

TOOL KIT

BREASTFEEDING WELCOMED HERE FOR CHILD CARE

BREASTFEEDING WELCOMED HERE

ALASKA CHILD CARE

alaskabreastfeeding.org





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Become a recognized *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* child care site

This toolkit explains how to become a recognized *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* child care site or family child care home. Being a recognized *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* site shows parents and your community that your program follows national breastfeeding and infant feeding standards. It lets everyone know that you are committed to helping families give their children the best nutritional start they can – with breast milk!

Child care sites and family child care homes that complete the ***Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* steps** will:

- Receive a ***Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* window decal** and certificate to display. This lets parents know that your program supports breastfeeding.
- Be listed on the Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition ***Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* website**. This website is promoted to parents as a source of information to find breastfeeding-friendly child care programs.





Why is breastfeeding important?

- **Breastfeeding is good for babies.** Breast milk is the perfect food for babies. Breastfeeding has many health benefits for babies, including reducing illnesses and helping them grow up at a healthy weight.
- **Breastfeeding is good for moms.** Breastfeeding strengthens the bond with her baby, lowers her risk for certain diseases, and helps speed recovery from childbirth.
- **Breastfeeding is good for child care providers.** Encouraging and supporting breastfeeding families can lead to healthier children, better daily attendance, higher parent satisfaction, and more public recognition.

Many moms start out breastfeeding, but find it difficult to continue when they return to work or school. Child care programs that support breastfeeding families allow parents to continue to breastfeed and feed their babies breast milk for as long as they want.

Exclusive Breastfeeding. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies are exclusively breastfed - babies are fed only breast milk - for the first six months. Babies should continue to be breastfed for at least the first year of life as solid foods are slowly introduced.



Steps to becoming a Breastfeeding Welcomed Here child care site:

1. Complete the Go NAPSACC Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Self-Assessment.
 - Register with Go NAPSACC at gonapsacc.org/register/program.
Use registration code: SBIDGAHG
 - Answer the questions in the Go NAPSACC Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding Self-Assessment module
2. Complete and sign the *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* Commitment Form for Child Care.
 - The form is available to download at alaskabreastfeeding.org or call (907) 269-8447 to have a hard copy mailed to you
 - The owner or director of the child care center or family child care home must sign the form
 - All commitment statements must be answered "yes"
 - Please answer all commitment statements honestly
3. Send the following to pan@alaska.gov or mail to Alaska DOH Physical Activity and Nutrition Unit, 3601 C St., Suite 722, Anchorage, AK 99503:
 - Your signed *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* Commitment Form for Child Care
 - A picture of your breastfeeding space
 - A copy of your breastfeeding policies

What is Go NAPSACC?

NAPSACC stands for Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care. Go NAPSACC is a trusted online tool that helps child care programs support children's healthy eating and physical activity.

Go NAPSACC helps child care programs see how well they meet national standards and best practices in seven areas:

- Child Nutrition
- Infant & Child Physical Activity
- Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding
- Outdoor Play & Learning
- Farm to ECE
- Screen Time
- Oral Health



Go NAPSACC helps child care providers set goals and make changes to better meet national standards. The Go NAPSACC website provides an online library of helpful videos and resources on nutrition and physical activity in the child care setting.

For more information about Go NAPSACC in Alaska, visit health.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Pages/Obesity/GoNAPSACC.

Need help with Go NAPSACC?

One-on-one coaching and resources are available to help walk you through Go NAPSACC. Learn more by emailing pan@alaska.gov or calling (907) 269-8447.

If you do not have access to a computer, call (907) 269-8447 to have a hard copy of the self-assessment mailed to you.

Reminder: Complete the Go NAPSACC "Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding" self-assessment to become a Breastfeeding Welcomed Here child care site.

Six Breastfeeding Welcomed Here Commitment Statements

The following pages explain the six commitment statements in the *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* Commitment Form for Child Care. These statements follow the standards found in *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs*, 4th ed., nrckids.org/CFOC.

1

**PROVIDE A WELCOMING
ENVIRONMENT FOR BREASTFEEDING
MOTHERS**

2

PROVIDE BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

3

**PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF**

4

**HAVE WRITTEN POLICIES THAT REFLECT
YOUR COMMITMENT TO PROMOTE
AND SUPPORT BREASTFEEDING**

5

**FOLLOW NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR
INFANT FEEDING**

6

SUPPORT BREASTFEEDING EMPLOYEES

Provide a welcoming environment for breastfeeding mothers

At a minimum, this includes:

- Allowing mothers to breastfeed at your site
- Providing a quiet and comfortable space set aside for mothers to breastfeed or express breast milk (other than a bathroom)
- Providing refrigerator and/or freezer space for all breastfeeding mothers to store expressed breast milk



Create a quiet, comfortable space for mothers to breastfeed their babies or express milk. Provide a space with some privacy. This could be a separate small room or a corner of a room separated with a curtain or a divider wall. A bathroom is not a good place for breastfeeding. The space should have an electrical outlet and comfortable seating, and a sink with running water in the room or nearby.

