

***Make Breastfeeding
Your Business:
An Action Support Kit***



Acknowledgement

This toolkit was created by Sarah Frittenburg, 4th year Dalhousie Nursing student, in collaboration with the Lunenburg and Queens Baby-Friendly Initiative™ Committee.

This binder may be copied, adapted, and distributed without further permission provided that there is an acknowledgement to Sarah Frittenburg and the Lunenburg and Queens Baby-Friendly Initiative Committee.

The intent of *Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit* is that it is used in the spirit of the Baby-Friendly Initiative™, in building community supports for breastfeeding families.

Lunenburg and Queens Baby-Friendly Initiative Committee
(February 2009)

Document revised July 2012 by Ad Hoc Committee of the Provincial Breastfeeding Capacity Building Working Group.

Welcome

On February 18, 2000 the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act defined breastfeeding as a human right and stated that women cannot be discriminated against based on sex or family status. In 2005 the provincial government adopted a breastfeeding policy supporting the Baby-Friendly Initiative™ (BFI).

The Baby-Friendly Initiative™ is an international initiative that helps organizations adopt practices that protect, promote and support breastfeeding. It has been created by the World Health Organization and UNICEF to support breastfeeding and its importance for the baby, the mother, families and the community. This initiative is also supported by the federal and provincial governments.

Throughout Nova Scotia, committees exist that provide leadership for the protection, promotion, and support of breastfeeding in local communities. The goal is for our Nova Scotia communities to become baby friendly, with breastfeeding becoming the cultural norm for infant feeding. Although it is recognized that breastfeeding is not an option for all women, by developing supportive spaces within our communities, barriers are removed that may influence a woman's decision to begin and/or continue breastfeeding their babies.

This kit has been created to help local businesses, organizations and governments to build their knowledge about breastfeeding and provide tools to better support breastfeeding women whether they are employees or clients. The toolkit is not designed to be read cover-to-cover, but rather is organized to allow employers to find the information they need as easily as possible. Thus, some sections contain information that is repeated elsewhere in the toolkit.

The *Make Breastfeeding Your Businesses* tool kit is also available on line at <http://novascotia.ca/dhw/healthy-communities/documents/Breastfeeding-support-kit.pdf>. Feel free to publicly display the provided poster to demonstrate your breastfeeding support.

Congratulations on being a progressive leader by recognizing the importance of supporting breastfeeding women in our Nova Scotian communities!

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A Checklist for Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly

- Review the *Make Breastfeeding Your Business* information we have provided.**

- Create a breastfeeding policy:**
 - Discuss with your staff the importance of their support in creating a breastfeeding friendly environment for clients and co-workers.
 - Ensure new employees learn about the breastfeeding policy during orientation.
 - In addition to your breastfeeding policy, ensure all staff are aware that breastfeeding is a protected human right and women in Nova Scotia have the right to breastfeed everywhere.

- Display a sign, such as the international breastfeeding symbol, indicating that breastfeeding is welcome.** 
 - Once managers and staff have learned how to support breastfeeding, display the international breastfeeding symbol and/or post a sign that shows everyone that breastfeeding is welcome.

- Ensure all pregnant employees are aware of available breastfeeding supports they will receive upon returning to work.**
 - Meet with pregnant employees before their maternity leave.

- If possible, provide a place for parents to change diapers.**

- If possible, provide a space for women, who choose, to feed their babies in private or to pump.**

Section 1: Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Place for Your Employee



Breastfeeding and Employment: An Introduction

In Canada, many women have the opportunity for a one-year leave from their employment. If eligible, mothers can receive Employment Insurance (EI) for the year, which includes 17 weeks of maternity leave and 35 weeks of parental leave and is equivalent to 55% of their salary up to a set maximum amount (ex. Jan. 2012= \$485/week). Some employers also 'top up' EI benefits to varying degrees (ex. 75%, 93% of wages) for all or part of the year. However, many women return to work earlier for various reasons such as ineligibility for maternity benefits, sharing of parental leave with their partner, and not being able to afford the loss in income.

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 2 years of age or beyond. For many women, returning to work can be seen as a barrier to beginning and/or continuing to breastfeed their children.

In Nova Scotia, the rights of women who are breastfeeding their babies are protected through the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Included in this is women's right to breastfeed their babies anytime, anyplace. Refer to the resource section of this kit for more detailed information (p.28).

Prior to returning to work, an individualized plan can be made that will depend on the woman, the baby, childcare and the job. Some women will have their babies brought to them for feedings during scheduled work breaks. For others, it will be more convenient to pump their breastmilk so that it can be given to their babies at a later time. This plan will be unique to the situation and it should not be expected that every breastfeeding employee would do the same thing.

As an employer, there are some simple steps that you can take to ease the transition for an employee who is breastfeeding when returning to work. By continuing to support women to breastfeed upon returning to work, your business/organization demonstrates a commitment to supporting employees as they make this transition, further highlighting the importance of breastfeeding.

The Importance of Breastfeeding

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

The Baby

NOT breastfeeding increases the child's risk of:

- asthma
- respiratory infections
- ear infections
- obesity
- diabetes

The Mother

NOT breastfeeding increases the mother's risk of:

- breast cancer
- ovarian cancer
- osteoporosis
- heart disease

The Family

NOT breastfeeding

- increases food costs for families
- requires more work (preparing formula and cleaning bottles)

The Employer

The baby who receives breastmilk is healthier. This results in fewer missed days from work to tend to a sick child and money saved by the employer.

Also, as a result of creating a welcoming environment for your breastfeeding employee, the mother tends to be more satisfied with the balance of her life resulting in increased job satisfaction and greater productivity.

By allowing a woman to return to work and continue to provide her child with breastmilk, she is more likely to return to work once her maternity leave is finished. This also results in money saved for your business relating to recruitment and training a new employee.

