

# Ten Steps to Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care

*The following Ten Steps describe ways that child care centers can provide optimal support for breastfeeding families. Below each step are specific actions to support that step.*

## **Step 1. Make a commitment to the importance of breastfeeding, especially exclusive breastfeeding, and share this commitment with fellow staff.**

- 1.1 Our center has a written policy for promoting and supporting breastfeeding, and it is regularly communicated to our staff and families.
- 1.2 Staff evaluations document a review of breastfeeding support activities.
- 1.3 Our center's breastfeeding support is part of our discussion with all potential families.

## **Step 2. Train all staff in the skills to support and promote optimal infant and young child feeding.**

- 2.1 All staff at our center receive training on age-appropriate infant feeding practices, including proper storage and handling of human milk.
- 2.2 All staff at our center receive training on recognizing infant hunger cues and feeding in response to these cues.
- 2.3 All staff at our center receive training on the risks and benefits of different infant feeding options.
- 2.4 All staff at our center receive training in breastfeeding protection, promotion, and support, including support of exclusive breastfeeding.

## **Step 3. Inform women and families about the importance of breastfeeding.**

- 3.1 We provide all our families with our written policy for promoting and supporting breastfeeding.
- 3.2 Culturally appropriate educational materials on breastfeeding, and on the risks and benefits of different feeding options are displayed in several areas.
- 3.3 Culturally appropriate educational materials on breastfeeding, and on the risks and benefits of different infant feeding options are actively distributed to the families we serve.

## **Step 4. Provide learning and play opportunities which normalize breastfeeding for children.**

- 4.1 We provide toys and books that illustrate nursing animals and babies, for children of all ages.
- 4.2 We discuss interactions between mothers and babies with children of all ages, including how they feed.

## **Step 5. Ensure that all breastfeeding families we serve are able to store and label milk properly for child care center use.**

- 5.1 We provide sufficient refrigerator and freezer space to accommodate all of our breastfeeding families' storage needs.
- 5.2 We instruct all breastfeeding families on the proper way to store and label human milk for child care center use, and all milk at our center is properly labeled.
- 5.3 We discuss with all families how expressed milk will be handled at our child care center.

## **Step 6. Provide a breastfeeding-friendly environment.**

- 6.1 We actively invite breastfeeding mothers to come to the center to nurse their babies while under our care.
- 6.2 There is a clean and comfortable place in our center, other than a bathroom, for mothers to sit and nurse their babies, or pump (express) milk if desired.
- 6.3 Our center displays posters and distributes materials, including photos reflecting the families we serve, that show our support of breastfeeding and demonstrate best practices.

## **Step 7. Support breastfeeding employees.**

- 7.1 Breastfeeding employees are given appropriate breaks so that they may express milk and/or nurse their babies as needed.
- 7.2 The center provides a clean, comfortable, private place for employees to pump/express milk and/or nurse their babies as needed.

## **Step 8. Ensure that each infant has a feeding plan that supports best feeding practices.**

- 8.1 We develop a written feeding plan with each new family at our center, which is accessible and regularly updated.
- 8.2 Breastfeeding support is explicitly included in all feeding plans, as part of the standard form.
- 8.3 We respond to infants' hunger cues rather than feeding on a schedule, and we encourage mothers to feed this way at home.
- 8.4 We encourage mothers to introduce solid foods at a developmentally appropriate time.

## **Step 9. Contact and coordinate with local skilled breastfeeding support and actively refer.**

- 9.1 Our center has a list of community breastfeeding resources to be used for referral.
- 9.2 Our center regularly refers families to community breastfeeding resources.
- 9.3 Our center tracks community referrals and follows up with families as needed.

## **Step 10. Continue updating and learning about protection, promotion, and support of breastfeeding.**

- 10.1 Our center has up-to-date materials on hand that include information on breastfeeding and human milk feeding.
- 10.2 Each staff member receives at least one hour per year of continuing education on human milk feeding and breastfeeding support.
- 10.3 Our center provides a resource list, for our staff, of local lactation consultants and community providers who can answer breastfeeding and human milk feeding questions.