

# National ECELC Newsletter

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## Breastfeeding Friendly Environment

Written by: Alexandra Hyman, Intern

Reviewed by: Brianna Holmes, MA and Katey Swanson, RD

Creating a breastfeeding friendly environment is one way to provide ongoing support to breastfeeding moms. A supportive early care and education (ECE) program environment provides an informal support system, which can have a positive impact on breastfeeding mothers.

Breastfeeding friendly environments allow mothers to feel welcome to breastfeed in the program. ECE programs can designate an area where breastfeeding mothers can receive resources to support them as they return to work. Mothers often cite embarrassment and an unsupportive environment as barriers to breastfeeding. As you observe programs, assist them in providing breastfeeding mothers with contact names and numbers of local breastfeeding professionals, peer support groups, and pamphlets

to serve as a resource for reliable information about breastfeeding.

To help programs ensure that their program provides a breastfeeding friendly environment, inform them of the following steps:

1. Establish a breastfeeding program policy;
2. Designate a private space for breastfeeding;
3. Train staff so they are able to promote breastfeeding and provide support;
4. Display culturally appropriate posters that promote breastfeeding;
5. Inform new families about the program breastfeeding policy; and
6. Establish and maintain relationships with community partners that support breastfeeding.

Pederson, K. *Ten Steps to Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Centers*. (2013). Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

### The National ECELC

Welcome to the National Early Care and Education Collaboratives Project (ECELC) Newsletter! We hope this newsletter is helpful as we offer supplemental information to help you prepare for the Learning Sessions and provide technical assistance to early care and education (ECE) providers. Topics within each newsletter will emphasize areas outlined in the *Let's Move! Child Care* goals including healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support. We hope you enjoy it!

-The National ECELC Team

Visit the *Let's Move! Child Care* website:

[www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org](http://www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org)

## Contraindications to Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is recommended for most infants, but there are a small number of women who should not or cannot breastfeed. This includes:

- Mothers with HIV, T-cell lymphotropic virus type 1 or type 2, active untreated tuberculosis, or herpes simplex lesions on the breast.
- Infants with galactosemia.
- Mothers who use certain drugs or treatments, including illicit drugs, antimetabolites, chemotherapeutic agents, and radioactive isotope treatments<sup>1</sup>

### Resources for ECE Programs

**Resource Kit:** Wisconsin Department of Health Services, "Ten Steps to Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Centers" <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/PO/PO0022.pdf>

**Video (shown in LS 2):** Breastfeeding Coalition of Oregon & the Indiana Perinatal Network, "How to Support Breastfeeding Mothers & Families" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpDDxnb7c>

**Additional resources can be found on the Let's Move! Child Care website:**  
[www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org](http://www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org)

### Questions?

**Please contact your State/Local Project Coordinator or one of our Content Specialists:**

For health & nutrition information:  
Katey Swanson, RD  
[katey.swanson@nemours.org](mailto:katey.swanson@nemours.org)  
202.649.4422

For early care and education information:  
Brianna Holmes, MA  
[brianna.holmes@nemours.org](mailto:brianna.holmes@nemours.org)  
202.649.4425



## The Impact of Medications and a Poor Diet on Breast Milk

ECE program staff may not feel comfortable discussing the nutritional quality of breast milk to breastfeeding mothers. However, to create a supportive breastfeeding environment, program staff should be aware of the benefits of breastfeeding even if the mother has a poor diet or is taking medication. ECE providers can provide the following breastfeeding information to mothers in their programs:

- Breastfeeding is one of the most effective preventative measures a mother can take to protect the health of her infant and herself;<sup>1</sup>
- Breast milk is uniquely suited to meet the nutritional needs of an infant for proper growth and development;<sup>1</sup>
- The composition of human milk is very stable, regardless of the diet of the mother. It is a good idea for the breastfeeding mom to eat healthy, but even if she does not eat healthy, the mother's milk is still the best food for the baby;<sup>2</sup>
- Poor maternal diet does not take away any of the nutritional benefits of breastfeeding for the baby;<sup>2</sup>
- Women on strict vegetarian or vegan diets should speak with a doctor about the possibility of nutrient deficits in their milk, as they may need to add supplements;<sup>2</sup>
- Restrictive maternal diets or malnutrition in the mother are not reasons to not breastfeed.<sup>5</sup>
- Mothers can reference LactMed, a database developed by the U.S. National Library of Medicine, for the most comprehensive list of information regarding the safety of maternal medications and breastfeeding;<sup>3</sup>
- Women can safely breastfeed while taking most, but not all, medications.<sup>5</sup>

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General; 2011.
2. Lawrence R. and Lawrence R. (2001). Breastfeeding, What Contraindications Exist? *Pediatric Clinics of North America* 48(1), 235-251.
3. Breastfeeding and the use of human milk. (2012). *Pediatrics*, 129(3), e827-e841.
4. Rowe H., Baker T., Hale T. (2013) Maternal Medication, Drug Use, and Breastfeeding. *The Pediatric Clinics of North America* (0031-3955), 60 (1), 275.
5. Lawrence, R. (2013). Circumstances when Breastfeeding is Contraindicated. *Pediatric Clinics of North America*. 60(1). 295-318.



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