Implementing a breastfeeding policy at your workplace can be promoted as a health benefit. This will enhance your business image as progressive and family friendly. Refer to the Resources section of this tool kit to see an example of a sample policy.

The Community

As an employer who supports breastfeeding, you are a vital part of creating a community that supports breastfeeding. Your support shows other members of the community that breastfeeding and providing a child with breastmilk are important. Community support is a key factor that can influence a mother's decision about whether or not to breastfeed and how long she breastfeeds.

Supporting breastfeeding families benefits all members of the community.

- Breastfeeding is environmentally friendly. There is no waste that results from milk preparation.
- Breastfed babies have fewer doctor visits, hospitalizations and prescriptions, thus lowering overall health care costs.

Help make breastfeeding a part of our culture. Healthier people and a healthier community will be the result.

Management Tips for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Place

Managers and supervisors can help a woman be more comfortable breastfeeding in her community. The following tips can help create a breastfeeding friendly place:

- Create policies and procedures specific to your business that will help your employees support breastfeeding mothers. Encourage staff to express any concerns about breastfeeding.
- Make use of the materials provided in this kit. After your employees have learned how to support breastfeeding, display the poster and/or a sticker to show the public that breastfeeding is welcome in your workplace.
- Make your workplace baby friendly by having a place for a parent to change diapers.
- Mothers should feel welcome to breastfeed everywhere. However, some mothers feel more comfortable breastfeeding in private. If space allows, a small, clean space (separate from the bathroom) with a chair is all that is required.
- Post the handout titled *Staff Tips for Supporting Breastfeeding in Public* (p.39) in a central location where staff can find it and refer to it when needed.
- Use your efforts to your advantage. Advertise your business as breastfeeding friendly. Research shows that families go to public places that are welcoming and supportive to families and mothers who are breastfeeding.
- In October, participate in local activities for World Breastfeeding Week. Check with your local breastfeeding support groups regarding local events.

Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace

Key considerations when planning a breastfeeding-friendly workplace are space, time, and support.

Space

The space required is very little. Often a small, clean, private area with a comfortable chair is sufficient. If the employee is pumping her breastmilk, this room should also be equipped with an electrical outlet. It is at the discretion of the place of employment whether a breast pump will be provided or if it is the responsibility of the employee to provide the pump. Electric breast pumps, which are the most efficient, can be bought or rented. Many pharmacies and stores that specialize in infant supplies rent or sell breastpumps.

A properly functioning refrigerator should be accessible to store the breastmilk in until the employee finishes her shift. If this is not possible, she could use a cooler and ice packs.

Time

In most cases, breastfeeding or pumping times can be incorporated into regular breaks throughout the workday. However, the time required can vary according to the mother and baby.

Support

Sit down and talk with an employee prior to her return to work. Ideally this meeting occurs before the employee begins her maternity leave. This will allow for the opportunity to develop a plan that is workable for everyone involved and can result in a win-win situation.

Support and understanding is key in successfully creating a breastfeeding friendly workplace for your employee. Information should be provided to other employees so that they can effectively support their co-worker.

Post the *Providing Support to Your Co-Worker Who is Breastfeeding Her Baby* (p.36) poster found in the Resource Section of this kit, for ways that staff can support a breastfeeding co-worker.

Creating and implementing a breastfeeding policy is an effective way to ensure that all staff are aware that the organization supports breastfeeding. Policies will be specific to each workplace.

The following is a policy adapted from the Peterborough County-City Health Unit in Ontario, which can serve as an example for your own breastfeeding policy:

SAMPLE:

(Name of business or organization) recognizes that breastmilk is the optimal food for healthy growth and development of infants. *(Name of business or organization)* promotes and supports

breastfeeding and the expression of breastmilk by employees who are breastfeeding when they return to work.

Management and staff of (*name of business or organization*) shall work with breastfeeding employees to determine mutually agreeable hours of work, assignments and breaks, which support breastfeeding practices, and are compatible with the collective agreement and other policies.

1. Supervisors will advise staff of the breastfeeding policy and the supports available if they wish to continue breastfeeding when they return to work.
2. Supervisors will meet with employees returning from Pregnancy/Parental leave, to establish a schedule and assignment that facilitates breastfeeding. This could include paid breastfeeding breaks or the use of existing break times, as mutually agreed upon by the employee and employer.
3. The Multi-Purpose Room can be booked (for 30 minute periods) for women who wish privacy in order to breastfeed or express breastmilk.
4. Employees are encouraged to address individuals with concerns about breastfeeding in public by providing information about the importance of breastfeeding and the importance of supportive environments.

Additional sample policies can be found in the Resource Section.

- Baby/Family Friendly Policy, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (p. 29)
- Workplace Breastfeeding Policy, South Shore Health (p. 30)

You can adapt one of these sample policies to meet the specific needs of your workplace or develop your own. Members of your local breastfeeding committee are also a good resource when writing workplace policies and procedures.

Providing Support to Your Breastfeeding Co-Worker

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 family foods are introduced up to 2 years of age or beyond.

When a co-worker returns to work after having a baby, she may choose to continue to breastfeed her baby. This will require her to either breastfeed her baby or express her breastmilk throughout the day. Most often, these times can be incorporated into regular breaks in the normal workday.

Employees who plan to express their milk at work will be provided with a private room for this purpose. If using an electric breast pump, the employee will need access to an electrical outlet. She will also need a fridge or a cooler with ice packs for safe breastmilk storage.

Returning to work after having a child can be very difficult for a mother. Providing her with the opportunity to continue breastfeeding can make her more at ease with her decision to leave her child each day and to return to work. Your employer supports breastfeeding and understands its importance for the health of both the mother and child. Equally important in her success is the support that is provided by you, her co-worker.

Some ways that you can show your support to a co-worker incorporating breastfeeding into her workday include:

- Show interest in her baby. Ask her questions or ask to see a picture of her baby. Even though there is no mention of breastfeeding in the conversation, you are acknowledging that her child is important.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Acknowledge and applaud her decision to continue providing breastmilk to her baby, after she has gone back to work.
- Recognize the positive impact her decision will make on the community.

