




CHRISTINA RUST





# A Cocooning Project to Protect Newborns From Pertussis

The increasing rate of pertussis (whooping cough) has become a significant problem throughout the United States and in the Northern Kentucky area. Pertussis is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by the bacterium *Bordetella pertussis*. Pertussis is transmitted through respiratory droplets from sneezing, coughing or talking (Faulkner et al., 2011). According to the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, a clinical case of pertussis is defined as "... cough illness lasting for  $\geq 2$  weeks with paroxysms of coughing, inspiratory whoop and/or posttussive whoop without other apparent cause" (Sandora, Gidengil, & Lee, 2008, p. 428).

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**Abstract:** The Pertussis Cocooning Project was created through a collaborative effort by a health care organization and a State Department for Public Health to decrease community pertussis rates and protect infants from the deadly effects of pertussis. Free pertussis immunizations are provided to all mothers who give birth at the health care organization and to all infants' family members and caregivers older than 18 years. DOI: 10.1111/1751-486X.12121

**Keywords:** cocooning | immunization | pertussis | vaccine | whooping cough

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