

Ten Steps to Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care

The following Ten Steps describe ways that child care programs can provide optimal support for human milk feeding families. Below each step are specific actions to support that step.

Step 1. Have a written policy that reflects the program's commitment to promoting and supporting human milk feeding, especially exclusive human milk feeding, and share with employees and families.

- 1.1 Our program has a written policy for promoting and supporting human milk feeding, and it is regularly communicated to our staff and families.
- 1.2 Staff evaluations document a review of human milk feeding support activities.
- 1.3 Our program's human milk feeding support is part of our discussion with all potential families.

Step 2. Train and evaluate all staff in the skills to support and promote optimal infant and young child feeding.

- 2.1 All staff at our program receive training on age-appropriate infant feeding practices, including proper storage and handling of human milk.
- 2.2 All staff at our program receive training on recognizing infant hunger cues and feeding in response to these cues.
- 2.3 All staff at our program receive training on the risks and benefits of different infant feeding options.
- 2.4 All staff at our program receive training in human milk feeding protection, promotion, and support, including support of exclusive human milk feeding.

Step 3. Inform women and families about the importance of human milk feeding.

- 3.1 We provide all our families with our written policy for promoting and supporting human milk feeding.
- 3.2 Culturally appropriate educational materials on human milk feeding and the risks and benefits of different feeding options are displayed in several areas.
- 3.3 Culturally appropriate educational materials on human milk feeding and the risks and benefits of different infant feeding options are actively distributed to the families we serve.

Step 4. Provide learning and play opportunities that normalize human milk feeding for children.

- 4.1 We provide toys and books that illustrate lactating mammals and their babies, for children of all ages.
- 4.2 We discuss interactions between families and babies with children of all ages, including how they feed.

Step 5. Ensure that all human milk feeding families we serve are able to properly store and label their human milk for child care use.

- 5.1 We provide sufficient refrigerator and freezer space to accommodate all of our human milk feeding families' storage needs.
- 5.2 We instruct all human milk feeding families on the proper way to store and label human milk for child care program use, and all human milk at our program is properly labeled.
- 5.3 We discuss with all families how expressed human milk will be handled at our child care program.

Step 6. Provide a human milk feeding-friendly environment.

- 6.1 We actively invite lactating families to come to the program and chest/breast feed their child while under our care.
- 6.2 There is a clean and comfortable place in our program, other than a bathroom, for families to sit and at chest/breast feed their babies, or pump (express) milk if desired.
- 6.3 Our program displays posters and distributes materials, including photos reflecting the families we serve, that show our support of human milk feeding and demonstrate best practices.

Step 7. Support human milk feeding employees.

- 7.1 Human milk feeding employees are given appropriate breaks so that they may express milk and/or feed their child at chest/breast as needed.
- 7.2 The program provides a clean, comfortable, private place for employees to express milk and/or feed their child at chest/breast as needed.

Step 8. Ensure that each infant has a feeding plan that supports best feeding practices.

- 8.1 We develop a written feeding plan with each new family at our program, which is accessible and regularly updated.
- 8.2 Human milk feeding support is explicitly included in all feeding plans, as part of the standard form.
- 8.3 We respond to infants' hunger cues rather than feeding on a schedule, and we encourage families to feed this way at home.
- 8.4 We encourage families to introduce solid foods at a developmentally appropriate time.

Step 9. Contact and coordinate with community human milk feeding support resources; actively refer families.

- 9.1 Our program has a list of community human milk feeding resources to be used for referral.
- 9.2 Our program regularly refers families to community human milk feeding resources.
- 9.3 Our program tracks community referrals and follows up with families as needed.

Step 10. Train all staff (teaching and non-teaching) annually on the protection, promotion, and support of human milk feeding.

- 10.1 Our program has up-to-date materials on hand that include information on human milk feeding.
- 10.2 Each staff member receives at least one hour per year of continuing education on human milk feeding and human milk feeding support.
- 10.3 Our program provides a resource list, for our staff, of local lactation consultants and community providers who can answer human milk feeding questions.