

Make Breastfeeding Your Business:

**A User's Guide for Community Breastfeeding
Committees & Groups**



Acknowledgement

This User's Guide for Community Breastfeeding Committees & Groups was created January 2012 by an Ad Hoc Committee of the Provincial Breastfeeding Capacity Building Working Group:

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Section 1: Introduction for Volunteers

Welcome!

The purpose of this User's Guide is to provide individuals and groups with resources to help put the *Make Breastfeeding Your Business* tool kit into action. It is hoped that these additional tools will make it easier for volunteers to approach and recruit community partners to the *Make Breastfeeding Your Business* initiative.

Although the *Make Breastfeeding Your Business* toolkit is full of helpful information and many resources, the entire kit may not be needed for each community partner you approach. Depending on the size of the business, organization or municipality you are working with, you may find different parts of the kit more useful and/or more appropriate than others. For some employers you may end up using all the resources in the kit; for others just some of them. For example, a municipality or a large business may use the whole binder, while a small independent coffee shop may need to reference only certain parts of the tool kit. For small businesses, instead of giving them the entire binder, consider using one or more of the resources provided in this User's Guide.

Please feel free to use and/or adapt the resources provided in this User's Guide to meet the needs of your community.

Thank you for recognizing the importance of supporting breastfeeding in our communities and working towards creating more breastfeeding friendly places!

A Checklist for Volunteers: How to Approach a Business/Organization to Become Breastfeeding Friendly

Getting Started

- ✓ Review the *Make Breastfeeding Your Business* tool kit.
- ✓ Identify a business, organization or municipality you want to contact. Decide the best way to make first contact with them (in person, via phone or via e-mail).

First Contact

- ✓ Introduce yourself. Explain who you are and the purpose of the visit/call/e-mail.
 - *Make Breastfeeding Your Business* is a province wide initiative to increase awareness about the importance of breastfeeding by creating more breastfeeding friendly spaces in our communities.
 - You are approaching their business, organization or municipality because they serve and/or employ staff with young families.
- ✓ Check that you are communicating with the appropriate person for this discussion.
- ✓ Highlight that ...
 - Community support is a key factor influencing a mother's decision of whether to breastfeed and how long to continue breastfeeding.
 - By supporting breastfeeding you are helping to create a more family friendly environment where mothers feel welcome. This will enhance the image of your business, organization or municipality as progressive since breastfeeding is environmentally friendly and supports the health of women and children.
- ✓ Depending on the size of the business/organization/municipality, provide a copy of:
 - One or more of the following *Make Breastfeeding Your Business* resources: 1. Tool Kit, 2. One page flyer (p. 10) and/or 3. The leaflet (p. 11)
 - A letter describing who you are. (See sample letter of information p. 8)
 - The handout titled *Staff Tips for Supporting Breastfeeding In Public*" (p.17).
 - A window decal of the international breastfeeding logo and/or an appropriate Breastfeeding Friendly Poster (p. 13).
- ✓ Leave your contact information in case they have any questions. Tell them you will follow up with them in a few days. If necessary, ask for additional contact information.

Future Contacts

- ✓ Ask if they have had a chance to read over the information you left. If not, ask if you could go through it together.
 - Ask if they have any questions or concerns.
 - Highlight the benefit of becoming breastfeeding friendly.
 - Review the *Checklist for Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly* from the tool kit and offer your support in their transition to become more breastfeeding friendly.
- ✓ If they have already agreed to make changes, ask how things are progressing. Do they have any questions or concerns? Would they like further support?
- ✓ Set a date for additional follow-up visits if needed.

Section 2: Resources

Sample Letter of Information

Breastfeeding Community of Practice
Public Health, Capital Health
7 Mellor Avenue, Unit 5
Dartmouth, NS, B3B 0E8

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Breastfeeding Community of Practice is a local group created to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding in our community. Support from all members of the community is a key factor influencing a mother's decision of whether to breastfeed and how long to continue breastfeeding. By supporting breastfeeding mothers your (business, organization or municipality) can play a vital role in helping us create a breastfeeding friendly community.

