



Baby-Friendly Initiative Ontario

Co-Chair Report for 2019

Baby-Friendly Initiative Ontario (BFION) is a volunteer multidisciplinary organization consisting of health care professionals, service providers and consumers within Ontario interested in protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding.

BFION is the provincial representative for the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC) and partners with hospitals and community health services to assist and support them to achieve and maintain Baby-Friendly designation. BFION provides ongoing expert advice and recommendations on policy and guidelines to government, health facilities, community agencies and professional organizations through knowledge exchange and translation, advocacy, the sharing of resources, and provincial monitoring surveys.

Our mission is to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding in the province of Ontario through the adoption, implementation and maintenance of the practice standards of the Baby-Friendly Initiative. Our vision is that all eligible facilities in Ontario receive the BFI designation and all supporting facilities practice according to BFI standards.

Our goals are to:

- Increase the number of BFI designated hospitals and community health services
- Support designated facilities to maintain their BFI designation
- Increase BFION membership participation
- Increase awareness and education of best practices related to infant feeding

Our current list of Executive members are as follows:

<i>Position</i>	<i>Executive Member</i>
Co-Chair Community	Wendy Lahey
Co-Chair Hospital	Carolyn Crowley
Past Chair	Margaret Sherratt
Membership	Linda Young
Political Advocacy	Gillian Szollos
Social Media	Jenny Vandermeer
BFI Ontario Assessment Committee	Marg LaSalle
Treasurer	Hiltrud Dawson
Breastfeeding Committee for Canada	Kathy Venter
Website	Karen Frith
Communications	Laura Dueck
Chair Elect- Community	Vacant

Highlights from the BCC for the past year

Breastfeeding Committee for Canada

National BFI Innovative Strategy:

- This project is being funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to facilitate 25 Canadian hospitals to proceed towards BFI designation.
- The Project hosted the first national QI collaborative workshop on September 5th and 6th with 116 participants from across Canada.
- Attendees learned from other hospitals already designated; teams worked on their hospital Aim Statements, secondary drivers to achieve their aims, and action plans for follow up.
- The second workshop will be in Vancouver in April 2020 and the final workshop will be in Atlantic Canada in the fall of 2020.

BCC BFI Symposium in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (NWT) October 1 – 3, 2019:

Over 120 participated (30 speakers) including experts, policymakers, healthcare providers, administrators, NGOs, community partners and infant feeding champions from across Canada. Opening remarks from NWT Chief Public Health Officer and the Assistant Deputy Minister of Health Programs set the foundation.

- Provinces, Territories and others from across Canada provided an update on innovative ways they are working to advance breastfeeding & BFI.
- Symposium social media included a Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/pg/BCCBFSymposium/about/?ref=page_internal, as well as Instagram account: BCC Baby Friendly Symposium and BCC Twitter account: @BCCBFI
- The BCC Board Chairs & PT Chairs developed a media release. Due to the Gov NWT election on Oct. 1, it was released on Oct. 2 after the Symposium had started. One article was published: <https://www.myyellowknifenow.com/43502/the-breastfeeding-committee-for-canadas-hosts-baby-friendly-initiative-symposium-in-yellowknife/>
- **Day 1:** Global to Local – we discussed how health equity and social justice approaches can inform the BFI and its implementation in Canada. A key theme was how to move beyond our organizational practices to build the critical connections necessary for transformative change in breastfeeding promotion, policy and research. It was an incredible opportunity to expand the participant's understanding of this.
- **Day 2:** Reconciliation and cultural competency in the context of family-centered care and the BFI - A full day that reflected on the constraints caused by unmet social determinants of health and injustices (including gender inequality, racism, poverty, and violence) and how they contribute to disparities in breastfeeding rates, impact maternal health and care, and access to support in Canada. This was emotionally very heavy, focusing on the work that must be done at the personal, political, and professional levels to address these injustices. Integral to this work is our responsibility to increase knowledge about trauma-informed practices, family-centered care, and cultural safety. It was extremely powerful listening to Dr. Marie Wilson, former Commissioner, Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Canada.
- During this workshop we heard from a range of leaders, academics, advocates and indigenous people about the critical role we as healthcare providers play and how we can be a

part of reconciliation in a meaningful way. This workshop focused on the actions in the context of maternal-child health and care, as well as the importance of policy and quality improvement initiatives, such as BFI, in achieving reconciliation. Please take time to visit the 150 acts of reconciliation site: <http://activehistory.ca/.../150-acts-of-reconciliation-for-t.../>

