



Breastfeeding USA - Executive Summary of Strategic Plan FY19-FY21

October 29, 2018

A. Mission

The mission of Breastfeeding USA is to provide evidence-based breastfeeding information and support, and to promote breastfeeding as the biological and cultural norm.

B. Purpose

Breastfeeding USA provides evidence-based information and support, and promotes breastfeeding as the biological and cultural norm. We accomplish this through a network of certified breastfeeding counselors and comprehensive resources for the benefit of mothers and babies, families, and communities.

C. Vision

Breastfeeding USA's vision is for every breastfeeding family to get the information and support they need from their personal community, healthcare providers, and society.

D. Core Values

Breastfeeding USA's founding core values were codified as:

- Promoting breastfeeding as a biological/cultural norm by sharing evidence-based information
- Serving families from all walks of life regardless of race, social class, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, education, employment status, or culture.
- Supporting families across all stages and forms of human milk feeding (including short term breastfeeding, use of donor milk, exclusively pumping, chest feeding, inducing lactation, and weaning) to make informed decisions and meet their personal goals
- Being a member-driven and member-governed organization

E. Programs

- **Breastfeeding Support:** Provide skilled mother-to-mother/family support through
 - One on one in-person, phone, and digital communications
 - In person group Chapter Meetings
 - Social media discussions
- **Breastfeeding Counselor Certification:** Train and certify volunteer Breastfeeding Counselors with a standardized curriculum of evidenced based breastfeeding support
- **Breastfeeding Advocacy:** Harness the power of members' voices to advocate for a society in which all families have the information and support they need to breastfeed
- **Breastfeeding Resource Hub:** Build public awareness of Breastfeeding USA as a trusted source of an evidence-based breastfeeding information and support on breastfeeding

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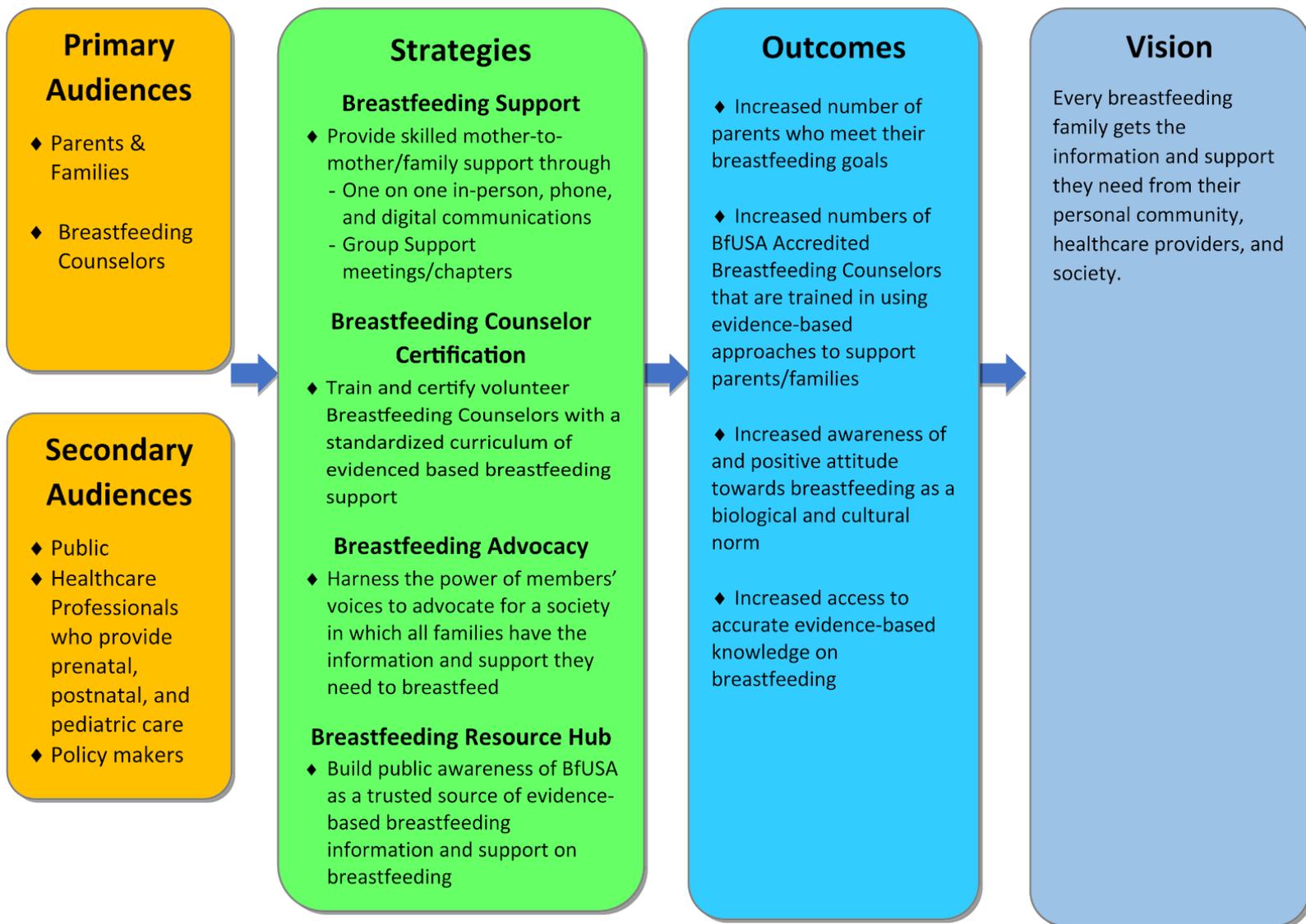


