

# Supporting Breastfeeding Families A Toolkit for Child Care Providers

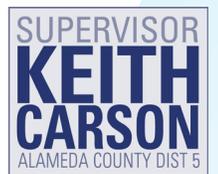
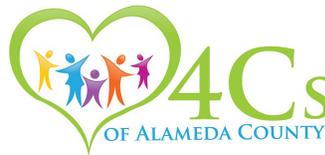
A project of the  
Alameda County Breastfeeding Coalition  
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*This toolkit is designed to help child care centers, family child care programs, and in-home caregivers support breastfeeding families.*

*Not all suggestions may be applicable to all child care environments.*

## Breastmilk – Nature’s Miracle Food



Project Sponsored by: Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson, District 5  
In collaboration with: WIC Agencies of Alameda County • Alameda Alliance for Health  
• 4Cs of Alameda County • Alameda County Public Health Department  
• La Leche League of Northern California and Hawaii





# Breastmilk – Nature’s Miracle Food

For nearly all infants, breastmilk is the best source of infant nutrition and immune protection.

## Breastmilk is good for babies because it:

- Is the only food a baby needs during the first six months of life, and it continues to be a key source of nutrients for the first year
- Contains the right balance of nutrients to meet baby’s needs
- Changes over time to adapt to baby’s needs
- Helps baby and mother develop a special closeness
- Helps protect babies from infections and reduces the risk of allergies
- Is easy to digest

## Breastfeeding is good for mothers because it:

- Helps their bodies recover from pregnancy and get back into shape more quickly
- Lowers the risk of diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and breast, uterine, cervical cancers
- Causes certain hormones to be released into her body, which brings feelings of relaxation and well-being to the mother
- Takes less time than using infant formula AND saves money

## Caring for breastfed babies is good for you as a child care provider because you have:

- Babies with less colic, diarrhea, and spitting up

- Diapers that do not smell bad
- Babies who are sick less often
- Mothers who feel good about child care because they can continue to breastfeed their babies

## Breastfeeding helps everyone because it:

- Leads to healthier people
- Is less expensive for families than buying infant formula
- Creates less trash because there are fewer cans, bottles, and nipples to throw away

In California, mothers are allowed to breastfeed in public by law. California Civil Code, Section 43.3, states, “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a mother may breastfeed her child in any location, public or private, except the private home or residence of another, where the mother and child are otherwise authorized to be present.”

Child care providers who are supportive of breastfeeding enable these mothers to nurse much longer. This means greater benefits for baby, mother and your center!





# Storage, Handling, and Warming of Breastmilk

Mothers work hard to pump, store and provide breastmilk for their baby while at child care. Your knowledge of how to handle breastmilk ensures the child benefits from each nutritious ounce.

## Breastmilk

Breastmilk varies in color from a bluish white to a deep yellow color. The fat in the milk may rise to the top of the milk. This does not mean the milk is spoiled. Just swirl it gently to mix the layers. It may appear thinner than infant formula. However, it remains the best food for babies.

## Storing breastmilk

- Breastmilk can be stored in a refrigerator for up to 3 days from the time it was expressed.
- Place breastmilk in the back of the refrigerator where it is coldest.
- Try to keep 2-3 ounces of breastmilk in your freezer in case the baby needs more milk one day.
- Breastmilk can be frozen for up to 3 months from when it was expressed.
- Rotate fresh and frozen breastmilk, using the oldest milk first. Once frozen breastmilk is thawed, use it within 24 hours and do not refreeze.

## Handling breastmilk

Ask mothers to label their milk with baby's full name, date, and time collected. It's best for mothers to store frozen milk in small portions (1-4 ozs.) to decrease the chances of any waste.

Ask mothers to bring in enough breastmilk to feed the baby each day. Be sure that each bottle or other container of breastmilk is labeled appropriately. Bottles should have just the amount both you and the mother think the baby will take at each feeding.

Breastmilk is not a body fluid that requires universal precautions. Simply handle breastmilk like other food.

## Thawing/Warming of breastmilk

Thaw frozen breastmilk in the refrigerator overnight, or in a bowl of water. Do not set breastmilk out to thaw at room temperature. Do not thaw breastmilk by heating on the stove or in a microwave. If breastmilk has separated, swirl gently to combine the layers.

Warm the breastmilk by placing the bottle in a bowl of warm water.



Do not warm breastmilk on the stove or in a microwave. Microwave heating causes hot spots in the milk that can burn the baby. These hot spots may stay even if you shake the bottle. Heating also destroys most of the natural substances in breastmilk that help protect babies from sickness.



# Feeding the Breastfed Baby

Frequency of feeding, how you bottle feed and even bowel movements are different in breastfed babies versus formula fed children.

## Before baby's first day in child care

Ask parents to begin bottle or cup feedings before baby's first day. Encourage mothers to get the baby used to being fed her pumped breastmilk by another person. Before bringing baby to the center, invite the mother to visit. This will expose her to common germs. Then her breastmilk will adapt to better protect her baby.

