



Breastfeeding Support in the Workplace

More and more mothers today choose to give their infants the healthiest start in life possible by breastfeeding. Thanks to abundant research, all major health organizations today promote breastfeeding as the perfect form of infant nutrition, and call on local communities to provide the support new mothers need to be successful. Since breastfeeding rates in Wisconsin are increasing, you will find that more and more of your employees are breastfeeding. Your support will help them to continue to breastfeed longer and will help them be more productive employees. Studies have shown that working mothers who breastfeed have less turnover, and less absenteeism. They are generally more satisfied on the job and less worried about leaving their babies with another caregiver than mothers who formula feed. Because breastfed babies have fewer and less severe illnesses, this may also result in insurance savings for you and your company.

What can you do to protect and support breastfeeding in your facility?

- ⌘ Establish a supportive breastfeeding policy and communicate this to all staff members.
- ⌘ Provide orientation. (Contact your local breastfeeding coalition or task force for information on local persons who may be able to provide orientation training for employees and on-site childcare center staff.)
- ⌘ Provide a quiet, private area for employees to pump or express milk during working hours. (A bathroom stall is not an option, being neither sanitary nor private.) See "Furnishing a Worksite Lactation Room."
- ⌘ Allow breastfeeding mothers sufficient break time to express milk three times during an eight-hour shift. (20 minutes per session -- mid-morning, lunchtime, and mid-afternoon -- is all a mother will need to provide milk for her baby and maintain her milk supply.)
- ⌘ Provide positive breastfeeding messages in the building to let employees know that you support their decision to breastfeed.
- ⌘ Inform expectant mothers that you support their decision to continue to breastfeed after returning to work.