

# Breastfeeding Friendly Business

## A Tool Kit





# About the Breastfeeding Friendly Business Project

The project is part of the **Grey Bruce Health Unit** Baby-Friendly Initiative. Included in this is education and promotion of breastfeeding practices among families, health care providers, businesses and communities.

Working towards a **Breastfeeding Friendly Grey Bruce** involves creating a community where breastfeeding for health and food security is recognized, and appropriate breastfeeding supports are available.

This kit is created to help local businesses build their knowledge about breastfeeding and provide tools to better support breastfeeding women and their families. As a result, breastfeeding will become normal practice within our community. We encourage you to publicly display the provided signs to demonstrate that you support a **Breastfeeding Friendly Grey Bruce**. Any venue can participate: restaurants, indoor play centres, pharmacies, local government services, shops, banks and so on.

## Acknowledgement

This toolkit was modified from the **Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit** (Nova Scotia) by JustFood Ottawa, supported by Ottawa Public Health and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Healthy Communities fund. The intent of the **Breastfeeding Friendly Business: A Tool Kit** is that it be used in the spirit of the Baby-Friendly Initiative, in building community support for breastfeeding families.

The **Breastfeeding Friendly** sticker has been produced with funds provided by the Government of Ontario and the support of the Best Start Resource Centre at Health Nexus. The information reflects the views of the authors and is not officially endorsed by the Government of Ontario or the Best Start Resource Centre.

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The Grey Bruce Health Unit mission is to work with the Grey Bruce community to protect and promote health.



# Breastfeeding Friendly Business



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# Becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Business

Congratulations on being a progressive leader in recognizing the importance of supporting breastfeeding families in Grey Bruce!

By choosing to develop an atmosphere that supports breastfeeding mothers and families within your business, you are helping to remove barriers that can influence a woman's decision to begin and/or continue breastfeeding.

## How to participate in the Breastfeeding Friendly Business Project

1. Print the following materials from this kit or download and print from our website:
  - **Breastfeeding Friendly Business Signs:** Please post at least one sign in your business. Consider posting additional signs at your entrance, cash, and reception and on your menus and flyers. By posting signs you are working towards normalizing breastfeeding in Grey Bruce and showing your customers that you care.
  - **The Breastfeeding Friendly Business Toolkit:** Leave this toolkit in a place where it is accessible to all staff.
  - **Tips for Staff Poster:** Display this poster in an area accessible by all staff members; train your staff; talk with them about how to create a supportive environment; encourage staff to tell mothers with babies that they are welcome to breastfeed in your business if they wish.
2. **Create a supportive environment for customers.** Every business is different. It is understood that most businesses cannot create a room specifically for breastfeeding and this is not necessary. Supporting breastfeeding families means they are welcome to breastfeed anytime, anywhere. Talk to your staff – they may have great ideas about how you can create a more breastfeeding friendly environment for your clients.



# The Importance of Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is important for the baby, the mother, the community and the employer.

## The Baby

Breastfeeding provides a unique combination of nutrients and antibodies essential to a baby's health and can lower chances the child will have:

- Asthma, respiratory infections, ear infections, obesity, diabetes and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

Breastfeeding also helps with mother-child bonding because it gives the baby time for close contact with the mother.

## The Mother

Breastfeeding is also good for the mother. It lowers a woman's risk of:

- Breast cancer, ovarian cancer and heart disease.

Commercially sold baby formulas are expensive and must be carefully prepared to avoid contamination. Breast milk is free and takes no time to prepare. As a result, a mother will save money and have more time to spend with her family.

## The Community

When you support breastfeeding in your business, you show the community that breastfeeding and providing a child with breast milk is important.

Breastfeeding is environmentally friendly and is a natural use of resources. There is no waste from packaging, preparation or leftovers.

**As a business that supports breastfeeding, you are a vital part of creating a community that supports breastfeeding.**

Businesses and communities benefit from mothers continuing to breastfeed their babies. Make it a part of our culture. Healthier people, healthier relationships and a healthier community will be the result.



# Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business for Your Client

## Breastfeeding Friendly Spaces and Businesses

Breastfeeding is the normal way of providing young infants with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development. Virtually all mothers can breastfeed, provided they have accurate information, and the support of their family, the health care system and society at large.

Health Canada recommends that babies be fed only breast milk for the first six months of their lives. Breastfeeding is recommended to continue after solid foods are introduced, up to 2 years of age or longer.

Community members have identified that there is a need to support breastfeeding families who are using services in the community. Some mothers are concerned that if they breastfeed in public, it may make others feel uncomfortable. This may keep mothers away from entering businesses and may influence their decision to breastfeed at all.

The rights of breastfeeding women are protected under the Federal Labour Standards Maternity-Related Reassignments and Leave, Maternity Leave and Parental Leave (Pamphlet 5). The Ontario Human Rights Commission recognizes breastfeeding as a human right as outlined in the Policy on Discrimination Because of Pregnancy and Breastfeeding. This means that women have the right to breastfeed their babies anytime, anywhere.

We recognize that policy development and implementation can be a lengthy process and at times complicated. The intent of this toolkit is to ease employers and businesses through the process of developing breastfeeding friendly policies and provide the supports for their employees and clients in breastfeeding that are feasible and realistic to implement.

We encourage you to post the **You are Welcome to Breastfeed Anywhere, Anytime** sign, also available for download on the website. Displaying a **Breastfeeding Friendly Sign** tells people that your business is a friendly or welcoming environment for breastfeeding families. It also tells mothers that you and your staff respect the decision to breastfeed and will do your best to support breastfeeding mothers' rights both as an employee and client.

# Tips: Breastfeeding Friendly Business for Your Client

## Management Tips for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business for Clients

Business owners and managers can help a woman be more comfortable breastfeeding in her community. The following tips can help create a breastfeeding friendly place:

- Make use of the materials provided in this kit. After your employees have learned how to support breastfeeding, display the **You are Welcome to Breastfeed Anywhere, Anytime** sign to show the public that breastfeeding is welcome on your premises.
- Make your workplace family friendly by having a place for parents to change diapers.
- If there is room, provide a breastfeeding area for a woman who chooses to breastfeed in private. A small, clean space (separate from the bathroom) with a chair is all that is required.
- Hang the **Tips for Staff Poster** in a central area where staff can find it and use it when needed. This poster can also be found in the resources section of this document and can be downloaded from the website.
- Use your efforts to your advantage. Advertise your business as **Breastfeeding Friendly**. Research shows that families go to public places that are welcoming and supportive to families and breastfeeding mothers.
- Help create policies and procedures specific to your business that will help your employees support women who are breastfeeding. It is also important to support your own employees who are breastfeeding babies.
- Use the **Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Checklist** to make changes to the workplace to support all mothers who are breastfeeding their babies.
- Hang the **Tips for Mothers** poster and provide a copy to employees who are pregnant or returning to work.
- Have accessible additional resources for families and mothers; visit the Best Start.org website for worksite, parenting and family support.
- Participate in local activities for **World Breastfeeding Week**. Check with your local breastfeeding support groups regarding local events and promotion.





# Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business for Employees

- ✔ Develop a welcoming and supportive work environment
- ✔ Promote Breastfeeding Friendly policies and practices in the workplace

Stay in step with your competition and be recognized as a progressive employer. All businesses that join will be recognized for their efforts. Communicate support for the health of your employees and their families and become a Breastfeeding Friendly Business.

## For information on how to support breastfeeding in your community:

- ✔ Use the **Checklist** in the toolkit to determine your level of participation.
- ✔ You can also find the checklist on the Grey Bruce Health Unit website including example policies, resources and supports.

## Some of the associated benefits include:

- ✔ Less absenteeism – mothers and fathers are less likely to miss work with a sick child.
- ✔ Improved productivity, morale and loyalty – due to increased work satisfaction.
- ✔ Less staff turnover – breastfeeding women are more likely to return to work; keeping trained, experienced and motivated staff on the payroll.
- ✔ Expanded and strengthened ties in the community and with future employees.

