

## **NPM 6: BREASTFEEDING**

### **GOAL**

To increase the percent of infants who are breastfed and who are breastfed exclusively for six months.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends all infants (including premature and sick newborns) exclusively breastfeed for about six months, followed by continued breastfeeding as complementary foods are introduced for 2 years or longer. However, significant differences in breastfeeding initiation and duration persist by socioeconomic status and race/ethnicity.

Breastfeeding supports optimal growth and development, strengthens the immune system, reduces respiratory infections, gastrointestinal illness, and SIDS, and promotes neurodevelopment. Breastfed children may also be less likely to develop diabetes, childhood obesity, and asthma. Maternal benefits include reduced postpartum blood loss due to oxytocin release and possible protective effects against breast and ovarian cancer, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.<sup>1</sup>

### **DEFINITION**

#### **Numerators:**

- Number of infants for whom breastfeeding was initiated by hospital discharge.
- Number of children, ages 6 months through 2 years, who are reported by a parent to have been breastfed or fed breast milk exclusively for 6 months.

#### **Denominators:**

- Number of live births, excluding those transferred to another facility within 24 hours and who died before completion of the report.
- Number of children, ages 6 months through 2 years.

### **HEALTHY PEOPLE 2030 OBJECTIVES**

- Related to Maternal, Infant, and Child Health (MICH) Objective 15: Increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed exclusively through 6 months (Baseline: 24.9 percent of infants born in 2015, Target: 42.4 percent).
- Related to MICH Objective 16: Increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed at 1 year (Baseline: 35.9 percent of infants born in 2015, Target: 54.1 percent).

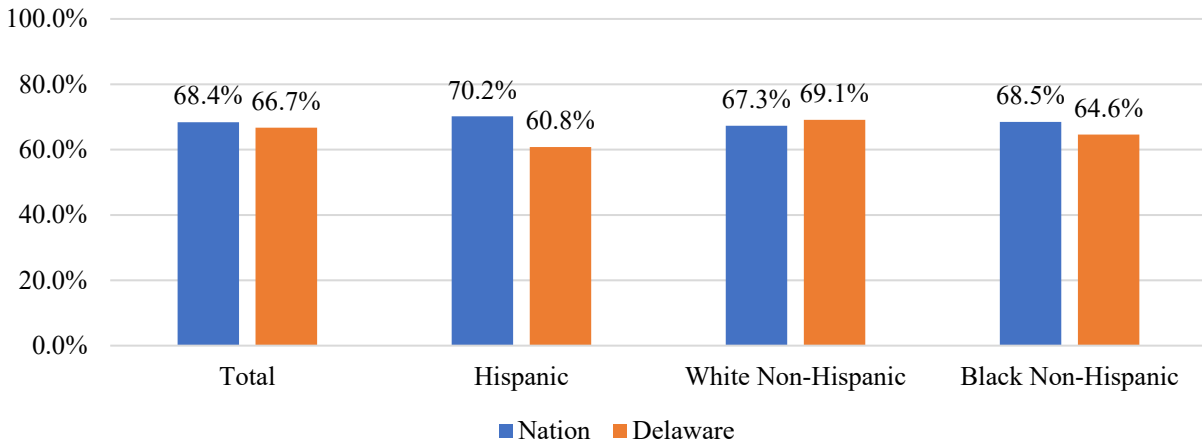
### **STATUS**

The estimated percentage of infants in Delaware who were reportedly breastfed at one month was approximately the same as the corresponding nationwide percentage as given in the figures on the following page. These percentages were also comparable across race/ethnicities, health care coverage, and age of the mother. However, among infants and children in Delaware ages six months to two years who were breastfed exclusively for six months, the reported percentages among Black non-Hispanic infants and children and Medicaid-enrolled infants and children were lower than the other socio-demographic categories as shown in Figures 4 and 5.

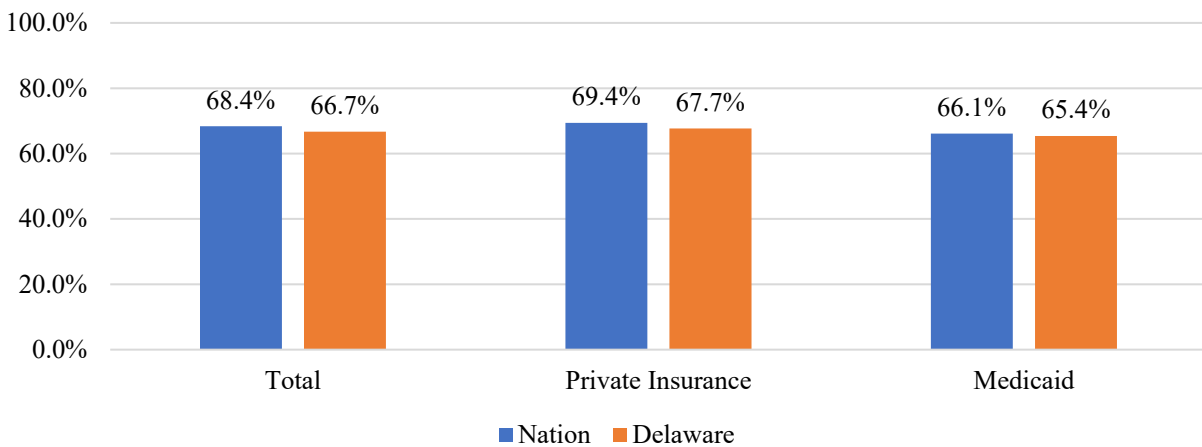
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<sup>1</sup> Meek JY, Noble L; Section on Breastfeeding. Policy Statement: Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk. Pediatrics. 2022;150(1):e2022057988. doi:10.1542/peds.2022-057988.