As a (business, organization or municipality) that serves families and/or employs young women we would like to support you in becoming more breastfeeding friendly. By supporting breastfeeding you are helping to create a more family friendly environment where mothers feel welcome. This can also enhance the image of your (business, organization or municipality) as progressive, since breastfeeding is environmentally friendly and supports the health of women and children.

Employers who provide lactation support experience other benefits:

- Increased job satisfaction and productivity. Breastfeeding employees feel valued when they have active support to breastfeed.
- Increased employee retention post-maternity leave. When barriers to long term breastfeeding are removed, women are happier and feel more supported when they return to work.
- Decreased costs for recruitment and training. Women, who feel actively supported in their decisions to continue breastfeeding after returning to work, have increased job satisfaction and therefore increased loyalty to their employers.
- Lower employee absenteeism resulting from family illness. Children who are breastfed get sick less often, than those who receive formula.

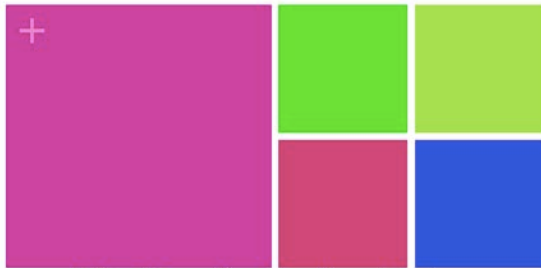
By supporting breastfeeding you are helping to create positive social change that can have far reaching health, social, economic and environmental benefits for our community.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact (insert name) by phone (insert phone number) or email (insert email address).

Kind Regards,

Signature
[Print your name here]

Sample PowerPoint Presentation for Businesses, Organizations, or Municipalities



Make Breastfeeding Your Business:
Everybody benefits !



+ What is the Baby Friendly Initiative?

- Developed by the World Health Organization and UNICEF in 1991
- Aims to improve the quality of breastfeeding outcomes for mothers, babies, and families
- Through the implementation of evidence based best practices standards to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding



+ Why talk about Breastfeeding?

- Health Canada recommends babies be exclusively breastfed for 6 months
- The Nova Scotia Human Rights Act supports women to breastfeed "wherever, whenever"
- Provincial Breastfeeding Policy (2005)
- Breastfeeding committees exist province wide throughout the province
- The Lunenburg & Queens Baby Friendly Initiative™ Committee provides breastfeeding leadership locally



+ Why breastfeeding matters to families:

- Health benefits for mothers and babies
 - Mothers- decreases risk of some chronic diseases, such as osteoporosis, ovarian and breast cancer
 - Babies- decreases risk of infections, asthma, diabetes, and childhood obesity
- Enhances mother-child relationships
- Promotes optimal infant growth and development



+ Why breastfeeding matters to our community:

- Environmentally friendly and supports sustainability
- Reduces food costs for families
- Reduces health care costs
- Promotes social equity
- All of these benefits resonate in the community and improves quality of life and well being of community members:

Supporting breastfeeding will create healthier communities and will send a message that breastfeeding is valued, thus the health and future of our children and our community members matter.



+ Win-win situation: Businesses that support breastfeeding families can:

- Have a positive influence as to whether and when a mother returns to work
- Improve employee productivity, satisfaction, loyalty, & morale
- Enhance recruitment and retention
- Reduce parent absenteeism due to a sick child as breastfeeding helps infants fight infections
- Improves image of business



+ What kind of barriers do breastfeeding families face in the community?

- Lunenburg and Queens County community members have identified a need for the development of breastfeeding “friendly spaces and places” within our communities
- Barriers some breastfeeding families face in our community:
 - Bottle feeding culture
 - Lack of community support
 - Returning to work
- Developing supportive spaces within our communities reduces barriers that may influence a woman’s decision to begin or continue breastfeeding her baby



+ How the Lunenburg & Queens Baby Friendly Initiative™ Committee has supported our community:

- B.E.S.T Friend Peer Support Line
- Make Breastfeeding Your Business: Everyone Benefits & Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit
- Provide support for those expressing an interest in creating supportive environments for breastfeeding families
- Partnerships and linkages with community businesses and organizations
- Commitment and partnership in Sustainability Bridgewater
- Provide input in regards to Lifestyle Centre
- Celebration and recognition (eg. High Tea Cranberry’s)