- **Day 3.** Connections and innovations that lead to the equity-informed implementation of the BFI in Canada – this day brought it all together. Many of the panel discussions highlighted bright spots across Canada that have used innovative practices, policies, and programs to move beyond organizational practices to implement BFI in a way that acknowledges the context and environment in which families live and health facilities operate. Each presentation built on the next - highlighting the importance of building connections and engaging in discussion around innovative practices that contribute to transformative change in breastfeeding promotion, policy, and research across Canada.
- The BCC is very grateful to the Government of the NWT for hosting such a successful Symposium and for providing an incredible opportunity to learn more about the Chief Drygeese Territory & traditional knowledge. We would also like to extend our gratitude to all those who made the journey to Yellowknife - together ***we can do so much more!***
- The general membership meetings provide a forum to communicate information and engage members. Reports from the BCC, BFI Assessment Committee, Provincial/Territorial BFI Implementation Committee, and the Ontario Public Health Association are an easy way to hear updates from across Ontario and Canada. Hot topics have been a valuable avenue to share new information. The presentation PowerPoints are available for membership to access on the BFIO website.

Highlights from BFI Ontario for the past year

Hot Topic Presentations

Date	Topic	Presented By
March 2019	Torticollis Impacting Oral Motor Feeding	Laura Doyle
Sept 2019	BFI Report for Ontario	Marg LaSalle
Dec 2019	Montfort Postnatal Care at Home Program	Carolyn Crowley

BFI Ontario is grateful for the ongoing support from Hiltrud Dawson and Health Nexus with the Adobe Connect platform that makes the hot topic presentations easier to see and hear. Presentation slides are available in the Members section of the website under *Hot Topics*.

BFI Report Card

- The BFI Report Card on the status of BFI within the province of Ontario was released in April 2019. It describes how Ontario fits into the global perspective, the work of BFI Ontario, growth of BFI in Ontario, infant feeding trends and why achieving and maintaining BFI designation is important. In addition, parents were surveyed and provided suggestions for improving care.
- Read the full report [here](#)
- A big thank you to the BFI Strategy for Ontario, Better Outcomes Registry & Network (BORN Ontario), and Ontario Public Health Units for providing information. Another special thank you to the families who participated in the parent survey and contributed comments about their experiences.

BFI Ontario Expo 2020!

[Save the date!](#) October 2nd, 2020. Planning for the BFI Expo 2020 is well underway! This exciting Expo aligns with the 20th anniversary of BFI Ontario and features renowned speaker James McKenna: The Return of Humankind's Oldest and Most Successful Sleep and Feeding Arrangement.

- [Session 1](#)) Setting the Stage: Why We Need the Concept
- [Session 2](#)) Neurobiology, Psychobiology and Importance of Mother-Infant, Father-Infant Contact
- [Where](#): Knox Waterloo Presbyterian Church, 50 Erb St W, Waterloo, ON
- Take a virtual tour of the [conference space](#):
- [Preconference](#): October 1st, 2020: "Celebrate! Dream! Build BFI Ontario for Tomorrow!" A planning and networking day.

Other Highlights

- We have adapted Perinatal Services BC document for Ontario: [Make Breastfeeding Your Business: Welcome Families to Breastfeed ANY TIME, ANYWHERE](#). This has been posted on the BFI Ontario website, feel free to use and share!
- Welcome to Carolyn Crowley, our new Co-chair, Linda Young who has taken over the membership role, and to Jenny Vandermeer who has moved to the social media position. Thanks to Shannon Boyd for her work with social media as well as the membership.

Executive report

Website Report – Karen Frith

The BFION website has been redeveloped with a brand-new look and feel to be minimalistic yet well polished. Viewers will find the site especially easy to browse and navigate. We have included a sticky navigation menu which will follow viewers by being 'stuck' to the top of the screen, as a viewer scrolls down to the lower portion of each page.

The website fills the width of the screen, with improved marketing to promote the Baby-Friendly Initiative to the public in a more professional manner. All website elements were recreated in a more modern light,

along with the 'become a member' feature which is presented better (as opposed to detailing a large text-based message on the homepage).

Cell Phone Ready

The website will scale down to function very well on mobile devices such as iPhone, iPads, Android devices and so on, without the need to 'pinch' the screen, or be presented with unreadable text which is often the case when viewing a website that is not cell phone ready.

Content Management

The entire website is content managed, which means that we can add new content, as well as adjust any page content quickly and easily via a secure administration area. It is easy to manage all our content, without the need to have any form of website coding experience, although for anything outside the design layout, coding experience would be needed.