Provide families with refrigerator and freezer space at your site. Breast milk brought from home or expressed on site must be clearly labeled with the child's name and date it was expressed.

Other ways to provide a welcoming environment include displaying posters, brochures and other materials that promote breastfeeding. Include children's books about how mammals feed their young in your library.

The Alaska Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) has Alaska-specific breastfeeding posters available to save and print for free at <https://health.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/nutri/default.aspx>.

Reminder: Include a picture of your breastfeeding space in your *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* application packet.

Provide breastfeeding support

- Share with families the ways you support breastfeeding
- Share with families education materials about breastfeeding
- Teach families to properly store and label their expressed milk
- Link families with community organizations that provide breastfeeding support

Child care providers have a great opportunity to promote the importance of breastfeeding and to share good information to help breastfeeding families.

Let families know all the ways your site supports breastfeeding. Provide families with your breastfeeding policies at orientation and post them on your website. Provide information on breastfeeding in your newsletter or on your Facebook page.

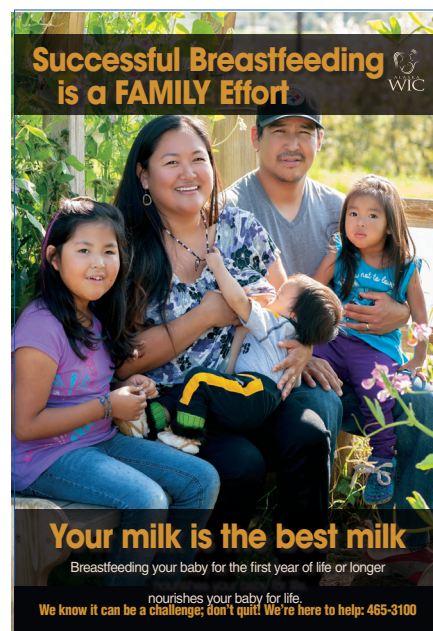
Provide families with culturally appropriate breastfeeding materials or good online resources.

Some good, free materials and websites include:

- “Your Guide to Breastfeeding,” Office on Women’s Health: www.womenshealth.gov/your-guide-to-breastfeeding
- American Academy of Pediatrics: healthychildren.org
- USDA WIC Breastfeeding Support: wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov
- La Leche League: l.li.org

Parents often need help to continue to breastfeed. An experienced, trained breastfeeding counselor, an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, or local support groups can offer valuable help. **The Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition** can connect you to resources in your area: alaskabreastfeeding.org.

Teacher and staff attitudes can also support breastfeeding families. Be sure that all teachers and staff show positive attitudes about breastfeeding and are prepared to answer parents’ questions about breastfeeding.



Provide professional development for all staff (or owner of the family child care home completes professional development) at least two times per year to promote and support breastfeeding mothers.

At a minimum, this includes:

- Training about proper storage and handling of breast milk
- Training about infant feeding and how to bottle-feed a breastfed baby
- Training on your program's policies on promoting and supporting breastfeeding (not required for family child care homes)

Owners, directors, teachers, and staff play an important role in providing a breastfeeding-friendly child care site. Training helps make your breastfeeding-friendly policies successful.

With training, staff should be able to

- Safely label, store, thaw, and warm expressed breast milk
- Recognize and respond appropriately to baby's hunger cues
- Feed expressed human-milk to breastfed babies at appropriate times
- Understand your site's written policies on promoting and supporting breastfeeding
- Share with families the benefits of breastfeeding, the breastfeeding education materials your site provides, and how to find local resources that can help breastfeeding parents

Resources for training on storing and handling breast milk:

- Caring for our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards 4.3.1.3 (nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/4.3.1.3) and 4.3.1.4 (nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/4.3.1.4)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm

Resources for other breastfeeding and infant feeding topics:

- Go NAPSACC "Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding" module at gonapsacc.org
- Child and Adult Care Food Program "Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program" at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program

Have written policies that reflect your commitment to promote and support breastfeeding

Creating a breastfeeding-friendly child care site begins with written breastfeeding policies. Written policies help teachers, staff and parents know what to expect at your site. Breastfeeding-friendly policies should address all of the *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* commitments and include at a minimum:

- A clear statement that your site welcomes and supports parents who breastfeed their babies
- A statement that your site provides a comfortable space for breastfeeding or expressing milk and refrigerator and/or freezer space to store expressed breast milk
- A commitment to provide families with education materials on breastfeeding
- A commitment to train all staff (or complete professional development for owner of the family child care home) on the skills needed to support breastfeeding
- A commitment to follow the national standards for breastfeeding and infant feeding from the *Caring for Our Children National Health and Safety Performance Standards, Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 4th ed.*
- A clear statement that your site supports breastfeeding employees (not required for family child care homes, unless there is more than one employee)

Reminder: Include a copy of your breastfeeding policies in your Breastfeeding Welcomed Here application packet.

