

Why is Breastfeeding Important?

Health Canada recommends babies be exclusively breastfed for the first six months, and then continue to be breastfed (along with the introduction of other foods) for up to two years and beyond.

Benefits for Baby

Breastfeeding is associated with reduced:

- Infection (gastro-intestinal, respiratory, urinary tract, ear)
- Allergies
- Diabetes
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
- Obesity
- Childhood cancer
- Cardiovascular disease
- Speech and dental health problems

As well, breastfed babies have optimal brain development.

Benefits for mother

Breastfeeding reduces a mother's risk of:

- Cancer (breast, uterine, ovarian)
- Osteoporosis

As well, it contributes to a healthy weight loss after baby is born.

Benefits for the family and community

Breastfeeding saves money.

- Formula feeding costs a family an average of \$1500.00 per year.
- The Canadian Health Care System could save millions of dollars a year if more babies were breastfed.

Breastfeeding is environmentally friendly too.

Listening To Mothers

"It's wonderful as a breastfeeding mom to go into a place that is supportive of me feeding my son there. Not having glares when my son wants to eat makes it much more enjoyable. If we feel un-welcome we usually don't continue to go there."

Kaili, Summerland

"Knowing that a business is breastfeeding friendly gives me confidence that I can shop there and not be concerned about having to leave at a moment's notice when my daughter needs to be fed. I enjoy supporting those businesses that value breastfeeding and help simplify things when I am out with my kids."

Amber, Penticton

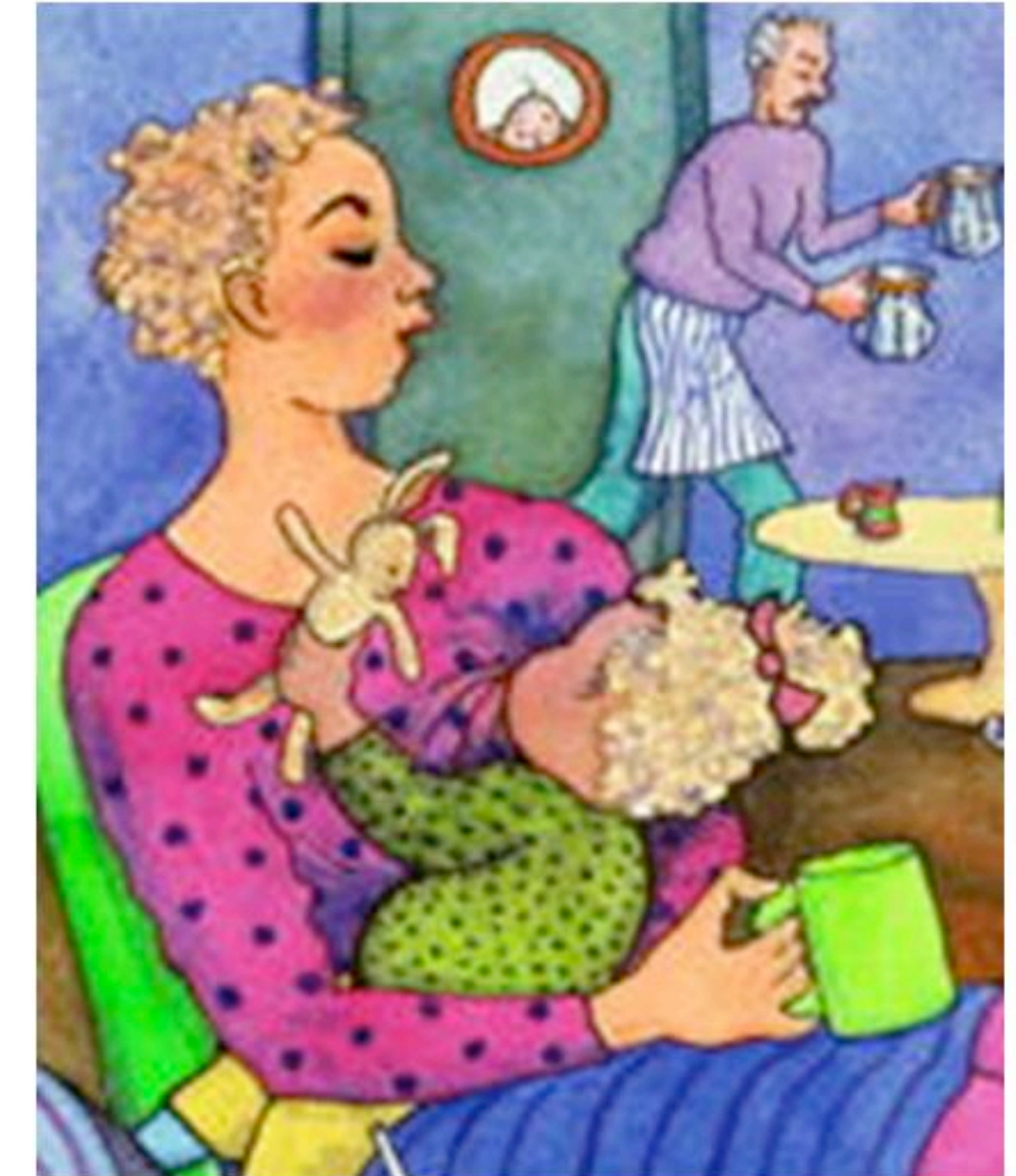
**For more information
contact us at:
www.okanaganbreastfeeding.org
or (250) 770-3419**