New! Ontario Family Forum

A new feature that has been added is the Ontario Family Forum. We are hoping to hear from families to share their perinatal experiences in Ontario hospitals and Health Centres so that we can keep in touch with practices in Ontario and advocate for all families for BFI practices in Ontario. Families that have questions can have the opportunity to connect with BFION to find out more about the Baby-Friendly Initiative and how it affects them.

Resources

If you have made or updated any resources that you are willing to share with the membership, please send an email and we can make sure to put it in our "Members" section. Some of our resources are getting dated and it would be great to keep current resources available there!

Also, contact us to advertise any upcoming educational sessions that you are offering or if you have any concerns using our website. Contact Karen at info@bfiontario.com.

Communications Report – Laura Dueck

One of BFI Ontario's goals is to facilitate accurate and timely information sharing with members regarding breastfeeding and the Baby-Friendly Initiative. Laura Dueck is the lead for BFIO Communications and is responsible for taking the minutes of the Executive Meetings and circulating information to the BFI Ontario membership. There are currently approximately 425 members and the MailChimp marketing platform has effectively supported the sharing of over 60 messages over the past year.

Assessment Coordinator Report – Marg LaSalle

Over the past year many facilities in Ontario have been active over the past year with the implementation of the BCC's BFI 10 Steps and WHO Code Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services. The BFI Ontario Assessment Coordinator has participated in teleconferences and responded to many email inquiries about the Baby-Friendly Initiative and WHO Code. Additionally, many hospitals and community health services have received guidance and support from assessors and candidates in the province as they proceed with their journey toward BFI designation.

In 2019 the following facilities in Ontario achieved BFI designation:

Community Health Services

Haldimand Norfolk Health Unit

Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit

Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit

As of December 31, 2019, Ontario has 33 designated facilities including 7 hospitals and 26 community health services. Nine facilities in Ontario have been redesignated. Although some previously designated hospitals and community health services in the province have decided to not be reassessed for BFI redesignation, many have indicated that they intend to continue to uphold BFI principles and standards.

Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto and Halton Healthcare with Georgetown Hospital, Milton District Hospital and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital were successful applicants and now actively involved as participants in the BCC's Quality Improvement Collaborative. Kathy Venter is a consultant with the project and both she and Marg La Salle attended the first collaborative workshop that was held in Oakville in September 2019.

An assessor training was held by the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC) in July 2019 at Halton Region Woodlands Operation Centre in Oakville. The 2-day workshop was facilitated by Kathy Venter and Marg La Salle with 8 new assessor candidates and 3 previously trained assessor candidates in attendance. Ontario currently has 2 lead assessors, 5 assessors and 8 assessor candidates.

All assessment work is done in close collaboration with the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada. During 2019 Marg La Salle and Kathy Venter Co-Chaired the national BFI Assessment Committee and both are members of the BCC's Board of Directors. Marg La Salle and the BFI Ontario Co-Chairs have also regularly attended the BCC's P/T Committee meetings.

Assessors provided guidance and collaboration with members of the BFI Strategy for Ontario during the first part of 2019. Assessors have also continued to participate in the review of documents for various organizations such as Best Start and assisted with projects such as webinars.

Advocacy Report – Gillian Szollos

Over the past year, Baby-Friendly Initiative Ontario members have brought forward opportunities for advocacy on behalf of Baby-Friendly Initiative Ontario. One advocacy letter was sent, and one briefing note prepared. A description of each is below:

- The first letter was sent to the Ontario College of Family Physicians regarding the video *Grow Your Family with A Family Physician*. It was brought to our attention that there were a few moments in the video where bottles and branded pumps were seen and the only infant feeding in this video was that of a bottle fed infant. We felt the video missed the opportunity to highlight the support family physicians can offer families postpartum in particular with the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding. No breastfeeding or breastfeeding support was seen in this video despite the role of the family physician being one of great importance when it comes to receiving information and support about infant feeding.
- The second was a briefing note that highlighted the use of images of pacifiers on the Central East LHIN's website. The Briefing note highlighted step nine of the BFI indicators which specifically states: Give no artificial teats or pacifiers (also called dummies or soothers) to breastfeeding

infants. Recommendations were made to follow the recommendations of *A joint statement of Health Canada, Canadian Paediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada, and Breastfeeding Committee for Canada*¹ by supporting consistent BFI messaging from all Ontario health care agencies which will support mothers to feed and care for their breastfeeding babies without the use of artificial teats or pacifiers.

