



Congratulations on choosing to breastfeed your child and provide her/him with the best start in life!

We are excited that you have chosen to breastfeed or are considering breastfeeding. We want to help you continue to do this as long as possible. As a mother, returning to work after having a baby can be one of the most difficult transitions. If you are planning to return to work, we want to let you know what MaineGeneral Medical Center can do to help you succeed at combining breastfeeding and work.

MaineGeneral is part of a *Mother Friendly Worksite Initiative*. This initiative is working with local businesses to help increase support for breastfeeding employees. We have a Mother Friendly Toolkit available for worksites that walks employers through the importance and cost-savings of helping their employees continue breastfeeding.

We are also available to provide technical assistance to worksites that are interested in providing more support for breastfeeding employees but need help.

If you would like a copy of this Toolkit CD to take to your manager or human resources department please call Erin at 621-3740.

We also have some resources for you that we hope will help ease your return to work.

In this packet you will find:

- 📄 A letter from your physician to your employer stating the importance of your continued breastfeeding
- 📄 A letter to your childcare provider discussing the importance of their support for your choice to breastfeed
- 📄 Materials to help prepare you and your baby for your new breastfeeding relationship
- 📄 Worksite Toolkit Table of Contents



Dear Employer:

I am writing on behalf of _____ and _____. This mother will soon be returning to work from maternity leave. I have advised her to continue providing breast milk to her baby after she returns to work.

Breastfeeding is a natural part of the birthing cycle, and lowers the mother's risk for breast cancer, ovarian cancer and osteoporosis, the longer she is able to breastfeed. Breastfed babies receive antibodies to protect them against infection and disease for as long as they breastfeed. This is especially important for babies in daycare. Babies receive most of their nutrition from their mother's milk, even after they begin eating solid foods.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding for at least one year or longer to protect babies against diabetes, obesity, and osteoporosis. Breastfeeding also enhances brain development and increases I.Q.

As an employer who supports your employee's decision to provide her baby with the best infant nutrition, you will gain a more loyal and productive employee, happy in knowing she can contribute to her child's health even when they are apart. She will be absent less from her job because of baby illnesses- her baby will have fewer earaches, gastrointestinal and other infant health problems.

All major health organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologist, the U.S. Surgeon General, and the American Academy of Family Physicians support breastfeeding and encourage employers to do the same.

Contact MaineGeneral Medical Center's Prevention Center at 621-3740 if you would like help in providing this support for your breastfeeding employee.

Sincerely,



Dear Childcare Provider,

As my child care provider, you will play an important role in helping me succeed in my decision to breastfeed my child. There are many reasons why I have chosen to breastfeed my child, but most importantly is that breastfed babies are healthier babies. Breastfed babies have stronger immune systems and tend to be at lower risk for ear infections, colds, asthma, allergies, and diarrhea. Also, breastfed babies are less fussy because breast milk is more easily digested than formula. Both of these factors will hopefully ease your job of caring for my child.

As a breastfeeding mom there are some things I might need from you, which is why I've attached the Breastfeeding Works! document. This was written specifically for childcare providers and answers questions you might have such as how to store and handle breast milk.

Although, breastfeeding is natural, it's not always easy. Your support can make the difference.

Thank you for your help!

Breastfeeding Works!



How to Meet the Needs of Breastfed Babies in Child Care

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Bureau of Family and Community Health

Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit

WIC Nutrition Program

*Max Care: Maximizing the Health and Safety of Children in
Out-of-Home Care*

2004

Breastfed Babies in Child Care

As a child care provider, you play an important role in helping mothers succeed in their decision to breastfeed. Creating a breastfeeding friendly program helps mothers to continue breastfeeding. This will benefit both you and your families. Breastfed babies become healthier children with healthier mothers.

Breastfed babies are healthy babies...healthy babies are happy babies...and parents and child care providers with healthy, happy babies are less stressed!

Breastfed babies are healthy babies!

Breastfed babies have stronger immune systems. Breastfed babies tend to be at a lower risk for:

- ear infections
- colds and other illnesses
- asthma and allergies
- episodes of diarrhea and constipation
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- chronic conditions such as diabetes and obesity

Breastfed babies are less fussy!

Breastmilk is more easily digested than formula. This translates to fewer episodes of spitting up, diarrhea, and fussiness.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians recommend exclusive breastfeeding for six months and continuing to breastfeed until at least 1 year of age, and then for as long as mutually desired.