Combining Breastfeeding and Work: The Preparation

Before having her baby, a mother should be made aware of the support that she will have to continue breastfeeding her child when she returns to work. This could greatly influence her decision to breastfeed and/or return to work. The handout *Making Breastfeeding Work...At Work!* (p.38) can be made available to a woman prior to leaving work to have her baby. This gives suggestions to make the transition from home to work easier for the mother and her employer.

Closer to the date that the mother will be returning to work, a plan can be made to incorporate breastfeeding into her workday. As discussed earlier, this plan will be specific to the mother, the baby, and the job. This plan may also change as a result of factors such as an increased need of the baby for more milk. For example, when a baby experiences a growth spurt, breastmilk needs are often greater. When this occurs, more frequent breastfeeding or pumping may be necessary for two or three days.

As the employer, it is important for you to provide an open line of communication. It may be difficult for your employee to ask you for what she needs, and it may be difficult for you to know what she needs. Effective communication is required for the transition of combining breastfeeding and employment to be successful. This can be achieved by:

- Ask your employee what she needs to make this transition easier. Ensure her of your support.
- Make the business' support of breastfeeding common knowledge among all employees. Post the handout titled *Providing Support to Your Co-Worker Who is Breastfeeding Her Baby* (p. 36), provided in this kit. A woman may feel co-workers will resent her, as allowing women to breastfeed or pump breastmilk during business hours may be perceived as special treatment by other employees who are not breastfeeding.
- Active implementation of policies and procedures can raise the awareness of other employees and make the mother who is breastfeeding more comfortable.
- Show your support to non-breastfeeding employees and their families. Provide a bulletin board for employees to post pictures and/or accomplishments of their own family members or include them in your company newsletters.

Making Breastfeeding Work...At Work!

Before leaving on your maternity leave....

- Meet with your employer to discuss your plan to continue breastfeeding when you return to work. Begin to explore possible options.

Before returning to work...

- Meet with your employer to develop a plan to continue breastfeeding. Let him or her know what you will need and what they can do to help you.
- Discuss the possibility of starting back to work part way through the week so that your first week is short. Another possibility is returning part-time and gradually increasing to full-time. Working from home for a part of the day may be another possibility to ease back into work, while incorporating breastfeeding into the workday.
- You may want to get your baby used to drinking from a cup or bottle so your baby can be fed pumped breastmilk, while you are at work.
- Learn about expressing and storing breastmilk. Find the method of expression that works best for you. For more information, call local community supports or refer to [Breastfeeding Basics](#), a free Public Health resource.
- Depending on the age of your baby and how frequently he/she nurses, you may want to begin storing your breastmilk prior to returning to work to ensure that your baby has enough.
- Check your wardrobe. Two-piece work outfits are a more practical choice when breastfeeding or expressing at work. Patterned tops can hide leakage and/or the contour of a nursing pad. It may be useful to keep a sweater at work, just in case.
- Perform a “test run” workday. Arrange for the baby to be left with the caregiver for a typical workday. Breastfeed and/or pump as you would during a workday. As a result, any kinks can be worked out before actually returning to work.

When you are back to work...

- Organize your time and commitments as best you can and ask for help from family and friends. This can decrease the stress associated with returning to work and maximize your success with continuing to provide your baby breastmilk.
- Give yourself time in the morning to breastfeed at least once and breastfeed right after you return from work.
- At work, pump or breastfeed as often as you would if you were at home with your child. When at home, breastfeed as often as you can. This will help you maintain your milk supply.
- Don't sweat the small stuff. Decide what is important and accept help from family and friends.
- Eat and drink well and rest when you can.
- Talk to other women who have combined work and breastfeeding. Provide feedback to your employer about your progress.
- Remember that it will take time to adjust to your new routine. Be patient with yourself and your baby.

Be proud of yourself and celebrate your accomplishments!

Section 2: Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Place for the Client



Breastfeeding Friendly Spaces and Places

Health Canada recommends that babies be fed only breastmilk for the first six months of their lives. Breastfeeding is encouraged to continue after family foods are introduced. This can be up to 2 years of age or beyond. However, some mothers are concerned that if they breastfeed in public, it may make others feel uncomfortable. This may keep mothers from taking their babies out and may influence their decision to breastfeed. It may also influence how long they breastfeed.

This kit has been created to help local businesses, organizations and governments build their knowledge about breastfeeding and provide tools to better support breastfeeding women. As a result, we hope that breastfeeding will become normal practice within our communities.

In Nova Scotia, the rights of women who are breastfeeding their babies are protected through the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Included in this is women's right to breastfeed their babies anytime, anyplace. Refer to the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act (p.28) for more detailed information.

Feel free to post the *We are a Breastfeeding Friendly Space* (p.40) or the baby friendly decal we have provided. Displaying a baby friendly sticker and/or poster tells people that your business is a breastfeeding friendly place. It also tells mothers that you and your staff respect the decision to breastfeed and will do your best to protect mothers' rights.

The Importance of Breastfeeding

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

The Baby

NOT breastfeeding increases the child's risk of:

- asthma
- respiratory infections
- ear infections
- obesity
- diabetes

The Mother

NOT breastfeeding increases the mother's risk of:

- breast cancer
- ovarian cancer
- osteoporosis
- heart disease

The Family

NOT breastfeeding:

- increases food costs for families
- requires more work (preparing formula and cleaning bottles)

The Community

As a business, organization or government that supports breastfeeding, you are a vital part of creating a community that supports breastfeeding. Your support shows other members of the community that breastfeeding and providing a child with breastmilk are important. Community support is a key factor that can influence a mother's decision about whether or not to breastfeed and about how long to breastfeed.