## How to Become a Breastfeeding Friendly Employer

### 1. Download and print the following materials:

- ✔ **Complete the Checklist:** Use the **Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Checklist** to assess your premises. Please let us know what you are doing to be breastfeeding friendly and send us an email. [publichealth@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](mailto:publichealth@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca)
- ✔ **Breastfeeding for Employees Poster:** Post in an area accessible by all staff members; talk with employees about how to create a supportive environment for breastfeeding; explain your worksite lactation program; and share resources with working moms, such as Best Start and the Public Health Agency of Canada website.
- ✔ **How to be a Family Friendly Workplace Booklet:** Use this booklet to learn more about the education, practices and policies that can make a difference to help both men and women have the healthiest family possible even before conception. [http://www.beststart.org/resources/wrkplc\\_health/pdf/preg\\_work\\_16pg\\_FNL.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/wrkplc_health/pdf/preg_work_16pg_FNL.pdf)

### 2. Create a supportive environment for your staff by providing privacy and flexibility to express and store breast milk. Every establishment is different. Talk to your staff – they may have great ideas about how you can create a more **Breastfeeding Friendly** environment.



# For more Information and Support

**Ontario Human Rights Commission:**

[ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-discrimination-because-pregnancy-and-breastfeeding](http://ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-discrimination-because-pregnancy-and-breastfeeding) [ohrc.on.ca/en/pregnancy-and-breastfeeding-brochure](http://ohrc.on.ca/en/pregnancy-and-breastfeeding-brochure)

**Federal Labour Code:** Recommendations 7.59; "Part III should provide for short breaks during working hours to afford nursing employees reasonable time off, without pay, to breastfeed a child and/or to express milk on the work site. Similar breaks should also be available to employees who need them to inject medications or for similar medical purposes. Such breaks should be subject to operational considerations, but should not be unreasonably denied." [http://www.labour.gc.ca/eng/standards\\_equity/st/pubs\\_st/fls/page08.shtml](http://www.labour.gc.ca/eng/standards_equity/st/pubs_st/fls/page08.shtml)

**Service Canada:** Offers information on maternity and parental leave including employment insurance information. [servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/lifeevents/baby.shtml](http://servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/lifeevents/baby.shtml)

**Telehealth Ontario:** Offers new and expectant moms 24/7 access to free, confidential, expert advice and support for breastfeeding. Family, friends and caregivers who are supporting new and expectant moms are also encouraged to call if they have any questions. **Phone: 1-866-797-000 TTY: 1-866-797-0007**

<http://www.themothersprogram.ca/resources-and-information/telehealth-ontario>

**Grey Bruce Health Unit:** Offers information about breastfeeding and local breastfeeding supports.

[https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Infants/Breastfeeding/Quick\\_Links](https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Infants/Breastfeeding/Quick_Links)

**Public Health Agency of Canada:** Supports and promotes breastfeeding and provides resources, posters, booklets and information on the nutritional, immunological and emotional nurturing of infants and toddlers.

[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance\\_0-2/nutrition/index-eng.php#s](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance_0-2/nutrition/index-eng.php#s)

**La Leche League: [lllc.ca](http://lllc.ca)** offers breastfeeding information, free monthly meetings, telephone support, a resource library, and community breastfeeding support circles. **Phone: 519-377-4931 or 519-377-9725**

**Free, bilingual on-line course on breastfeeding:** If you are interested in learning more about breastfeeding this course is set up in an easy to access format. Once you successfully complete the course, you can request a Completion Certificate.

[Beststart.org/courses](http://Beststart.org/courses)

The **Baby-Friendly Initiative:** A world-wide program to help hospitals and community health agencies adopt best practices to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. [breastfeedingcanada.ca](http://breastfeedingcanada.ca)

**Grey Bruce Food Charter:** The charter acknowledges the right to food and **Baby-Friendly Initiative** policies that protect, promote, and support breastfeeding through informed decision making.

