Promoting all of the projects as an aligned system without taking credit or overburdening the community
Aligning forces around the community to work together

**What Does Success Look Like?**

Residents throughout the zones organize and rally neighbors for community events, awareness campaigns, and action steps
Seamless transitions of care between health center, home visiting, moms groups, and other community services such as financial opportunity center
Community organizations working together in concerted, coordinated effort

**What Does Success Look Like?**

- Lots of momentum – engaged partners, county leaders, and residents
- Use design thinking as a promising method of resident engagement and small win strategy development to address social determinants of health
- Laying the groundwork for year three!
EVALUATION and LEARNING PLATFORM
Reflecting on and measuring progress is vital to transforming community systems.

• PURPOSE
* Inform and strengthen local efforts
* Measure and demonstrate impacts
* Better position sites for future funding
* Facilitate the replication of the BBZ model nationwide

EVALUATION PROCESS

PLAN
GATHER DATA
REPORT & USE DATA
GATHER DATA
INTERPRET DATA

Social Media
Visit our website for more information:
www.BestBabiesZone.org

Best Babies Zone:
Like us on Facebook!

@BestBabiesZone:
Follow us on Twitter!

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