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Help make breastfeeding a part of our culture. Healthier people and a healthier community will be the result.

Management Tips for Creating Breastfeeding Friendly Spaces

Managers and supervisors can help a woman be more comfortable breastfeeding in her community. The following tips can help create a breastfeeding friendly place:

- Create policies and procedures specific to your business or organization that will help your employees support breastfeeding mothers Encourage staff to express any concerns about breastfeeding.
- Make use of the materials provided in this kit. After your employees have learned how to support breastfeeding, display the poster and/or a sticker to show the public that breastfeeding is welcome.
- Make your workplace baby friendly by having a place for a parent to change diapers.
- Mothers should feel welcome to breastfeed everywhere. However, some women feel more comfortable breastfeeding in private. If space allows, a small, clean space (separate from the bathroom) with a chair is all that is required.
- Post the handout titled *Staff Tips for Supporting Breastfeeding in Public* (p.39) in a central place where staff can find it and use it when needed.
- Use your efforts to your advantage. Advertise your business as breastfeeding friendly. Research shows that families go to public places that are welcoming and supportive to families and mothers who are breastfeeding.
- In October, participate in local activities for World Breastfeeding Week. Check with your local breastfeeding support groups regarding local events.

Staff Tips for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Place

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 both Nova Scotia's Human Rights Act and Provincial Policy Statement on Breastfeeding protect a woman's right to breastfeed in public. If necessary, provide a copy of the Act (p.28).
 - 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.

Section 3: Resources



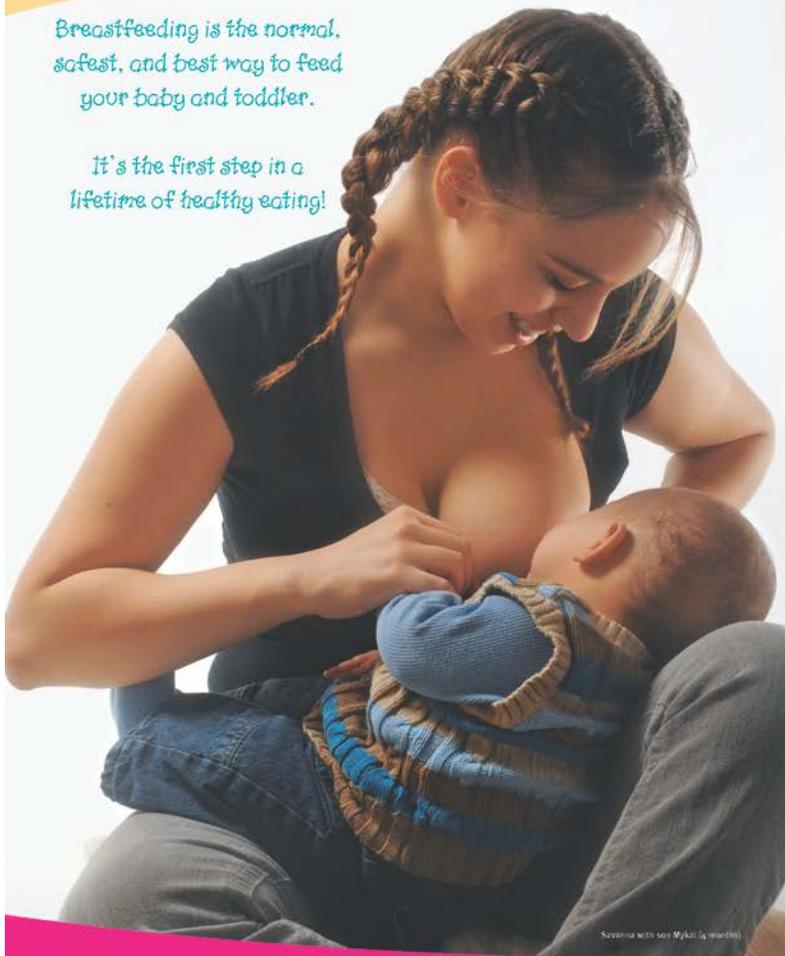
Nova Scotia promotes, protects, and supports breastfeeding!

It is our policy to promote, protect, and support breastfeeding, and to respect the decision each mother makes about how to feed her baby.

We pledge to help you and your baby breastfeed – in hospital, at home, and in the community.

Breastfeeding is the normal, safest, and best way to feed your baby and toddler.

It's the first step in a lifetime of healthy eating!



Savanna with son Wyke (4 months)

In hospital...

- Everyone who takes care of you before, during, and after the birth of your baby is educated to support you while you begin breastfeeding.
- We will give you the information you need to make an informed decision about feeding your baby based on the latest research and experience.
- We will encourage skin-to-skin contact between you and your baby right after birth to help you get a good start breastfeeding.
- We will help you learn how to position and latch your baby to breastfeed successfully.
- We will not feed your baby anything other than your breastmilk unless it's medically needed.
- We will keep you and your baby together day and night unless a medical or safety reason prevents this.
- We will help you learn to understand hunger signs and feeding cues so you'll know when to feed your baby.
- We will not give your baby soothers or bottles with nipples because these can cause problems with breastfeeding.
- We will make sure you know about community breastfeeding support programs and have their phone numbers.

In the community...

- Our staff is educated to support you with breastfeeding your baby.
- While you're pregnant, we will give you the information you need to make an informed decision about feeding your baby based on the latest research and experience.
- We will support you to feed your baby only breastmilk for the first six months.
- We will help you to learn about the solid foods your baby needs from six months on while continuing to breastfeed.
- We will continue to support you and your baby to breastfeed for two years and beyond.
- We will offer a welcoming place for you to breastfeed your baby.
- We will work with your community to promote, protect and support breastfeeding.



Nova Scotia protects promotes and supports breastfeeding

It is our policy to promote, protect, and support breastfeeding
And to respect the decision each mother makes about how to feed her baby.