Theory of Change

A theory of change codifies an organization's vision for society and how the organization directly and indirectly contributes to that vision coming to fruition.

Breastfeeding USA's vision is for every breastfeeding family to get the information and support they need from their personal community, healthcare providers, and society.

Breastfeeding USA Theory of Change



Strategic Planning

This strategic planning process builds on Breastfeeding USA's accomplishments and learnings from its prior strategic plan and strategic planning process.

This strategic planning process, commenced in spring 2018, consisted of the following components:

- Forming a Strategic Planning Committee
- Conducting an electronic survey of board members, founders, and committee chairs
- Gathering and analyzing background materials, including:
- Conducting one-on-one calls with key board members, founders, and national volunteers
- Observing in real-time ongoing communication across email list serves, Facebook channels, Board calls, conference calls, and other communication
- Developing a written summary of the current state of Breastfeeding USA
- Creating a theory of change for Breastfeeding USA
- Codifying the organization's core values
- Expanding on the research the organization has done to map the funding landscape and prioritize funders from which to seek grants
- Conducting iterative conversations at the Strategic Planning Committee level, the Board level, and Working Group/Committee level to:
 - identify key strategic questions
 - review/discuss findings and learnings
 - answer the strategic questions
 - set priorities for the next chapter
 - discuss implications of the priorities on programs/services, business model, & partnerships
 - identify any needed one-time or ongoing investments

At its launch, Breastfeeding USA replicated many aspects of the mature and established La Leche League International as many of its founders and leaders were familiar with that organization. Unfortunately, Breastfeeding USA did not have the same level of resources (staff, volunteers, board members, budget) to support the breadth and depth of what Breastfeeding USA had envisioned and sought to replicate. This mismatch between priorities/processes/structures and available resources has contributed significantly to tension and burnout at Breastfeeding USA. Breastfeeding USA has, over the last ten years, continued to build norms, cultures, policies, and practices which require too many volunteers and too many hours from them. In Paper Crane Associates' experience, this struggle of having more the organization wants to do than resources with which to do it, is emblematic of a nonprofit lifecycle stage called growth. Understanding that this is a normal stage of development for an organization but it requires a deliberate attention to resource development, systems, and prioritization of programs drove many parts of the strategic planning process.

The best strategic planning processes do not occur in a vacuum and Breastfeeding USA's planning process was no exception. This strategic planning process occurred concurrently with the organization's ongoing operations and programs. Accordingly, the strategic planning process was informed by learnings, discussions, and events that were occurring within the organization and the organization's internal working and Board decisions were guided in real time by emerging findings and decisions from the strategic planning process.