There are many ways that you can help a mother to continue breastfeeding while her child is in your care. You can provide a clean, comfortable place for mothers who want to breastfeed in your child care program. When a mother can't come to your site to breastfeed, she may express (pump) her milk and then store it in the refrigerator or freezer for later use. You play a vital role in ensuring the safety of the stored breastmilk that is given to babies in your care.

Will a mother's milk supply decrease if she returns to work or school?

A full supply of breastmilk can be maintained if a mother breastfeeds full-time when she is with her baby and pumps her breastmilk when they are separated. Her supply is directly related to the baby's demand.

Welcoming Breastfed Babies to Your Program

Let current and prospective families know that you are willing to find ways to help breastfeeding mothers. There are several steps that you can take to ease a breastfeeding baby's transition into your child care program as a mother prepares to return to work or school.

- ◆ Invite the parents to bring the baby in for one or two short visits before returning to work or school. This helps the whole family get used to child care and it helps you get to know the baby.

- ◆ A baby needs to get used to bottle feeding before entering child care. For breastfed babies, this process should be delayed until they are about four weeks old. At this time, the introduction of a bottle is less likely to interfere with the establishment of breastfeeding skills. Parents should practice giving a bottle (a few per week to one per day) before the baby starts child care.

- ◆ Ask parents to write down an approximate feeding schedule. Also, ask them what to do in cases of emergency, such as when pick-up is delayed.

- ◆ Plan a baby's feedings so that they fit into the mother's schedule. For example, if the mother wants to nurse when she picks the child up, try not to feed the baby for 1 to 2 hours before she is due to arrive.

- ◆ Encourage a mother to breastfeed on site:

- *before leaving her child in your care*
- *during her lunch break (when possible)*
- *when she picks her child up from your program*

- ◆ Discourage or limit the use of pacifiers for breastfeeding babies. At first, they may delay the development of sucking skills. Later, they may contribute to the child eating less.

- ◆ Ask parents to bring breastmilk in labeled hard plastic bottles with a tight lid. Encourage parents to fill each bottle with the amount that the baby drinks in one feeding. If this cannot be done, pour enough breastmilk for only one feeding into a separate bottle and immediately put the rest back in the refrigerator.

- ◆ Ask the families of exclusively breastfed babies to provide you with enough frozen breastmilk for 1-2 additional feedings.



Setting up a Breastfeeding Friendly Space

- ◆ Provide breastfeeding mothers with a clean, quiet place away from the hustle and bustle of activities.
- ◆ Offer mothers a comfortable chair with arms. You might also want to provide extra pillows.
- ◆ Make sure mothers know there is a place where they can wash their hands.
- ◆ Ensure a nearby electrical outlet in case mothers need to pump their breastmilk.

Feeding Time: How to Handle Breastmilk

- ◆ Wash your hands before handling breastmilk or feeding a baby. Make sure that the bottles, nipples, and cups that you use are clean.
- ◆ When you prepare a bottle, use just enough breastmilk for a single feeding. Any breastmilk that a baby does not drink during a single feeding should be discarded.

Rule of Thumb:

- For younger infants, about 2-4 ounces per feeding.
- For older infants, 6-8 ounces per feeding.
- ◆ *Do not thaw frozen breastmilk at room temperature.* Instead, thaw frozen breastmilk by placing it in the refrigerator or running it under cool water. Once breastmilk has been thawed, do not refreeze it. Use thawed milk within 24 hours.
- ◆ Place refrigerated bottles in warm water for five minutes before you feed the baby.
- ◆ *Do not warm refrigerated bottles in boiling water.* If the water is too hot, some of the benefits of the breastmilk may be destroyed.
- ◆ **Never** use a microwave oven to warm bottles. This is dangerous for the baby because the milk is not heated evenly; this can lead to “hot spots” that can burn a baby’s mouth. The microwave can also destroy some of the vitamin C and immune components in the breastmilk.
- ◆ After you have warmed a bottle of breastmilk, gently swirl the bottle to mix the layers and test the temperature before you feed the baby.

