



What is “Mother-Baby Friendly” Maternity Care?

Mother-Baby friendly maternity care is evidence-based and provides optimal care for mothers and newborns. It’s a philosophy of care that recognizes the normalcy of the birthing process and minimizes the use of non-medically indicated interventions to provide the best outcomes for mothers and babies. This approach recognizes the importance of the mother-baby dyad and minimizes separations between the two after birth.

In 1992, The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative was launched by UNICEF and WHO. The goal was to recognize hospitals and maternity care centers that intentionally created a breastfeeding-supportive environment by following 10 evidence-based steps.

The Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI) is a consensus document that was developed by The Coalition for Improving Maternity Services (CIMS) in 1996 and endorsed by 31 individuals and 26 organizations. Hospitals, maternity centers and clinics can implement any or all of the 10 evidence-based steps to improve maternal and newborn outcomes, improve quality of care, and reduce costs.

PRINCIPLES OF THE MFCI:

- ✚ Normalcy of the Birthing Process
- ✚ Empowerment
- ✚ Autonomy
- ✚ Do No Harm
- ✚ Responsibility

ACOG, AWHONN, ACNM, AAFP and AAP agree: “Pregnancy and birth are physiological processes that usually proceed normally. Most women have normal conception, fetal growth, labor and birth and require minimal or no intervention in the process.”
 -Quality Patient Care in Labor and Delivery: A Call to Action, December 2011

Rationale for the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative:

- ✚ In spite of spending far more money per capita on maternity and newborn care than any other country, the United States falls behind most industrialized countries in perinatal morbidity and mortality, and maternal mortality is four times greater for African-American women than for Euro-American women;
- ✚ Midwives attend the vast majority of births in those industrialized countries with the best perinatal outcomes, yet in the United States, midwives are the principal attendants at only a small percentage of births;
- ✚ Current maternity and newborn practices that contribute to high costs and inferior outcomes include the inappropriate application of technology and routine procedures that are not based on scientific evidence;
- ✚ Increased dependence on technology has diminished confidence in women’s innate ability to give birth without intervention;
- ✚ The integrity of the mother-child relationship, which begins in pregnancy, is compromised by the obstetrical treatment of mother and baby as if they were separate units with conflicting needs;
- ✚ Although breastfeeding has been scientifically shown to provide optimum health, nutritional and developmental benefits to newborns and their mothers, only a fraction of U.S. mothers are fully breastfeeding their babies by the age of six weeks.
- ✚ The current maternity care system in the United States does not provide equal access to health care resources for women from disadvantaged population groups, women without insurance, and women whose insurance dictates caregivers or place of birth.

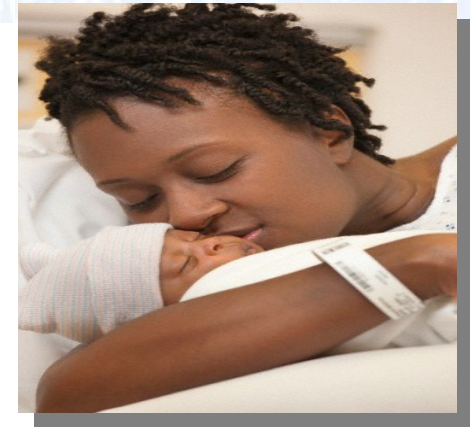
-From the preamble to the MFCI by CIMS



The Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative of Los Angeles County

A Proposal for High-Quality Maternity Care

Implementing Evidence-Based Maternity Care in the Hospital, Clinic, and Community



Sponsored by



*The Association for Wholistic Maternal and Newborn Health
 Promoting Mother-Baby Friendly Maternity Care*

Maternal-Child Health Education, Training, Consultation and Support

Promoting Mother- and Baby- Friendly Maternity Care

Ten Mother-Friendly steps are the foundation of The Mother Friendly Childbirth Initiative. They are evidence-based practices which when implemented provide the best quality care for mothers and babies.