We pledge to help you and your baby breastfeed - in hospital, at home
and in the community.

In hospital...

- Everyone who takes care of you before, during, and after the birth of your baby is educated to support you while you begin breastfeeding.
- We will give you all the information you need to make an informed decision about feeding your baby based on the latest research and experience.
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- We will support you to feed your baby only breastmilk for the first 6 months.
- We will help you to learn about the solid foods your baby needs from six months on while continuing to breastfeed.
- We will continue to support you and your baby to breastfeed for 2 years and beyond.
- We will offer a welcoming place for you to breastfeed your baby.
- We will work with your community to promote, protect and support breastfeeding.

**Breastfeeding is the normal, safest, and best way
to feed your baby and toddler.**

It's the first step in a lifetime of healthy eating!



Nova Scotia's Provincial Policy Statement

SUBJECT: Breastfeeding in Nova Scotia: Responsibilities of the Nova Scotia Department of Health and the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection

Approval Date: September 2005

Updated: June 2006

Approved by: Department of Health, Senior Leadership Team
Nova Scotia Health Promotion, Executive

Effective by: October 2005

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Department of Health and the Department of Health Promotion and Protection hold a firm and unequivocal position in favor of breastfeeding and communicates its position both within government, the health system, to health system providers as well as the general population. Such an affirmation provides a fundamental point of reference for all provincial government and health system funded practitioners and staff.

II. DEFINITIONS

Baby Friendly Initiative: An international program established by the World Health Organization and UNICEF to promote, support and protect breastfeeding worldwide in hospital and in the community. Three evidence-based documents provide the foundation for the Baby Friendly Initiative: The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative; The Seven Point Plan for the Protection, Promotion & Support of Breastfeeding in Community Health Services and; The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.

International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes: The International Code was adopted by a resolution of the World Health Assembly (of which Canada is a member state) in 1981. The Code bans all promotion of formula and sets out requirements for labeling and information on infant feeding. Any activity that undermines breastfeeding also violates the aim and spirit of the code.

Breastfeeding Committee for Canada: Established in 1991 as the national authority for the Baby Friendly Initiative in Canada, with a mandate to oversee and facilitate the implementation of the Baby Friendly Initiative.

Breastfeeding Initiation and Duration: Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended for the first six months of life for healthy term infants with continued breastfeeding for up to two years & beyond with the introduction of complementary foods at six months. (Health Canada 2004 – endorsed by Canadian Pediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada, College of Family Physicians of Canada)

III. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- Provide leadership for the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding
- Improve the health status of mothers and babies by increasing breastfeeding initiation & duration in Nova Scotia
- Support the implementation of the Baby Friendly Initiative

IV. POLICY APPLICATION

The policy applies to Department of Health, Department of Health Promotion & Protection, District Health Authorities, the IWK Health Centre and all health system funded providers.

V. POLICY DIRECTIVES

5.1

The Department of Health and the Department of Health Promotion & Protection state its position on breastfeeding, consistent with “Healthy Babies, Healthy Families: Postpartum and Postnatal Guidelines” and the Public Health Services: Infant Feeding Position Statement. Make it known and applied at every level within the health system. To this end, the Department of Health and the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, will, in part, through the Provincial Breastfeeding and Baby-Friendly Initiative Committee:

- appoint a person to coordinate breastfeeding and the Baby-Friendly Initiative at the provincial level;
- integrate breastfeeding into all government programs relating to child health; ensure that information on breastfeeding and infant feeding is standardized and updated in provincial documents or services to which parents and professionals refer (i.e. A New Life, Breastfeeding Basics, Year One Food for Baby, After Year One Food for Children, etc.);
- include and maintain information on breastfeeding, including the position of the Department of Health and the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, to its website;
- ensure the development and use of standardized infant feeding assessment and care planning tools by providers throughout the health system.

5.2

Put in place the conditions (time, space and support) necessary to facilitate breastfeeding by employees of the Department of Health and the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and work to ensure the same across government.

5.3

Ensure that social policies (interdepartmental and cross-sectoral) that promote breastfeeding are maintained and improved.

5.4

Establish a breastfeeding social marketing strategy aimed at the general population.

5.5

Promote the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) through a provincial committee (Provincial Breastfeeding and BFI Committee). The following are included within the mandate of the committee:

- I. provide leadership for the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding;
- II. support the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Initiative within Nova Scotia, in partnership with the Breastfeeding Committee of Canada (BCC), the National Authority for the Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI);
- III. make known the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding and the Seven Step Plan for the Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding in Community Health to health system funded organizations and agencies;
- IV. distribute to health system funded facility and organization administrators appropriate information concerning programs aimed at protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding (e.g. BFI);
- V. assume responsibility, in collaboration with the organizations concerned (e.g. WHO, UNICEF, the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada, etc.), for the certification of baby-friendly facilities and for recommendations made to the Department of Health and the Department of Health Promotion and Protection For the granting of the designation;
- VI. build commitment throughout the province for breastfeeding and to implement the BFI so that breastfeeding will be the cultural norm for infant feeding in Nova Scotia.

5.6

Encourage the application of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, which implies:

- I. Include in policy relating to ministerial publications, both written and audiovisual, the obligation to respect the Code, while emphasizing that breastfeeding is the normal method of infant feeding. Images representing bottlefeeding, baby bottles, nipples or commercial infant feeding formula (artificial milk) should not be used unless absolutely necessary;
- II. Ensure that policies relating to government publications are respected, and using influence on other Departments to ensure that the Code is respected.

5.7

With the Provincial Committee and the District Health Authorities/IWK Health Centre, support the implementation of tools e.g. infant feeding/nutrition assessment & care planning tool (under development) and activities, such as, individual breastfeeding support, community capacity building e.g. peer support groups, local coalitions/networks, by DHAs and other health system funded organizations and agencies.