Guidelines for Using Stored Breastmilk

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association support the following storage guidelines:

Refrigerated
(< 40 degrees F)

Use within
48 HOURS

Frozen
(0 degrees F)

Use within
3 MONTHS

Thawed
(then refrigerated)

Use within
24 HOURS

The following procedures will help you to ensure that stored breastmilk is safe for the babies in your program:

- ◆ Advise parents to keep breastmilk cool during transport to the child care site. They can use a cooler with ice packs.
 - ◆ Only accept bottles labeled with a name and the date that the milk was expressed.
 - ◆ When parents arrive at child care with breastmilk, immediately refrigerate the bottle(s).
 - ◆ Keep thermometers in your refrigerator and freezer to ensure that they are at the temperatures listed in the above guidelines.
 - ◆ Check the dates and times on labeled bottles **daily**. Be sure that you are using the bottle with the oldest date first. *If the breastmilk is expired (according to the above guidelines) it must be discarded.*
 - ◆ After you remove breastmilk from the refrigerator, **never** let it sit at room temperature for more than one hour. If a bottle of breastmilk sits at room temperature for more than an hour, it should be thrown out because of the risk of bacterial growth.
- Never** refreeze thawed breastmilk.



Frequently Asked Questions

How often should the baby be fed?

Babies should be fed whenever they are hungry. Signs of hunger include turning the head, opening the mouth wide, sucking on the hands, and/or slight fussing. Crying is a late sign of hunger. Breastmilk digests more quickly than formula; so, breastfed babies usually eat more often than formula-fed babies do.

As a general rule of thumb, babies should be fed every 2-4 hours. Newborns and babies going through a growth spurt may eat more frequently. You should talk to parents about a baby's feeding schedule and the amounts that the baby should be fed so that you can accommodate each baby's individual needs.

How can I tell if the baby is getting enough breastmilk?

During an 8-hour day at child care, you can expect most babies to eat about 3 times depending on the child's age. The amount of milk that breastfed infants drink from a bottle varies widely. Some babies will only drink small amounts (2-4 ounces at a time), and then nurse frequently in the evening when they are with their moms. Other babies may drink larger amounts.

Content and alert babies are probably getting enough breastmilk. If a baby is fussy you should talk to the parents and have them discuss the problem with their health care provider. If a baby acts listless and sick and has dark yellow urine and/or a dry mouth and lips, he or she may be dehydrated. A baby who is dehydrated needs immediate medical attention.

If a baby only drinks part of a bottle, is it okay to reuse the rest of the breastmilk later on?

No! Once a baby starts feeding, the milk becomes contaminated. The baby's saliva creates an environment that can lead to bacterial growth. Any breastmilk that has not been consumed during a single feeding should be thrown away. To avoid wasting breastmilk, measure out small amounts at first. This can be increased as the baby's appetite grows.

Should water, formula, or solid foods be given to the baby?

Babies should have only breastmilk or formula until about 4-6 months of age (unless indicated by a physician). At that time, you should get specific instructions from the parents regarding the age-appropriate introduction of solids and liquids.

The breastmilk has a layered look. Does this mean that it is spoiled?

No, the breastmilk is not spoiled. When breastmilk sits for a while, the fat can separate out, giving it a layered appearance. Gently swirl the bottle to mix the layers that have separated.

What should I do if a baby is accidentally given the wrong bottle?

If a baby does get fed from the wrong bottle, inform both mothers immediately. To minimize the chances of having this type of accident occur, make sure that you have procedures that ensure proper labeling and storage of breastmilk.

Do I need to wear gloves to clean up spilled breast milk?

Since the risk of infection to caregivers who are feeding expressed human milk is very low, wearing of gloves to feed or clean up spills of expressed breast milk is unnecessary. However, caregivers with open cuts on their hands should avoid direct contact with breast milk.

Where can I get more information about breastfeeding?

You can speak with your child care health consultant. Other local resources include nutritionists, community health centers, and lactation consultants. You will also find some useful resources listed on the last page of this brochure.



Preparing to Return To Work



During your pregnancy and maternity leave, you laid out your plan. You and your baby have learned to breastfeed. Now it is time to put these plans into action.

2 weeks before your scheduled return to work:

- ❖ Discuss your plans with your supervisor. Assure her/him that you will be able to maintain your daily and weekly work schedule.
- ❖ See how much time you will need each work day to wake, dress, and feed yourself and your baby, and travel to child care and work.
- ❖ Let your baby-sitter and baby spend time together so they can get to know each other.
- ❖ Begin to establish a milk expression schedule
- ❖ Start making extra meals for your family, and storing them in the freezer.

1 week before your scheduled return to work:

- ❖ Continue your expression and breastfeeding schedule so that it will be close to what you will be doing when you return to work.
- ❖ Leave your baby with the baby-sitter for a few hours 2-3 times this week so they can get to know one another better.
- ❖ Hold a dress rehearsal of your new morning routine and make changes as needed.
- ❖ Try to get plenty of sleep so that you are ready for your return to work.