Breastfeeding USA's Goals and Strategies

Through this strategic planning process, Breastfeeding USA has developed three goals to guide its work over the next three years that will, as they are accomplished, help position Breastfeeding USA to successfully deliver on its mission and offer the programs described above:

Goal 1: Deploy technology strategically to reduce unsustainable burdens on volunteers.

Goal 2: Strengthen the organization's financial position to underwrite needed investments.

Goal 3: Foster a more supported and engaged breastfeeding community.

Each of these goals and the corresponding strategies are described in the pages which follow and build on recommendations Paper Crane Associates provided in memos to the strategic planning committee during the strategic planning process.

Goal 1: Deploy technology strategically to reduce unsustainable burdens on volunteers.

In all volunteer organization like Breastfeeding USA, one of the key challenges is having sustainable workloads for volunteers. The mismatches between what is asked of volunteers, what is actually required to do the job, and what volunteers can manage given their other personal and professional commitments has led many volunteers to prematurely resign or decline a volunteer position. While the easy answer to this appears to be to recruit more volunteers to replace departing volunteers or share the burden with existing volunteers (a strategy Breastfeeding USA has repeatedly attempted in the past few years), aligning a volunteer's limited hours with the highest best use of their volunteer hours also needs to be a priority.

Paper Crane Associates encouraged Breastfeeding USA to also look at what is asked of volunteers, simplifying tasks and eliminating unnecessary or busy work. A key driver of these changes will be the better deployment of technology. In particular, this will mean replacing disparate spreadsheets, actions done by hand, and multiple duplicative systems with streamlined, centralized, and integrated systems which can automate actions and reduce repetitive, duplicative, and busy work tasks. Part of this work will require a rigorous assessment of existing technologies and systems, ensuring that Breastfeeding USA doesn't fall victim to a sunk cost fallacy of sticking with hard-to-use and hard-to-update systems, when a more suitable system is available. Deploying technology also means providing training during the transition to new systems, cross-training of key volunteers on all of Breastfeeding USA's systems, and periodic trainings for new volunteers. Finally, Breastfeeding USA will be more purposeful as to how it uses each of its communication channels, directing inquires, as appropriate, to a more robust FAQ or contact person instead of to a whole community.

Goal 2: Strengthen the organization's financial position to underwrite needed investments.

Breastfeeding USA is currently investing its resources and draining its coffers to underwrite goal #1. These investments are important and yet many of the other priorities in this plan also require or would benefit from a financial investment as well. Accordingly, a key goal over the next three years is to strengthen Breastfeeding USA's financial position. This will include Breastfeeding USA moving to a breakeven budget with the exception of specified one-time investments. Breastfeeding USA will also roll out a new Breastfeeding Counselor Certification fee structure which is more aligned with the field and the value of the Certification. Breastfeeding USA will develop and roll out fundraising strategies which raise support from families served by Breastfeeding USA as well as individuals, foundations, and companies with a shared commitment to Breastfeeding USA's mission. Finally, Breastfeeding USA will build a membership structure which provides a welcoming

community for families served by Breastfeeding USA and for supporters of Breastfeeding USA's mission.

Goal 3: Foster a more supported and engaged breastfeeding community.

Breastfeeding USA's community is inclusive of people who at the same time and over time fluidly move between the many roles with the Breastfeeding USA community including: mother/family seeking breastfeeding support, family member providing support to a loved one who is breastfeeding, Breastfeeding USA Certified Breastfeeding Counselor, Breastfeeding USA local chapter leader, Breastfeeding USA organizational volunteer, breastfeeding advocate, Breastfeeding USA social media follower, and Breastfeeding USA donor. With nearly 200k social media followers, a 100k families served each year, and hundreds of active Breastfeeding USA Certified Breastfeeding Counselor and organizational volunteers, the existing Breastfeeding USA community is ripe for further and deeper engagement. Breastfeeding USA will work to break down internal divides between how Breastfeeding USA views and manages community members in each of these roles and increasingly invite its community to deepen their relationship with by Breastfeeding USA, recognizing that each way a community member is involved increases their likelihood of furthering deepening their relationship with the organization.