5.8

With the Provincial Committee, encourage all professional bodies to ensure that universities, community and vocational colleges offer students who will be future health professionals, adequate theoretical and practical training in the area of breastfeeding.

5.9

Ensure the development and implementation of a provincial breastfeeding surveillance system using standardized definitions and timelines (initiation and duration) developed and approved by the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada. [Consistent with “Healthy Babies, Healthy Families” infant feeding and growth (i.e. height and weight) should be monitored at 3-7 days of age, ten to fourteen days of age and at one month.]

5.10 Regularly monitor progress towards achievement of the BFI in Hospitals and Community Health Services across the province.

VI. ACCOUNTABILITY

Department of Health, Department of Health Promotion & Protection, District Health Authorities, the IWK Health Centre and all health system funded providers are responsible for the implementation of the policy.

VII. MONITORING

Monitoring tool(s) and processes will be developed in collaboration with District Health Authorities and the IWK Health Centre.

VIII. REFERENCES

Healthy Babies, Healthy Families: Postpartum & Postnatal Guidelines (2002)
Healthy Eating Nova Scotia (2005)

IX. ENQUIRIES

Enquiries about this policy should be directed to:
Name: Michelle Amero (424-3749) or Kathy Inkpen (424-4391)
Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection

Nova Scotia Defines Breastfeeding as a Human Right

On February 18, 2000 the Nova Scotia's Human Rights Act clarified the law regarding discrimination based on sex and family status.

2.19 Under the Human Rights Act women are protected from discrimination and harassment because of sex, which includes pregnancy, and family status, which means being in a parent-child relationship. In Nova Scotia it is illegal to discriminate because a woman is or was pregnant, because she may become pregnant or because she has had a baby. This includes a woman's right to breast-feed her baby.

2.19.1 The Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination in the area of "the provision of or access to services and facilities". Women have the right to breast-feed a child in public areas, including restaurants, retail stores and shopping centres, theatres and so forth. Women shall not be prevented from nursing a child in a public area, nor asked to move to another area that is more "discreet".

2.19.2 The Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination in the area of employment against women who are breastfeeding. Employers have a duty to accommodate employees who are breastfeeding. This duty is limited only if the accommodation would create undue hardship. Accommodation could include allowing the employee to have the baby brought into the workplace by a caregiver for feeding, and arranging a quiet place to breast-feed. The onus is on the employer to show an undue hardship if a request for accommodation related to breastfeeding is refused.

2.19.3 The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission will accept complaints of discrimination based on sex and/or family status related to breastfeeding, and will deal with them in accordance with the above policies.

Sample Breastfeeding Policies

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Policy

Title: **Baby/Family Friendly Policy**

Policy No. **MDL-54**

Effective Date: February 9, 2010

1.0 Policy Statement

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MoDL) is a family organization that supports breastfeeding mother sand the right to breastfeed undisturbed in public places. The Municipality also recognizes that breastmilk is the optimal food for health growth and development of infants.

2.0 Purpose

To support breastfeeding mothers to breastfeed within Municipal facilities and to provide the conditions, time, space and support) necessary to facilitate breastfeeding by both the public and employees.

3.0 Definitions

- 1.1 *Breastfeeding*-Includes pumping or expressing milk, as well as nursing directly from the breast
- 1.2 *Employee*-Refers to any individual hired by the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
- 1.3 *Municipal Facilities*- Refers to the administration, MARC, and LRCRC

4.0 Applications

MoDL employees

- 1.1 The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg promotes and supports breastfeeding and the expression of breastmilk by employees who are breastfeeding when they return to work.
- 1.2 Staff of the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg shall work with breastfeeding employees to determine mutually agreeable hours of work, assignments and breaks, which support breastfeeding practices and are compatible with other policies, where possible.

Public

- 1.3 The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg promotes and supports breastfeeding and the expression of breastmilk by the public who are breastfeeding when they are visitors to Municipal facilities
- 1.4 Staff of the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg upon request shall provide assistance to visitors who wish to breastfeed their baby by providing a location comfortable to both baby and mother, where space is available.
- 1.5 Pursuant to the Human Rights Act, staff will not ask a mother to leave the premises, cover up or suggest using a restroom to breastfeed an infant

South Shore Health Workplace Breastfeeding Policy

Title: Workplace Breastfeeding
Number: AD-110-338
Effective Date: June 3, 09
Authorized by: Chief Executive Officer

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Policy South Shore District Health Authority (SSH) Breastfeeding Policy # 400-540
- Provincial Breastfeeding Policy: Breastfeeding in Nova Scotia, June 2006

PURPOSE

Background and Rationale

1. The values of SSH include healthier people, caring communities and valued healthcare teams.
2. In recognition that breast milk is the optimal food for growth and development of infants, SSH has endorsed a Breastfeeding Policy (see # 400-540).
3. Breastfeeding support in the workplace provides benefits such as increased productivity, decreased absenteeism and decreased health care costs as is consistent with 8 potential outcome measures of a healthy workplace identified in *Within Our Grasp: A Healthy Workplace Action Strategy for Success and Sustainability in Canada's Healthcare System* (Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation, 2007). It also supports the implementation of the Provincial Breastfeeding Policy.
4. Employee benefits include an easier transition back to work, a supportive breastfeeding environment, an increased opportunity for mother-infant bonding, an increased chance of having a healthier baby, and a reduction in the chance of her developing breast cancer, ovarian cancer, osteoporosis and heart disease.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. SSH creates a work environment that is supportive of breastfeeding, in keeping with the South Shore District Health Authority Breastfeeding Policy and the Nova Scotia Breastfeeding Policy.
2. SSH encourages employees and management to have a positive, accepting attitude toward working women and breastfeeding.
3. SSH promotes and supports breastfeeding and the expression (pumping) of breast milk by employees who are breastfeeding when they return to work.
4. SSH recognizes that breastfeeding or expressing breast milk is a right protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
 - 4.1. Harassment or discrimination because a woman is breastfeeding is deemed sexual discrimination and is not tolerated in the workplace.