When you return to work:

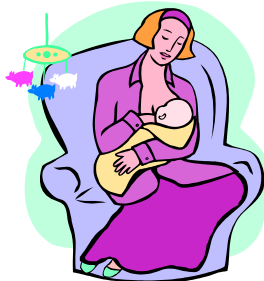
- ❖ Take it a day at a time. If work has piled up while you were away, relax and do your best to catch up.
- ❖ Breastfeed your baby right before you leave him with the sitter. This will limit the amount of milk you will need to pump while you are apart.

- ❖ Express or breastfeed according to your established routine. Try to pump or breastfeed a little early rather than a little late. If you do not express or breastfeed, you will be uncomfortably full, your milk supply may decrease, and you will have a greater chance for leaking or a breast infection.
- ❖ Breastfeed your baby right after you return from work. If your breasts are very full or you have a long commute home, may want to breastfeed before you leave the daycare. Ask your daycare provider not to feed the baby for 1-2 hours before your planned return, so that he will be ready to eat when you get there.
- ❖ Breastfeed more often in the evenings and on weekends when you and your baby are together. This will help to maintain your milk supply.
- ❖ Talk to your supervisor about how things are going. Be positive and thankful, but also be realistic if there are difficulties.
- ❖ Take care of yourself – commit to getting enough sleep and eating a healthy diet.

Regardless of how well you prepare for your return to work, there will still be a period of adjustment. Excitement, nervousness, guilt, sadness, and joy are a few of the emotions you may experience. These feelings are normal. With time you will adjust priorities and establish routines, and your confidence in your decision will grow. Support and encouragement from people around you is important, so don't hesitate to ask for help.

Other Ideas for When You Return to Work ...

- ☉ If possible return to work part way through the week. Working 2 or 3 days at first is easier than working an entire week.
- ☉ If possible return to work slowly – part time and then gradually increase to full time, or try to work at home part of each day or week.
- ☉ Many mothers find it helpful to organize lunches, pack the diaper bag and prepare clothes etc. the night before. If using a breast pump be sure to clean it as recommended by your health care provider. Remember to freeze any ice packs you want to use the next day. Know that freshly expressed breast milk can be left at room temperature for up to 10 hours.
- ☉ Try to breastfeed at least once before you leave for work and as soon as you can after work.
- ☉ If you will be expressing milk at work try to pump as often as you would nurse your baby during the day. Being relaxed when you pump will help you obtain more milk.
- ☉ Try listening to music, looking at a picture of your baby, or thinking about feeding your baby while you pump.
- ☉ Breastfeed your baby as often as you can whenever you are together. It is not unusual for a baby to want to nurse more frequently once mother returns home from work. Breastfeeding frequently on days off can also help maintain your milk supply.
- ☉ The first few weeks will likely be the most challenging. After that most mothers settle into a routine.
- ☉ Try to eat well and drink according to your thirst. Choose healthful foods that are quick and easy. Proper nutrition will help you maintain your milk supply and give you energy to get through the day.
- ☉ Focus on the things that really need to be done. Prioritize. Accept help from family and friends.
- ☉ Talk to other mothers who have combined breastfeeding and employment. They can offer suggestions and support.
- ☉ Take one day at a time. Remember – any amount of breast milk that you can give to your baby is better than none. Do what you can. Be proud of your efforts.



Mother Friendly Resource Toolkit Introduction



This CD toolkit is designed to make it easy for worksites to provide support to breast feeding mothers who return to work. You have received a packet of materials along with this CD to assist your organization in becoming "Mother Friendly". The resources contained on this CD include:

- Presentation for management (PowerPoint that can be used to provide information about the utility of being Mother Friendly)
- Letters from worksite (letter to employee who asks for leave explaining company's support for breastfeeding)
- Sample policies (3 different examples varying in length and specificity)
- How to set up a Mother's Room (components, cost, user agreement, sign-up sheet)
- Pumping, handling, storage information for new mothers
- Information about preparing to return to work for new mothers
- Local resources for breastfeeding support
- Best practices examples and local examples of Mother Friendly worksites
- List of breast pumps available for a worksite to purchase or help subsidize for individual employee
- Journal article supporting the claimed benefits to employers

For technical assistance contact:

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MaineGeneral supports this Mother-Friendly Worksite Initiative's efforts to increase support of breastfeeding by the worksite culture. We do so because an increase in the breastfeeding duration rate to and beyond 6 months will help reduce childhood obesity and illness, and decrease healthcare utilization by mother and child.