10 Ways to Create and Promote a Breastfeeding Friendly Environment in Your Child Care Center

1. Encourage breastfeeding mothers to continue to breastfeed when they return to work or school:
   ✓ Tell them about the benefits of breastfeeding and that you and your center support breastfeeding;
   ✓ Respect parents’ wishes to feed their infant breastmilk and do not feed the infant formula;
   ✓ Put mothers in touch with support groups and other breastfeeding mothers who are returning to work;
   ✓ Provide information on current federal and state breastfeeding laws in the workplace;
   ✓ Promote your child care center as breastfeeding friendly! Post a “Breastfeeding Is Welcome Here” sign.

2. Create a breastfeeding policy at your child care center to support the health of mothers and infants. This could include:
   ✓ Training staff to provide breastfeeding information to families;
   ✓ Develop protocols on the handling and storage of breastmilk;
   ✓ Provide a quiet space for mothers to express breastmilk in your center;
   ✓ Create a culturally appropriate breastfeeding environment.

3. If a mother chooses to breastfeed her infant while she is at your child care center, offer her a:
   ✓ Quiet, comfortable, clean and private place to breastfeed;
   ✓ Place to wash her hands;
   ✓ Glass or bottle of water to provide her with the fluids she needs while breastfeeding.

4. Encourage parents to try putting breastmilk into a bottle and bottle feeding their infant before coming to your child care center. It is recommended to practice giving one bottle a day at least 2 weeks before an infant starts coming to child care. Practice time with a bottle can start after the mother’s milk supply and the infant’s feeding schedule is well established. This is usually around 4 to 6 weeks.

5. Check with the infant’s parents to see if they would like you to try and time feedings so he/she is hungry when the parent picks the infant up from child care.
6. Communicate with the parent about how and what his/her infant did for the day. For example, write down how much and when he/she ate and how many wet and dirty diapers he/she had during the day.

7. Train all center staff to be supportive of breastfeeding. Provide breastfeeding information through newsletters, center policies and bulletin boards.

8. Promote breastmilk as the only food offered until the infant is 6 months of age unless otherwise directed by a health professional.

9. Work with health centers, community agencies and/or lactation consultants on activities and trainings related to breastfeeding/infant nutrition.

10. Safely store breastmilk at your child care center whether it is in the refrigerator or freezer.