PROCEDURE

1. South Shore Health will implement a systematic awareness/communications strategy to advise and educate all stakeholders regarding benefits of breastfeeding, workplace breastfeeding policy, compliance and supportive programming matters.
2. A copy of the District Breastfeeding Policy and the Workplace Breastfeeding Policy will be provided to all employees and managers.
3. SSH will provide educational information in the form of a handout to women prior to the initiation of maternity leave about breastfeeding and returning to work.
4. SSH will endeavour to support women wishing to continue breastfeeding after returning to work.
5. SSH will provide information to all employees as to how to provide support to a colleague who is breastfeeding.
6. SSH will make available a clean, comfortable and private space (lactation room) within the workplace for women who wish to use such a facility to breastfeed or express breast milk.
 - 6.1. The room shall have accessible electrical outlets for an electric breast pump use and a sink close by for hand washing and rinsing out storage containers.
7. An electric breast pump will be made available, on site.
 - 7.1. Mothers will be responsible for the tubing kit for the electric pump, if she so chooses to use.
8. **At least one month prior to return to work**, SSH employees planning to continue breastfeeding after return to the workplace will contact their manager to inform them of their intentions.
9. SSH will offer support and information from breastfeeding resource personnel.
 - 9.1. The support will be in the form of:
 - Prenatal breastfeeding education & resources: covering topics such as:
 - initiating breastfeeding after delivery,
 - health benefits, positioning,
 - choosing and maintaining a breast pump and
 - transitioning back to work.
 - Return-to-work consultation:
 - Approximately two weeks **prior** to the breastfeeding mother's return to work, the employee will arrange for a consultation with the lactation consultant which would also include a meeting with the employee's manager, prior to returning to work.
 - A plan will be developed that is workable for both employer and employee.
 - This plan will include familiarity with designated space and its location, equipment, instruction and cleaning requirements, pumping schedule, milk supply issues and other concerns.
 - Appropriate written resources will be made available to both employee and employer.

REFERENCES:

AVH Breastfeeding in the Workplace Policy
Minutes, January 27, 2009 Senior Executive
Within Our Grasp: A Healthy Workplace Action Strategy for Success and Sustainability in Canada's Healthcare System (Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation, 2007).
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Title: Workplace Breastfeeding Number: AD-110-338
SSH, Workplace Breastfeeding, ToC # AD-110-338, July 24/2009, Version # 1 Page 4 of 4
See Breastfeeding Basics (available through Public Health Services) and *Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit* (available through Lunenburg and Queens Baby-Friendly Initiative Committee or at ssdha.nshealth.ca/newsstand.htm).

Sample Policy from Breastfeeding Community of Practice

Breastfeeding Policy

Having a breastfeeding policy is an effective way to ensure that all staff are aware that the organization supports breastfeeding.

_____ recognizes :
(Name of business or organization)

- That breastfeeding is a protected human right and women in Nova Scotia have the right to breastfeed everywhere,
- That breastmilk is the optimal food for healthy growth and development of infants,
- That breastfeeding benefits infant and maternal health,
- And that breastfeeding contributes to the overall health of our community.

We promote and support breastfeeding and the expression of breastmilk:

- By managers, staff, clients and volunteers, as well as
- By accompanying friends and family members.

Management and staff are committed to:

- Educating new managers, staff, and volunteers about this policy
- And working with breastfeeding managers and staff to determine mutually agreeable hours of work, assignments and breaks, which support breastfeeding practices and are compatible with the collective agreement and other policies and contracts.

Print Name

Title

Signature

Date

Sample Verbal Breastfeeding Policy

Owner/Operator of BaKED Food Café Inc. in New Glasgow explains how she approached staff with a new policy about breastfeeding:

- My initial introduction was to describe in detail why breastfeeding is important. I had to make sure that everyone understood that it's not only beneficial for us as a business but that it is important to support far greater causes; the mother, the baby, the environment etc.
- Secondly, we went over a few procedures on how to accommodate a mother wanting to breastfeed in our establishment such as:
 - offer water
 - suggest a less busy/more quiet spot, if preferred
 - offer a chair with an armrest
 - ask if we can do anything else
- Third, we addressed some steps in regards to "conflict" resolution with other customers who might feel offended.
 - For example: approach the disgruntled customer and offer a new table further away from the breastfeeding mother, explain about our policy and state that it is the mother's right to feed her baby when ever and where ever she chooses. Customers who don't understand that right and therefore don't support it, are clearly not the right fit with our establishments' values.
- Lastly, we have to make sure that everything is handled in a natural and comfortable way by making sure that the policy has been explained to all staff, who accept it as something natural:
 - For example: if a breastfeeding mother has a question or request the staff will act the same way as if it was a food/service request; they always try their best to accommodate or offer an alternative & when in doubt, they ask questions to clarify how to proceed.

Our staff understands that as a service industry we're always looking for ways, trends, and options to accommodate our customers better. By supporting breastfeeding we're not only accommodating a group of customers; we're supporting a basic human right.

Handouts and Signage

Providing Support to Your Co-Worker Who is Breastfeeding Her Baby



Providing Support to Your Co-Worker Who is Breastfeeding Her Baby

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.

- When a co-worker returns to work after having a baby, she may choose to continue to breastfeed her baby. This will require her to either breastfeed her baby or express her breastmilk throughout the day. Most often, these times can be incorporated into regular breaks in the normal workday routine.
- As an employee breastfeeding her baby, a mother will be provided with a private room to either breastfeed or pump. If pumping, she may need to store her breastmilk in a fridge.
- Returning to work after having a child can be very difficult for a mother. Providing her with the opportunity to continue breastfeeding can make her more at ease with her decision to leave her child each day. This business/organization has offered her this opportunity as a health benefit to both her and her baby. Equally important in her success is the support that is provided by you, her co-worker.