+ How the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg can support our community: Action Binder

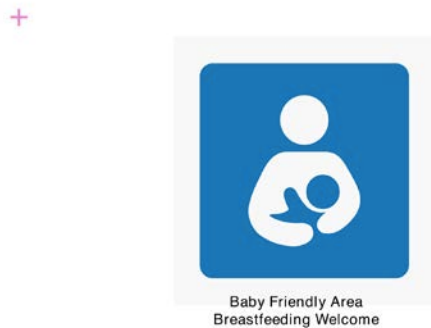
- Endorse breastfeeding policy for supporting Municipality employees who are breastfeeding and returning to work
- Endorse breastfeeding policy to support community members who are breastfeeding and accessing programs and services
- Create “family friendly spaces” in Municipality
- Educate employees how to provide support a co-worker or community member who is breastfeeding
- Educate employees how to address concerns raised by individuals in regards to a mother who is breastfeeding
- incorporate into strategic planning for the future of the Municipality



+ Leading the way...

Community organizations that are already “Making Breastfeeding Their Business”:

- Local Businesses (HEAT, Perfect 10 Nails, The Finish Line, The Kilted Grill house)
- Local organizations (South Shore Health)
- Local Daycares (Small World Learning Centre, Bridgewater Daycare, Lunenburg Daycare)



One-page Flyer for Business Owners and Managers

Make Breastfeeding YOUR Business

By supporting breastfeeding, we can create healthier people, healthier relationships and healthier communities.

Supporting breastfeeding will create healthier communities and will send a message that breastfeeding is valued, thus the health and future of our children and our community members matters.

How to deal with a concerned customer or employee?

When a customer or staff member expresses a concern, simply let them know that you are a family friendly business or organization, that you support breastfeeding and that it is a mother's right to breastfeed in public.

You can offer to serve a concerned customer in another location.

Where to get more information?

Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit is available online:
<http://novascotia.ca/dhw/healthy-communities/documents/Breastfeeding-support-kit.pdf>

Why is breastfeeding important?

Breastfeeding is important for the health of the baby and the mother, but also has benefits for employers and the community.

NOT breastfeeding increases the child's risk of asthma, respiratory infections, ear infections, obesity, and diabetes.

NOT breastfeeding increases the mother's risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, osteoporosis, and heart disease.

Breastfeeding is environmentally friendly (no waste), sustainable, & reduces food costs. Breastfed babies have fewer doctor visits, hospitalizations and prescriptions, thus lowering overall health care costs for the community.

When supported in the workplace, breastfeeding employees tend to be more satisfied with the balance of their lives, resulting in increased job satisfaction and greater productivity. It may also result in fewer missed days from work to tend to a sick child.

Support is a key factor that may influence a mother's decision to breastfeed.

How do we create supportive environments?

It can be as simple as smiling and making eye contact with a mother who is breastfeeding. Although women have the right to breastfeed "anywhere/ anytime", some mothers prefer a more private space to feed their babies. Offering a mother a spot to breastfeed her child will allow her to decide where she is most comfortable, for example "You are more than welcome to feed your baby here; however, if you would like a more private space, just let us know".

For mothers returning to work, developing a plan that is workable for both the mother and the employer can be a "win-win" situation. It can have a positive influence as to whether and when she returns to her job. Research shows that supporting employees who are breastfeeding can enhance productivity, satisfaction, loyalty and morale. It can improve the business image among employees, clients and the community, lower absenteeism, enhance retention and be a recruitment incentive. The *Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit* includes suggestions as to how to develop such a plan.



A Leaflet for Businesses, Organizations and Municipalities

Make Breastfeeding Your Business

Become Breastfeeding Friendly



Breastfeeding
Nova Scotia

For More Information
To learn more about becoming breastfeeding friendly or the *Make Breastfeeding Your Business* tool kit, please contact us.