<https://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Eating-Well/Food-Charter>

# Resources

## Breastfeeding Friendly Sign

1. Cut out and display this sign: you can download more copies at [publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](http://publichealthgreybruce.on.ca) or
2. Pick up a sticker at your local health unit.





## Working towards a Breastfeeding Friendly Community

For more information please visit;  
[publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Infants/Breastfeeding](http://publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Infants/Breastfeeding)

### Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Checklist

#### Good

- Verbal Agreement between mother and her direct supervisor regarding her break times and space to pump
- Private room with a lock on the door
- Flexible breaks (at least 15-20 minutes in the morning and afternoon as well as a lunch break) during which the employee can express milk or nurse her infant

#### Better

- Written breastfeeding support policy \*
- Education about policy provided to all employees
- Private room with a lock on the door
- Comfortable chair for pumping and/or nursing
- Refrigerator for milk storage
- Nearby sink with running water
- Flexible breaks

##### One of the following:

- Ability to work part-time or some hours from home
- Flex-time offered
- Job-sharing offered
- Extended maternity leave offered
- On-site childcare

##### One of the following:

- Lending library of Breastfeeding Resources or
- List of local breastfeeding resources\*

#### Optional Items:

Small table, electrical outlet

#### Best

- Written breastfeeding support policy with education provided for all employees
- Educational resources about breastfeeding given to all expectant parents\*  
[http://www.beststart.org/resources/wrkplc\\_health/pdf/Return\\_to\\_Work\\_ENG\\_Final.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/wrkplc_health/pdf/Return_to_Work_ENG_Final.pdf)
- Private room with a lock on the door
- Breast pump provided by employer

##### Lactation room with all of the following:

- Refrigerator for milk storage; comfortable upholstered chair for pumping and/or nursing; wall clock; nearby sink with running water; small table; electrical outlet
- Flexible breaks
- Extended maternity leave offered

##### One of the following:

- Ability to work part-time or some hours from home
- Flex-time offered
- Job-sharing offered
- On-site childcare

##### One of the following:

- Lending library of Breastfeeding Resources
- Lactation consultant services provided for employees (via insurance or paid by employer)

#### Optional items:

Radio/CD or iPod player; telephone; charging station; breastfeeding art; foot rest

\* Resources available on the GBHU website

# Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business



## Tips for Staff

The following are some ways that you can make a mother who is breastfeeding feel more comfortable:

Ask a woman with a baby where she would like to sit.

Allow her to pick a spot where she will be comfortable breastfeeding, if she chooses.

- ✔ Talk to her in a friendly manner. Ask her about her baby.
- ✔ Making eye contact with a mother who is breastfeeding shows her that you are comfortable with it and that you support her.
- ✔ If a customer expresses a concern about a woman breastfeeding in public:
  - ✔ Explain that you are a **Breastfeeding Friendly Business** and it is your policy to support breastfeeding.
  - ✔ Explain that the Ontario Human Rights Commission recognizes breastfeeding as a human right as outlined in the *Policy on Discrimination Because Of Pregnancy and Breastfeeding*. This means that women have the right to breastfeed their babies anytime, anywhere.
  - ✔ Offer to move the concerned customer to another seat instead of offering another seat to the breastfeeding mother. This supports the fact that breastfeeding her baby is a right.

Please do not ask a nursing mother to breastfeed in the washroom.  
It is uncomfortable and most mothers will find it disturbing and offensive.

# Breastfeeding for Employees



## Tips

Mothers can continue to be committed to their jobs, return to work and meet their breastfeeding goals.