The 10 Steps of the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative

Hospitals and clinics are encouraged to voluntarily implement any or all of the following evidence-based steps (for complete description of each step, go to: <http://motherfriendly.org/MFCI>). A summary of the steps is below:

1. **SUPPORT.** Unrestricted access to continuous emotional and physical support from a family member or a labor-support professional; including access to professional midwifery care.
2. **INFORMATION.** Provides accurate descriptive and statistical information to the public about its practices and procedures.
3. **CULTURAL COMPETENCY.** Provides culturally competent care.
4. **FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT.** Provides the birthing woman with the freedom to walk, move about, and assume the positions of her choice during labor and birth.
5. **COLLABORATION.** Has clearly defined policies and procedures for collaborating and consulting throughout the perinatal period with other maternity services; linking the mother and baby to appropriate community resources.
6. **EVIDENCE-BASED.** Does not routinely employ practices and procedures that are unsupported by scientific evidence, and limits others.
7. **PROMOTES NON-DRUG METHODS OF PAIN RELIEF.** Educates staff in non-drug methods of pain relief, and does not promote the use of analgesic or anesthetic drugs not specifically required to correct a complication.
8. **TOUCH.HOLD.BREASTFEED.** Encourages all mothers and families, including those with sick or premature newborns or infants with congenital problems, to touch, hold, breastfeed, and care for their babies to the extent compatible with their conditions.
9. **DISCOURAGES CIRCUMCISION.** Discourages non-religious circumcision of the newborn infant.
10. **PROMOTES BREASTFEEDING.** Strives to achieve the WHO-UNICEF "Ten Steps of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative" promoting successful breastfeeding.

For the scientific evidence supporting each of the 10 recommendations, download a copy of the peer-reviewed [Journal of Perinatal Education](http://motherfriendly.org) (Supplement, Winter 2007, Vol. 16, No.1) at <http://motherfriendly.org>

Get Involved



Overall Goal

To engage Los Angeles maternity care stakeholders in a conversation for action to implement evidence-based maternity care in their practice settings, using the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI) as a planning and policy-making tool.

Purpose of the Consortium Meetings

1. Discuss the benefits of the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative (MFCI) for hospitals, clinics, mothers, infants, and clinicians
2. Provide a forum for discussion among nurses, doctors, doulas, childbirth educators, midwives, administrators and others on the challenges and opportunities of implementing Mother-Friendly care in the clinical or hospital setting.
3. Provide a forum for dissemination of evidence-based best practices for maternity care.
4. Support clinics, hospitals and community-based programs in developing plans of action to shift the thinking in their organizations towards Mother-Friendly care.

Benefits of the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative for Hospitals, Clinics, Doctors, Nurses and Patients

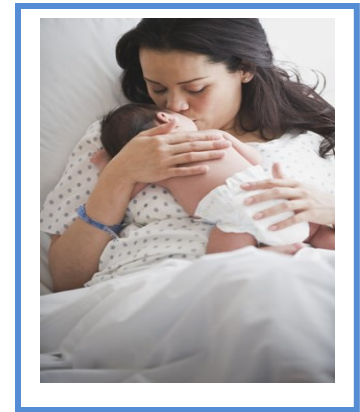
1. Increased patient satisfaction resulting in better compliance to medical recommendations and improved outcomes
2. Increased job satisfaction among nurses; helps to retain qualified staff and reduce turnover
3. Improvement in quality of care (evidence-based practices resulting in better outcomes for mothers and infants)
4. Cost-savings to hospitals because of shorter labors and less medical interventions
5. For doctors, clinics and hospitals, increased patient satisfaction results in repeat business and word-of-mouth recommendations

To learn about upcoming meetings and events, go to: <http://motherfriendlylosangeles.net>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MotherFriendlyLosAngeles>

Yahoo Group -To join go to: <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/MotherFriendlyLosAngeles/>

Follow us on Twitter!
#@MFCI-LA



*The Association for Wholistic Maternal and Newborn Health
Promoting Mother-Baby Friendly Maternity Care*
Maternal-Child Health Education, Training, Consultation and Support

We are a non-profit training and advocacy organization with grass-roots, community-based approach that supports direct-service providers in promoting the health of mothers, infants and families. We provide training for nurses, midwives, doulas, breastfeeding peer counselors and community health promoters who want to promote Mother- and Baby-Friendly Maternity Care. We also provide education and support for expectant parents.

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and



<http://motherfriendly.org>

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