## Follow the baby's signals to time the feedings.

Do not put babies on a strict feeding schedule. Breastfed babies will usually eat every 1-1/2 to 3 hours in the first few months and every 3-4 hours after that.

All babies go through growth spurts. During these spurts, babies may need more milk or need to eat more often.

## Early signs of hunger include:

- Baby turning head and opening mouth wide in search of milk
- Baby putting hands to mouth or sucking on hands
- Baby fussing or about to cry
- Crying is a late sign of hunger

## Slow Flow Bottle Feeding

Bottle feeding a breastfed baby is a little different from feeding a formula fed baby. Breastfed babies are not used to the fast flow from a bottle. Keeping the baby at a more upright position helps babies adapt to the flow. You may need to try different positions for babies who do not want to take a bottle. Slow flow or wide based nipples are preferred.

## Paced Feeding

It is easy to feed too much or too quickly with a bottle. Pause during a feeding by gently removing the bottle nipple from baby's mouth for a second. Baby will either welcome the break or want more.

## Reverse Cycle Breastfeeding

You may find a baby who takes only a little milk during the day but feeds a lot at home to make up for it. Always discuss the baby's feeding patterns with the mother and find out how often baby nurses when not in child care.



## Bowel movements

Bowel movements of breastfed babies do not usually smell bad. They are pale in color, loose, and seedy looking. In contrast, the bowel movements for formula-fed babies are darker and firmer with a less pleasant smell.

Usually, breastfed babies have more bowel movements than formula-fed babies. Yet, as breastfed babies grow, they may have fewer and even go for days without one. This is normal if bowel movements are soft. Breastfed babies usually do not get constipated.



# Ten Steps to Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care



## Step 1: Appoint a person or group to be responsible for making sure the 10 steps are carried out

- Gain support from management and all levels of staff.
- Commit to the importance of breastfeeding, especially exclusive breastfeeding. Then share this commitment with fellow staff.
- Use this toolkit to create an action plan to make your center more breastfeeding friendly. Although many staff may share the job of creating and carrying out an action plan, it's best to have one person coordinate the group's efforts.
- The action plan should also specify how all staff will be trained so that they are able to carry out breastfeeding promotion and support activities.

## Step 2: Establish a supportive breastfeeding policy and require that all staff be aware of and follow the policy

A sample policy is included in this toolkit. A breastfeeding friendly child care policy should:

- Welcome breastfeeding mothers.
- State that families will receive accurate breastfeeding information.
- Ensure that staff are trained to provide breastfeeding information and support. The goal is to help mothers continue to breastfeed when they return to work or school.

## Step 3: Inform women and families about the importance of breastfeeding, and about your breastfeeding friendly policies

- Talk about why breastfeeding is so good for babies.
- Encourage mothers to continue breastfeeding when returning to work or school.
- Share community resources with mothers that can answer their questions and concerns about breastfeeding.

## Step 4: Provide learning and play opportunities for children that make breastfeeding natural

- Expose children to breastfeeding mothers as a good way to teach about natural infant feeding.
- Plan learning activities that talk about how animals take care of their babies, including how they are fed.
- Offer children's books that have pictures of breastfeeding.
- Provide play dolls that are nursing.

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

- Provide a refrigerator where families can store their milk.
- Show families how containers should be labeled with baby's name and date the milk was expressed.
- Make available a freezer to store extra breastmilk in case not enough milk has been provided for the day.

### **Step 6: Create a breastfeeding-friendly space**

- Create a clean, comfortable, private place for mothers to breastfeed or pump. This area should have an electrical outlet, comfortable chairs, and access to running water.
- Invite mothers to breastfeed and pump at your location. Some mothers may want to nurse before they leave.
- Post “Breastfeeding is welcomed here” poster included in this toolkit.
- Educate families and staff that a mother may breastfeed her child wherever they have a legal right to be.
- Use culturally diverse breastfeeding education materials.
- Limit visibility of infant formula.
- Mention breastfeeding first in all communication about infant feeding.

### **Step 7: Establish a supportive worksite policy for staff members who are breastfeeding**

- Create a clean, comfortable, private place for staff to breastfeed or pump their milk.
- Include an electrical outlet, comfortable chairs, and nearby access to running water.
- Provide breastfeeding employees with a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping.

### **Step 8: Develop a feeding plan that supports best infant feeding practices with each family**

- Discuss baby’s feeding patterns with the mother. Try to time the baby’s feeding so the baby will be hungry when the mother is ready to nurse.

- Ask if the mother will want to nurse before leaving if she is picking up the baby. If she does, try to make the baby’s last feeding about 1-1/2 to 2 hours before the mother arrives. Use an activity or toy to keep the baby happy until the mother gets there.
- Ask for the mother’s schedule and ask that she call if she will miss a feeding or arrive late.
- Encourage her to provide a back-up supply of frozen or refrigerated breastmilk.

