

**The Center for Women's Health and Wellness is pleased to announce that we have received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to support the development, implementation and evaluation of a breastfeeding promotion program for adolescent mothers who are participating in the Teen Parent Mentoring Program of the Greensboro YWCA.**

### **Adolescent Mother Breastfeeding Support and Education Program**

Mothers under age 20 have the lowest rates of ever and exclusive breastfeeding of any socio-demographic group in the United States. Only 55.8% of mothers younger than 20 ever breastfeed, around 17% are exclusively breastfeeding at 3 months, and only 6% are doing so at 6 months ([Http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/NIS\\_data/2004/socio-demographic.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/NIS_data/2004/socio-demographic.htm), accessed January 2008). Analysis of data from the North Carolina Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System indicates that mothers under 20 in our state were also the least likely of any group to breastfeed—only 45% initiated for the years 1997-2001 (Smith, Avery and Gizlice, 2004). Although these mothers face many difficult social, cultural, and economic barriers to breastfeeding, there are few breastfeeding promotion interventions for this population. Further research is needed to identify programs and policies that can successfully promote and support breastfeeding among this population.

Our study proposes to evaluate the design, implementation and effectiveness of such a program. Our program will be implemented in the Teen Parent Mentoring Program (TPMP) of the Greensboro YWCA, a comprehensive program that provides support for teen mothers before, during, and after pregnancy. Typically at least 80% of the TPMP participants are African-American.

A distinguishing feature of our study is the methodology we will use to develop the adolescent breastfeeding promotion program (ABP). Its creation will rely on a team approach that brings together teen mothers, the staff, educators and volunteers of the TPMP, and researchers and practitioners with expertise in breastfeeding practice and promotion. Our goal is to create an adolescent breastfeeding and support program that:

- ✓ incorporates the values, experiences, and insights of teen mothers;
- ✓ provide opportunities and strategies for teen mothers to learn, practice and incorporate the knowledge and skills essential for successful breastfeeding;
- ✓ is feasible to implement in busy, low budget adolescent parenting support programs; and
- ✓ Increases the proportion of adolescent mothers who initiate breastfeeding, and increases the duration of any breastfeeding, and of exclusive breastfeeding.

Our specific aims are to:

Specific Aim 1: Evaluate the quality of the adolescent breastfeeding promotion program design.

Specific Aim 2: Evaluate the extent to which the program is implemented as designed.

Specific Aim 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of the program in improving breastfeeding practice.