Follow national standards* for infant feeding

At a minimum, this includes:

- Feeding infants on cue, not on a schedule
- Developing a breastfeeding-friendly infant feeding plan with each family
- Ensuring breastfed babies do not receive food or drink, other than their mother's breast milk, unless indicated in the feeding plan

Feeding on cue means responding to early signs of hunger that come before the baby starts crying. Signs that a **baby is hungry** include:

- moving fists to mouth
- waking or tossing
- making sucking noises
- opening and closing their mouth
- rooting (when a baby turns toward your hand if you stroke their cheek or mouth)

Signs that **baby is full** include:

- slowing or stopping sucking
- pushing or arching away
- turning away from the nipple
- falling asleep

Feed babies according to their hunger and fullness signals, not on a schedule.

Allow the baby to start and stop the feeding. Forcing babies to feed when they're not hungry or finish the bottle can lead to over-feeding and excess weight gain.

Feeding time should be positive and nurturing for the baby. Hold babies while feeding breast milk in a bottle. Look baby in the eyes and talk pleasantly. Never prop up a bottle or leave a baby alone with a bottle.





Talk with each family about a detailed feeding plan for their baby, even if they are feeding only breast milk. Breastfed babies are less likely to be given formula by mistake when you have a written plan.

Written feeding plans should include, at a minimum:

- Baby's food intolerances, allergies and preferences
- Instructions for feeding a baby who is breastfed or fed expressed milk
- Permission to feed a baby when they show they are hungry and end feedings when they show they are full
- Instructions for introducing solid foods and new foods while in child care

Do not feed babies breast milk in a bottle mixed with cereal, fruit juice or other foods unless the primary care provider provides written instruction.

Resource: *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs*, 4th ed., nrckids.org/CFOC.

Support breastfeeding employees

by providing flexible breaks and a quiet, comfortable space for breastfeeding and/or expressing breast milk

Businesses that provide time and space for employees to breastfeed or express their milk have **significant cost savings**. The benefits include fewer days of sick leave, lower health care costs, better retention of employees, and higher company loyalty.

The space available to mothers to breastfeed their children at the child care facility may also be used to support breastfeeding employees. Have a clear statement in your breastfeeding policies that your site supports breastfeeding employees.

This is not required for family child care homes unless there is more than one employee.



Need help meeting the six *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* commitments?

If you cannot honestly answer “yes” to one or more of the commitment statements, we can help! One-on-one coaching and resources are available to help you reach your goals. Learn more by emailing pan@alaska.gov or calling (907) 269-8447.

Breastfeeding and the Child and Adult Care Food Program

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides healthy meals and snacks to children and adults receiving day care. It plays a vital role in improving the quality of child care and making healthy meals more affordable for low-income families.

Child care centers and family child care homes participating in CACFP receive money for serving healthy meals that follow the United States Department of Agriculture CACFP meal patterns.

CACFP programs can receive money for meals for breastfed babies when:

- A mother directly breastfeeds her baby at the child care center or family child care home
- The family provides expressed breast milk to the child care provider for their baby
- A child care employee breastfeeds their baby on-site, as long as the baby is enrolled at the center
- A family child care home provider breastfeeds their baby on-site, as long as the baby is enrolled in CACFP and the household is eligible for CACFP

CACFP programs can receive money for meals even when the baby is taking only breast milk if individual documentation is done for that baby. While programs must maintain menus to show what foods a baby is served, child care providers do not need to record the amount of breast milk a mother directly breastfeeds her baby.

Resources:

Memo CACFP 02-2018: Feeding Infants and Meal Pattern Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers.

September 20, 2023 (www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/feeding-infants-and-meal-pattern-requirements-qas)

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Child and Adult Care Food Program: education.alaska.gov/cnp/cacfp



"Breastfeeding Welcomed Here for Child Care" is a program to help child care providers meet national standards for breastfeeding and support breastfeeding families. The Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services are working together to deliver this program.

Learn More:



Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition
alaskabreastfeeding.org



Alaska Department of Health
Physical Activity and Nutrition Unit
health.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Pages/Obesity/earlycare.aspx