Your baby can have all the benefits of your milk even while you work:

- If your childcare facility is nearby, you can breastfeed your child during your breaks.
- Continuing to breastfeed is a wonderful way to reconnect with your baby after hours of separation.
- You can express milk by hand or with a breast pump, leave it with your caregiver to feed the baby and breast milk can be frozen.
  - When you are pumping milk for a full-term, healthy baby, you do not need to worry about sterilizing storage containers or pump parts.
  - You can store your milk in the refrigerator space available until the workday is over, or use an insulated container with reusable ice packs to keep it cool. Breast milk keeps safely at room temperature for 4 to 6 hours.
  - Pumping, saving the milk and even leaking while you're at work helps you feel connected to your baby when you must be apart.
  - Breastfeeding saves money; a one-time pump purchase is cheaper than buying formula. Even renting a hospital-grade electric pump may be cheaper than buying formula.
- Breastfed babies are healthier, so mother (and father) will miss fewer work days to stay home with a sick baby who is not welcome at daycare.
- For more information and support on returning to work, visit [Best Start.org](http://www.beststart.org).  
[http://www.beststart.org/resources/wrkplc\\_health/pdf/Return\\_to\\_Work\\_ENG\\_Final.pdf](http://www.beststart.org/resources/wrkplc_health/pdf/Return_to_Work_ENG_Final.pdf)



Businesses that support families get more family business.

Become a Breastfeeding Friendly Business today!

Dear \_

I am a customer who supports businesses that participate in the **Breastfeeding Friendly Business Project**. In Grey Bruce, close to 1500 babies are born every year, which means our families make up a substantial portion of your customer base. I understand how important it is for you to appeal to your customers. As a patron of your business, I would like to help you better appeal to breastfeeding families.

Breastfeeding is a natural way for mothers to nourish their children. Health Canada recommends that babies be fed only breast milk for the first six months of their lives. Breastfeeding is recommended to continue after solid foods are introduced, up to 2 years of age or longer.

Mothers have the right under the Ontario Human Rights Commission to breastfeed their babies anytime, anywhere and babies have the right to feed. In Grey Bruce, 89% of mothers initiate breastfeeding but only 41% continue past 6 months. Many mothers discontinue because they do not feel supported by their community and they may be overwhelmed by negative attitudes and opinions surrounding public breastfeeding. Breastfeeding mothers need support.

I encourage you to make your establishment Breastfeeding Friendly and display the “**You are Welcome to Breastfeed Anywhere,Anytime**” sign. The attached information will tell you how.

Sincerely,

**Thank you for supporting breastfeeding**

**Working towards a Breastfeeding Friendly Community** For more information please visit, [publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Infants/Breastfeeding](http://publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Infants/Breastfeeding)



## Working towards a Breastfeeding Friendly Community

### Stay in step with your competition by becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Business

Businesses across Canada are broadening their appeal. They are taking steps to help breastfeeding mothers feel welcome and secure, by:

- ✔ developing a welcoming and supportive social environment
- ✔ promoting Breastfeeding Friendly practices amongst staff and customers

As a business owner or manager in Grey Bruce, it's up to you to lead the way. So take action, and get involved. Join the growing number of businesses that openly welcome breastfeeding mothers.

### How to become a Breastfeeding Friendly Business!

1. Visit [www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Infants/Breastfeeding](http://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/Your-Health/Child-and-Family-Health/Infants/Breastfeeding)

2. Download and print the following materials:

- ✔ **Breastfeeding Friendly Business Sign:** Please post at least one sign in your business. Consider posting additional signs at your entrance, cash, and reception and on your menus and flyers. By posting signs you are working towards normalizing breastfeeding in Grey Bruce and showing your customers that you care.
- ✔ **Breastfeeding Friendly Business Toolkit:** Leave the toolkit in a place where it is accessible to all staff.
- ✔ **Staff Training Poster:** Post this poster in an area accessible by all staff members; train your staff; talk with them about how to create a supportive environment; encourage them to tell mothers with babies that they are welcome to feed and care for their babies in your business if they wish.

Create a supportive environment for customers. Every establishment is different. It is understood that most businesses cannot create a room specifically for breastfeeding and this is not necessary. Supporting breastfeeding families means they are welcome to breastfeed anytime, anywhere. Talk to your staff – they may have great ideas about how you can create a more Breastfeeding Friendly environment for your clients.

**Thank you for supporting breastfeeding**





*June 2017*