### **Step 9: Reach out to the local breastfeeding coalition or other breastfeeding resources**

Some ways your center can further support breastfeeding families in the community include:

- Supporting breastfeeding promotional campaigns
- Joining breastfeeding coalitions or advocacy groups
- Sharing your experience in becoming more breastfeeding friendly with other child care providers
- Supporting legislation and community events designed to increase public awareness

### **Step 10: Maintain an updated resource file of breastfeeding services for families**

- Create a list of contact names and numbers of local breastfeeding professionals and peer support groups.
- Refer mothers who have breastfeeding questions or are experiencing difficulties with breastfeeding or pumping to community resources.



# Sample Child Care Breastfeeding Policy

The *ABC Child Care Center* is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers. Breastfeeding provides many health benefits to both the mother and baby. The *ABC Child Care Center* subscribes to the following policy.

## **Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk.**

Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area has an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water. Mothers are also welcome to breastfeed in public areas.

## **A refrigerator will be made available for storage of expressed breastmilk.**

Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed milk in the center refrigerator. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with baby's name and date.

## **Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies.**

The center is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers. Mothers are welcome to breastfeed their baby at drop-off in the morning and pick-up in the evening. Staff will hold off giving a bottle, if possible, when mom is due to arrive. Infant formula and solid foods will not be provided unless requested by the mother. Babies will be held closely when feeding.

## **Staff shall be trained in handling breastmilk.**

All center staff will be trained in the proper storage and handling of breastmilk, as well as ways to support breastfeeding mothers. The center will follow milk storage guidelines as recommended by health care organizations to avoid waste and prevent food borne illness. Special precautions are not required in handling breastmilk.

## **Breastfeeding employees shall be provided flexible breaks to accommodate breastfeeding or milk expression.**

Breastfeeding employees shall be provided a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breastmilk for their children. The time allowed would not exceed the normal time allowed to other employees for lunch and breaks. For time above and beyond normal lunch and breaks, sick/annual leave may be used, or an alternative arrangement, for example: the employee can come in earlier or leave later to make up the time.

## **Breastfeeding promotion information will be displayed.**

The center will provide information on breastfeeding, including the names of area resources should questions or problems arise. In addition, positive promotion of breastfeeding will be on display in the center.



# Child Care Infant Feeding Plan

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

1) What does your baby drink most of the time?

Breastmilk

Both Breastmilk and Formula

Formula Only

2) Does your baby drink any other liquid as a supplement?  Yes  No

If so, what and how often? \_\_\_\_\_

3) Does your baby currently receive any type of solid food?  Yes  No

If so, what and how much? \_\_\_\_\_

4) What is your baby's usual pattern of eating?

Milk: How much? \_\_\_\_\_ How often? \_\_\_\_\_

Solids: How much? \_\_\_\_\_ How often? \_\_\_\_\_

5) Are there times when you plan to nurse your baby at the center? If so, we will try to plan feeding times accordingly.  Yes  No If yes, at what times? \_\_\_\_\_

6) If your child is receiving breastmilk, what should we do if we run out of pumped milk?

7) Are you aware of any food allergies or sensitivities that your child has?

8) Does your child have any problems with feedings such as choking or spitting up?

9) Is there any other information that we should know about your child's eating habits?





# Breastfeeding Resources in Alameda County

## Child Care Provider Breastfeeding Education and Support

### Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies in Alameda County

- Bananas, Inc., (510) 658-0381, <http://bananasbunch.org>
- 4Cs of Alameda County, (510) 582-2182, <http://4c-alameda.org>
- Child Care Links, (510) 568-0306, <http://childcarelinks.org>

### Community Care Licensing, Department of Social Services

- General Information & Complaint Line, (844) 538-8766

### USDA Feeding Infants Guide:

[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/feeding\\_infants.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/feeding_infants.pdf)

### Videos on breastfeeding friendly child care (10 minutes each):

- For Child Care Providers:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=lpDDxnbin7c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=lpDDxnbin7c)
- For Parents:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXXpmCn57ZI&feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXXpmCn57ZI&feature=player_embedded)

## Family Breastfeeding Education and Support

[ACHealthcare.org](http://ACHealthcare.org), (888) 604-INFO (4636)

Find contact info for many community agencies, clinics and organizations that support breast feeding.

- Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Agencies of Alameda County
- Local clinics and hospitals
- La Leche League Northern California and Hawaii
- Health plans
- First 5 Alameda County

## Alameda County Breastfeeding Referral Guide

Information about more than 50 different local resources

<http://www.acphd.org/media/351377/bf%20referral%20guide.pdf>

## Alameda County Breastfeeding Coalition

The Coalition is a quarterly gathering of breastfeeding advocates working in Alameda County to promote breastfeeding as the norm.

Find the Coalition's free pre-recorded on line training for child care providers and electronic copies of this toolkit at:

<http://californiabreastfeeding.org>

Look under Coalition Information, quick links to Coalitions by County, and select Alameda County Breastfeeding Coalition.





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