Breastfeeding USA will also continue its work to build a more positive and supportive community culture, recognizing the efforts and impact of Breastfeeding USA Certified Breastfeeding Counselors, organizational volunteers, local chapters, and the broader community in providing evidence-based breastfeeding information and support and promoting breastfeeding as the biological and cultural norm. Breastfeeding USA will continue its organizational advocacy efforts supporting advocacy campaigns organized by like-minded organizations while also providing entry points and engagement points for community members to advocate, thereby amplifying Breastfeeding USA's organizational voice and impact on society.

The goals and strategies by goal and by year can be viewed in chart form on the following page.

Breastfeeding USA's 3-year Strategic Plan

Goal	Year 1: FY18-19	Year 2: FY19-20	Year 3: FY20-21
1. Deploy technology strategically to reduce unsustainable burdens on volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint or hire an IT project manager to oversee key IT projects Complete transition of certification course for Breastfeeding Counselors from Moodle to LearnWorlds Train volunteers on how to use LearnWorlds Automate actions (such as reminders, inactivity notifications) in LearnWorlds which are currently being done manually by volunteers Implement new CCAR form Implement moderation on email list serves and Facebook groups Revamp internal guidebooks for Breastfeeding USA Certified Breastfeeding Counselors and Organizational Volunteer to improve accessibility and usability Review and simplify google group structure Implement new accounts receivable and financial tracking tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition to the CRM as the platform through which all tracking of Breastfeeding Counselor applicants, Breastfeeding Counselor candidates, Breastfeeding USA Certified Breastfeeding Counselors, volunteers, members, donors, and newsletter subscribers is managed Train volunteers on how to use CRM Automate actions in CRM which are currently being manually by hand by volunteers (such as check-in emails) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrate and simplify the website to a non-Drupal, user friendly platform Institute a training schedule to train new volunteers on Breastfeeding USA's technology Cross train key volunteers on all technology platforms regardless of the committee position or role
2. Strengthen the organization's financial position to underwrite needed investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement new Breastfeeding Counselor certification fee structure of a one-time \$125 fee Implement new membership structure, raising annual membership dues to \$35 and being open to the whole Breastfeeding USA community Develop grant writing strategy and initiate grant writing Implement 100% board giving policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of grant submissions Develop and implement annual fund strategy Move toward a break-even operating budget, with the exception of strategic one-time investments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a corporate sponsorship strategy that is aligned with WHO codes Move toward a break-even operating budget, with the exception of strategic one-time investments Form a task force to reassess volunteer capacity and recommend whether to move to a staff-based model
3. Foster a more supported and engaged breastfeeding community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce Breastfeeding USA's core values to the community Introduce strategic plan goals to the community Shift to a culture of recognition and positive reinforcement for volunteer and Breastfeeding Counselor roles and requirements Identify opportunities for families supportive of Breastfeeding USA's mission and served by Breastfeeding USA to opt-in to learn more about and support the organization's work Roll out monthly newsletters – an internally focused one to Breastfeeding USA Certified Breastfeeding Counselors/volunteers and another externally focused one to the broader Breastfeeding USA community Create advocacy section in monthly newsletters that highlights quick bite-sized advocacy actions as well as larger advocacy efforts Support advocacy efforts of like minded organizations through signing on to position statements or letters of support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merge Advocacy, Communication and Marketing Work Groups under one umbrella Combine Volunteer and Breastfeeding Counselor workgroups Update research articles and content on website and in Breastfeeding Counselor certification course Promote and highlight the many ways people can be involved with Breastfeeding USA at the same time and overtime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create continuing education opportunities for Breastfeeding USA Certified Breastfeeding Counselors Develop plan for national or regional in-person meetings and trainings Revamp and relaunch breastfeeding awareness meme campaign Shift to an application, interviews, nomination, and slate based election process for Board of Director seats