Some ways that you can show your support to a co-worker incorporating breastfeeding into her workday include:

- Show interest in her baby. Ask her questions or to see a picture of her baby. Even though there is no mention of breastfeeding in the conversation, you are acknowledging that her child is important.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Acknowledge and applaud her decision to continue providing breastmilk to her baby, after she has gone back to work.
- Recognize the positive impact her decision will make on the community.

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!*
- Nova Scotia Health and Wellness www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/cdip/healthy-eating-breastfeeding.asp
- La Leche League Canada www.lllc.ca

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

Helping Managers Support Employees Who Are Breastfeeding Their Babies



Management Tips for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Place

Combining Breastfeeding and Work

Promoting, protecting, and supporting breastfeeding.

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

Before leaving for maternity leave...

- Before having her baby, your employee should be made aware of the support she will have to breastfeed her child when she returns to work. This could greatly influence her decision to breastfeed and/or return to work. The handout *Making Breastfeeding Work...At Work!* will be made available to her prior to her leaving work to have her baby. This gives suggestions to make the transition from home to work easier for the breastfeeding mother and her employer.

Before returning to work...

- Closer to the date she will be returning to work, a plan can be made to incorporate breastfeeding into her workday. This plan will be specific to the mother, the baby, and the job. This plan may also change as a result of factors such as increased needs of the baby. For example, babies experience predictable growth spurts during which their breastmilk needs will be greater. When this occurs, more frequent breastfeeding or pumping will be necessary for 2-3 days.
- The keys to a successful plan include:
 - **Space** - Often a small, clean area with a comfortable chair is all that is needed. If your employee is pumping her breastmilk, an electrical outlet may be necessary. Electric pumps are the most efficient way to express milk and a mother may decide to use one to pump at work. A refrigerator should be accessible to store the breastmilk until the employee finishes her workday. If a refrigerator is not possible, a cooler with ice packs can be used.
 - **Time** - In most cases, breastfeeding or pumping can be incorporated into regular breaks throughout the work day. The time required, will vary according to the mother and baby.
 - **Support** - Sit down and talk to your employee before she returns to work. This will allow the opportunity to develop a plan that is workable for everyone involved and can result in a win-win situation. Information should be made available to other employees so they can effectively support their breastfeeding co-worker. See handout *Supporting a Colleague Who is Breastfeeding Her Baby*.

As the Employer...

- It is important for you to provide an open line of communication. It may be difficult for your employee to ask you for what she needs, and it may be difficult for you to know what she needs. Effective communication is required for the transition of combining breastfeeding and employment to be successful. This can be achieved by:
 - Ask your employee what she needs to make this transition easier. Ensure her of your support.
 - Make your business/organizational support of breastfeeding common knowledge among all employees. Some women may feel their co-workers will resent them as, allowing women to breastfeed or pump breastmilk during business hours may be perceived as special treatment by other employees who are not breastfeeding.
 - Active implementation of policies and procedures can raise awareness to other employees and make the breastfeeding employee more comfortable.
 - Show your support to non-breastfeeding employees and their families. Provide a bulletin board for employees to post pictures and/or accomplishments of their own family members or include them in a departmental newsletter.
 - Consult the necessary resources for help. *Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit* (Frittenburg, S, 2009) is available online at http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/publications/breastfeeding_support_kit.pdf.

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

FAM July 2011

Making Breastfeeding Work...At Work!



Making Breastfeeding Work...At Work!

Promoting, protecting, and supporting breastfeeding.
Respecting the decision each mother makes about how to feed her baby.

Before leaving on your maternity leave...

- Meet with your supervisor/manager to discuss your plan to continue breastfeeding when you return to work. Begin to explore possible options.

Before returning to work...

- Meet with your supervisor/manager to develop a plan to continue breastfeeding. Let him/her know what you will need and what he/she can do to help you.
- Discuss the possibility of starting back to work part way through a regular work week so that your first week is short. Another possibility is returning part-time and gradually increasing to full-time. Working from home for part of the day may be another possibility to ease back into work, while incorporating breastfeeding into the workday.
- You may want to get your baby used to drinking from a bottle or a cup so your baby can be fed pumped breastmilk, while you are at work.
- Learn about expressing and storing breastmilk. Find the method of expression that works best for you. For more information, call local community supports or refer to *Breastfeeding Basics*, a free Public Health resource.
- Begin storing your breastmilk about 2 weeks prior to returning to work to ensure that your baby has enough.
- Check your wardrobe. Two-piece outfits are a more practical choice when breastfeeding or expressing milk at work. Patterned tops can hide leakage and/or the contour of a nursing pad. It may be useful to keep a sweater at work, just in case.
- Perform a "test run" workday. Arrange for the baby to be left with a caregiver for a typical workday. Breastfeed and/or pump as you would during a workday. As a result, any kinks can be worked out.

When you are back to work...

- Stay organized. This can decrease the stress associated with returning to work and maximize your success with continuing to provide your baby with breastmilk.
- Give yourself time in the morning to breastfeed at least once and breastfeed right after you return from work.
- At work, pump or breastfeed as often as you would if you were at home with your child. When at home, breastfeed as often as you can. This will help you maintain your milk supply.
- Don't sweat the small stuff. Decide what is important and accept help from family and friends.
- Eat and drink well and get enough rest.
- Talk to other women who have combined work and breastfeeding. Provide feedback to your supervisor or manager about your progress.

Be proud of yourself and celebrate your accomplishments!

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

FAM/July 2011

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

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).

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!*
- Nova Scotia Health and Wellness www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/cdip/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.

Sample Signage

Welcome!
We are a Breastfeeding
Friendly Place



We will do our best to support you



Baby Friendly Private Space



Breastfeeding 

Anytime...Anywhere!



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

In support of the
Nova Scotia Provincial Breastfeeding Policy



Section 4: References



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