Membership Report – Shannon Boyd

- There are currently 425 subscribers to our mailing list, an increase from ~400 members last year.
- Mailchimp and Google Docs continue to be used successfully to manage the membership database and mailing list and to keep membership information up-to-date.
- BFIO accepts membership payments predominantly through PayPal. Cheques or EFT can be accepted on rare occasions if necessary.
- Membership fees continue to remain at the rates set in 2015.

Membership fee structure

Membership type	Cost
Individual	\$20
Group (2-5 members)	\$50
Group (6-10 members)	\$100
Group (11-25 members)	\$250
Group (25+ members)	\$400

Membership numbers

Membership type	Number
Individual	56
Group A (2-5 members)	34
Group B (6-10 members)	9
Group C (11-25 members)	1
Group D (26+ members)	1
Total memberships	101

Sector representation

Sector	Individual	Group
Public Health	6	22
Hospital	8	11
CHC	4	5
FHT	2	2
Midwives	2	0
Breastfeeding organizations	10	4
Colleges/ Universities	5	0
First Nations	0	1
Unknown	19	0
Total	56	45

Geographic representation

BFI Ontario retains good representation from across the province. Top locations of where our members come from are #1 Toronto, #2 Ottawa, and #3 Hamilton.

Social Media Report – Jenny Vandermeer

In 2019, a goal of Baby-Friendly Initiative Ontario was to increase our social media presence. Our Twitter posts started in early 2019 with a pause through the summer due to a vacancy in the role. It was restarted in September 2019. Since that time, the feed has gone from 56 to 70 followers and from 246 to 261 following. 28 original posts were created in 2019 and 18 retweets were shared on the account.

Our Facebook activity started in September 2019 and since that time 38 posts were created or shared with a total of 112 shared Facebook posts. The top post was shared by 22 “followers” and reached 3660 views. Presently, there are 90 followers to the Facebook page and this continues to increase monthly.

Twitter	
Followers	70
Following	261
Posts	28
Retweets	18
Mentions	19

Facebook	
Posts	38
Shared posts	112
Followers	90
Top post	Shared 22 times, reached 3660 people with 200 reactions & 57 comments

As we continue to increase the activity on both pages, we encourage the membership to like our page and like, follow, and share created posts both on their personal and organizational accounts. We are always looking for ideas around content and for images to share on social media. Photo release permissions are available on our website.

For 2020 we plan to increase activity on LinkedIn – stay tuned!

Financial Report – Hiltrud Dawson

January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019

Opening Balance, January 1, 2019

Bank Account: \$25,532.71

PayPal Account: \$3,555.69

Total: \$29,088.40

Closing Balance, December 31, 2019

Bank Account: \$20,432.39

PayPal Account: \$2,523.87

Total: \$22,956.26

Balance Jan 1, 2019	29,088.40
Income	3,450.00
Expenses	- 9,582.14
Balance Dec 31, 2019	22,956.26

Income	
Membership Cheques and Direct Deposit	350.00
Membership PayPal	3,100.00
Total	3,450.00

Expenses	
Tax Services	678.00
PayPal Charges	111.82
Teleconferences	96.52
Display/promotion	51.43
Website	4,526.44
Travel Expenses	1,533.93
Executive Expenses	375.00
BFI Expo 2020	910.00
BCC Contribution	1,299.00
Total	9,582.14

Our income was low this year at \$3,450 due to issues with PayPal/memberships. These issues have been corrected and the process is working smoothly.

2019 has been an exciting year with the beginning of the National Project breathing renewed awareness and focus on the importance of the *10 Steps* and working towards BFI designation. In the next few years we will see that continue, and with it we hope for a wave of breastfeeding and BFI support across the provinces and territories.

BFI Ontario will continue to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding through the implementation of the WHO/UNICEF Baby-Friendly Initiative. We will continue to advocate for these evidence based, best practices in Ontario.

As we embark on the 20th year of BFI Ontario, we reflect on the year 2000, when we started with 14 volunteers working to promote breastfeeding best practices in the province. Now we are at over 400 members who continue these efforts. We should be very proud of how far we have come!

Join us October 1st at the BFI Expo preconference day to come together to celebrate the past 20 years and envision the future of the next 20!

Respectfully,



Carolyn Crowley, IA, MN
BFI Ontario Co-Chair Hospital



Wendy Lahey, RN, BScN
BFI Ontario Co-Chair Community