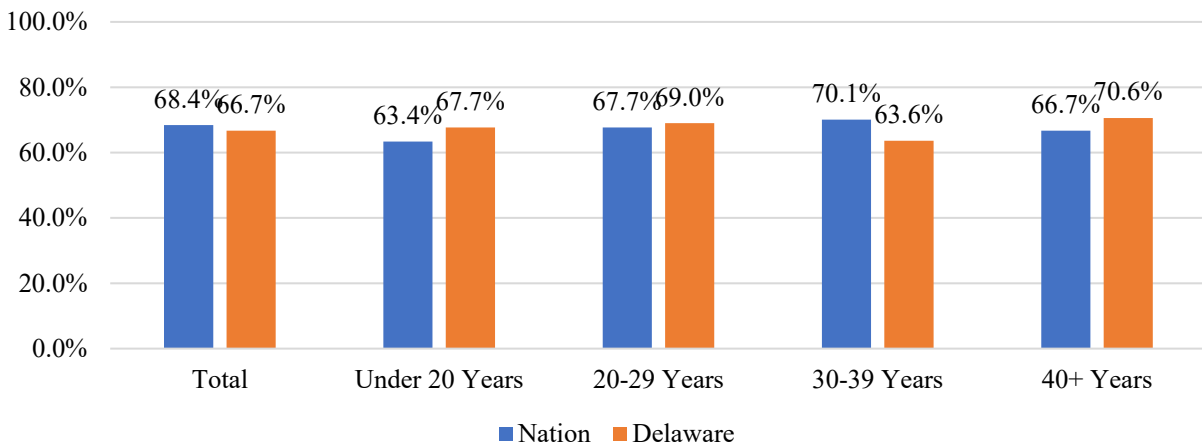
**Figure 1. Estimated Percentage of Infants Breastfeeding at One Month, by Selected Race/Ethnicities, PRAMS 2021.**



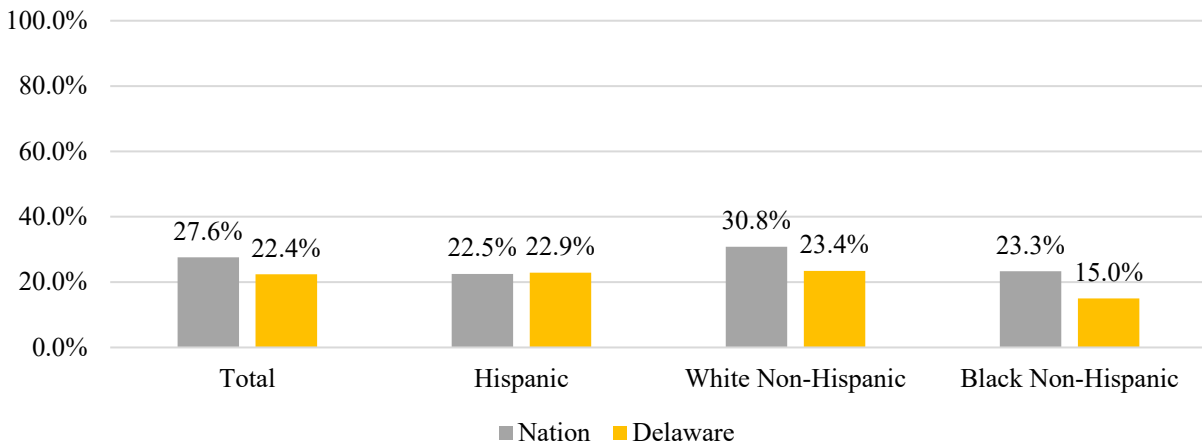
**Figure 2. Estimated Percentage of Infants Breastfeeding at One Month, by Health Care Coverage, PRAMS 2021.**



**Figure 3. Estimated Percentage of Infants Breastfeeding at One Month, by Age of Mother, PRAMS 2021.**



**Figure 4. Estimated Percentage of Infants and Children Six Months to 2 Years of Age Who Were Breastfed Exclusively for Six Months, by Selected Race/Ethnicities, NSCH 2021-2022.**



**Figure 5. Estimated Percentage of Infants and Children Six Months to 2 Years of Age Who Were Breastfed Exclusively for Six Months, by Health Care Coverage, NSCH 2021-2022.**