Name: _____


Email: _____

Phone: _____

Breastfeeding
Nova Scotia

International Breastfeeding Symbol

This important symbol has the potential to change the world for the better. It can be used by ordinary people to express their support for breastfeeding in their home and work environment. It can be used by shopkeepers, restaurant owners, and other businesses and organizations to let customers know that breastfeeding is welcome inside.



Nova Scotia Promotes, Protects and Supports Breastfeeding

Did you know ...

Breastfeeding is protected by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act.

A woman has the right to breastfeed in a public area without discrimination or harassment.

Breastfeeding is important for the health of the baby and the mother, but also has benefits for employers and the community.



Make Breastfeeding Your Business

Make Breastfeeding Your Business is a Provincial initiative that helps businesses, organizations and municipalities adopt practices that protect, promote and support breastfeeding.

Benefits of Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly

- Enhanced image of being progressive. Breastfeeding is environmentally friendly and supports the health of women and children.
- Increased business as a result of supporting a family friendly environment where people will feel more welcome.
- Lower employee absenteeism due to family illness. Breastfed babies and their mothers are healthier.
- Increased job satisfaction and productivity among employees returning to work post-maternity leave as the result of feeling better supported.
- Increased employee retention post-maternity leave, resulting in decreased costs for recruitment and training.

Support is a key factor that influences a mother's decision to breastfeed. You can play an important role in creating a community that supports breastfeeding.

How to Become Breastfeeding Friendly

- Be informed. Learn why creating more breastfeeding friendly spaces in our community is important.
- Provide a welcoming environment for mothers to breastfeed.
- Display a sign or symbol that tells everyone, breastfeeding is welcomed.
- Create a verbal or written breastfeeding policy.
- Ensure all employees know about the organization's breastfeeding policy.



For More Information

To learn more about becoming breastfeeding friendly, please visit the *Make Breastfeeding Your Business* tool kit available online. http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/publications/breastfeeding_support_kit.pdf

Sample Signage

Welcome!

We are a Breastfeeding Friendly
Place



We will do our best to support you



Breastfeeding 

Anytime...Anywhere!



**If you would prefer privacy,
please ask a member of the staff.**

In support of the
Nova Scotia Provincial Breastfeeding Policy





Handout: Staff Tips for Supporting Breastfeeding in Public



Staff tips for Supporting Breastfeeding In Public

Promoting, protecting and supporting breastfeeding.

Respecting the decision each mother makes about how to feed her baby.

It is recommended by Health Canada that babies be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of their lives. Breastfeeding is encouraged to continue after solid foods are introduced up to and beyond 2 years of age.

Importance of Breastfeeding:

- Decreases baby's risk of asthma, diarrhea, lung and ear infections, diabetes, and obesity.
- Decreases mother's risk of breast and ovarian cancers, osteoporosis, heart disease, and bleeding after birth.
- Less preparation time and lower cost.
- Decreases parents' missed work time due to sick children.
- Protects the environment (no waste).
- Creates healthier families, healthier communities & lower healthcare costs.

The following are some ways that you can make a mother who is breastfeeding feel **more** comfortable:

- Ask a woman with a baby where she would like to sit. Allow her to pick a spot where she will be comfortable breastfeeding, if she chooses.
- Talk to her in a comfortable manner. Ask about her baby.
- Making eye contact with a mother who is breastfeeding shows her that you are comfortable and that you support her.

If a customer expresses a concern about a woman breastfeeding in public:

- Explain that you are a family friendly establishment and it is your policy to support breastfeeding.
- Explain that the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act and Breastfeeding Policy protect a woman's right to breastfeed in public.
- Offer to move the concerned customer to another seat instead of offering another seat to the breastfeeding mother. This supports the fact that breastfeeding her baby is a right.

Where can you learn more about breastfeeding?

- Breastfeeding Nova Scotia www.first6weeks.ca: not only will you find information about breastfeeding but you will also be able to search for breastfeeding supporters & support groups in your own community!
- La Leche League Canada www.lllc.ca
- Nova Scotia Health and Wellness www.novascotia.ca/dhw/healthy-communities/healthy-eating-breastfeeding.asp

Reference: Frittenburg, S., Lunenburg and Queens Baby-Friendly Initiative™ Committee (2009). *Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit*. Bridgewater, FAM July 2011.

