



## Care Provider's Information

### *Caring for Breastfed Babies*

Many mothers want to continue breastfeeding after they return to work or school. Breastmilk helps keep their babies healthy, and they savor the special closeness they feel with their babies, especially when they must be away all day. **You can help!**

- ♥ Encourage mothers to breastfeed at the childcare center comfortably and at their convenience.
- ♥ Help the day begin and end calmly by offering the mother a place to rock and breastfeed her baby. (This space can also be used by employees for pumping.) This quiet time can help baby transition peacefully to other caregivers, and helps make the drive home easier after a busy day.
- ♥ Work with family members to develop the baby's individual breastfeeding support plan. Identify who is to do what and when. Update individual plans regularly.
- ♥ Give mothers a list of resources in your area, including lactation consultants and breastfeeding counselors who can help with breastfeeding\*.

#### Helping Breastfed Babies Adjust to the Childcare Setting

- ♥ Being separated from mom can be a difficult adjustment for any infant or child. Holding and cuddling is important for baby's development and can be the secret to a peaceful and enriching childcare experience.
- ♥ Breastfed babies are used to being held closely and often. If you are busy with many children, "wearing" an infant in a sling or carrier can provide the baby with the close contact she needs, while leaving your hands free to help with older children.
- ♥ Giving baby a blanket that has been in contact with the mother's skin may also comfort the baby.

#### Handling and Storing Human Milk

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC), breastmilk should be given the same care and respect in storing and handling as other foods and nutritional supplements. The milk can be stored in the refrigerator or freezer along with other foods and Universal Cautions do not need to be observed.

- ♥ Post the Human Milk Storage Guidelines where bottles are heated and on the refrigerator\*\*.
- ♥ Breastmilk should be stored in small containers labeled with the baby's name and the date the milk was collected and, if previously frozen, the date the milk was thawed.
- ♥ Mothers work hard to express their milk, and care should be taken so it is not wasted.
- ♥ It may be helpful to store a small amount of frozen milk in case a baby finishes all of his bottles. Ask mothers if they would like to provide you with a few "backup" ounces. Frozen breastmilk can be safely stored in a freezer (with a separate door) for up to three months.
- ♥ Discuss your center's policy for storing breastmilk with the mother, as the guidelines you follow may not be the same as what she is following at home. Work with the mother on a plan for providing breastmilk that will work for everyone.

\*Available from the Vermont Department of Health "Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Project" website at [www.breastfeedvermont.info](http://www.breastfeedvermont.info)



## Bottle-Feeding the Breastfed Baby – “Paced Bottle Feeding”

- ♥ Breastmilk is digested very quickly and easily, so breastfed babies usually eat more frequently than formula-fed babies, about every 1-½ to 3 hours. Feed the breastfed baby when their cues indicate hunger, rather than feeding on a schedule. Early hunger cues include mouth movements, rooting, sucking on hands, and restlessness. Crying is a late sign of hunger or may signal that baby needs something to be different.
- ♥ Feed the baby in a way that mimics breastfeeding. Hold the baby in an upright position, and never put a baby to bed with a bottle. Switch from one side to another midway through a feeding – this provides eye stimulation and development, helps pace feedings, and keeps the baby from developing a preference for one side.
- ♥ Begin feeds gently, allowing the infant to gape widely for the nipple rather than pushing it in so that baby controls when the feed begins. Stroke baby's lips with the nipple to illicit a rooting response and a wide open mouth, and then allow the baby to "accept" or draw in the nipple.
- ♥ Feed Slowly. An infant's system needs time to recognize that they are full – rapid feedings can lead to overfeeding, which puts the mother's milk supply at risk and can cause discomfort in the baby. Pause frequently during feedings to burp, switch sides, or talk to the baby, and avoid holding the bottle in a vertical position.
- ♥ Stop feeding when the baby shows signs of fullness. Do not encourage a baby to finish “just the last bit” in the bottle. If baby is drowsing off and releasing the bottle nipple before the bottle is empty that means baby is done; don't reawaken the baby to finish. With the mother's permission, an unfinished bottle can be reheated for later use. To reduce waste, ask the mother to send the milk in smaller amounts if bottles are often left unfinished.
- ♥ Breastfed babies sometimes eat smaller amounts at each feeding than babies who are formula-fed. The amount of breastmilk consumed may or may not increase with the age of the baby.

### Advantages of feeding in this manner:

- The infant will consume a volume appropriate to their size and age, rather than over- or under-eating. This can support the working and pumping mom who will have a better chance of pumping an amount each day that is equal to the baby's demand.
- Can minimize spitting up and colic-like symptoms in the baby whose stomach is too full.
- Supports the breastfeeding relationship, leading to increased success at breastfeeding for mothers who are separated from their babies.

## Other Ways to Offer Loving Support

Breastfeeding is natural, but not always easy. Working moms have many competing demands that can make breastfeeding challenging. Your support can make the difference!

- ♥ Ask the mother what to feed her baby. Many mothers want their babies to be fed only breastmilk; while others provide a combination of breastmilk and formula.
- ♥ Talk with the mother about her special requests if difficulties arise. For instance, if baby gets hungry before mother arrives at the end of the day, does she want you to provide a pacifier, some water, a small amount of breastmilk, solid foods, or formula?
- ♥ Encourage and support her efforts to provide her milk for her baby! Positive comments can boost her confidence.
- ♥ Help connect her with other mothers who have successfully combined breastfeeding and working.