Okanagan Breastfeeding Coalition
Interior Health– Public Health Nursing
and Community Nutrition
Okanagan College– Childbirth Educator
La Leche League Leader
Breastfeeding Mothers
Business Owners

**Image on Cover: Courtesy of the Breastfeeding
Café: www.breastfeedingcafe.com**

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Building a Breastfeeding Friendly Community



Information for Businesses and Public Places

Opening Doors to Breastfeeding Families



Okanagan Breastfeeding Coalition

What is 'Breastfeeding Friendly'?

Breastfeeding Friendly is when breastfeeding families feel welcomed and supported to breastfeed anytime, anywhere in their community.

Why Become Breastfeeding Friendly?

- Breastfeeding families will be able to visit your establishment longer if they are able to attend to the needs of their babies. They will likely come back again if their experience is positive.
- You will be participating in a community effort that promotes optimal health for children and families.
- Knowing that your establishment welcomes breastfeeding can influence a families decision on where they choose to go on outings.

"Nursing mothers have the right to breastfeed their children in a public area, and it is discriminatory to ask them to cover up or breastfeed somewhere else." (BC Human Rights Code)

When you are identified as breastfeeding friendly you will be:

- Included in community awareness and marketing campaigns.
- Listed as "Breastfeeding Friendly" in materials offered to women and their families.
- Able to use the 'Breastfeeding Welcome Here' logo on any of your promotional materials such as websites, advertising and menus.

How to Become 'Breastfeeding Friendly'

Four Simple Steps

1. Contact the Okanagan Breastfeeding Coalition.

Visit our Website:
www.okanaganbreastfeeding.org
or call us at (250) 770-3419 to register.

2. Review the policy and check list and inform your staff.

Place the breastfeeding friendly policy in your employee manual or post it for staff to review.

3. Create a welcoming atmosphere.

Families should feel welcomed to breastfeed without being asked to cover up or move to the restroom.

4. Display sticker.

Place the 'Breastfeeding Welcome Here' sticker at the entrance to your establishment.



This is an easy process and we are here to help!

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is 'Breastfeeding Friendly' even necessary?

Almost 95% of South Okanagan mothers start breastfeeding their newborns but less than 1/3 continue for the recommended duration. Supportive environments are important for mothers to continue breastfeeding.

We're not 'anti-breastfeeding' why would we need to become 'Breastfeeding Friendly'?

Research has shown that mothers need to be actively welcomed to breastfeed or they may still feel self conscious. While your establishment may not discourage breastfeeding, it is beneficial for you to go one step further to welcome breastfeeding families.

What about the 'Discretion Question'?

Having a mother cover herself and her baby with a blanket only draws unwanted attention to them and can cause discomfort. Breastfeeding can happen so discretely that it is never noticed. It should be up to the mother whether she chooses to use a cover or not.

What if other people are uncomfortable? I don't want to lose business because of this.

With some carefully chosen words, it is possible to address any discomfort felt by other patrons while supporting a mother's right to breastfeed her child.

I don't want to have to renovate my space or incur any cost to become breastfeeding friendly. Is this possible?

Absolutely! Becoming 'Breastfeeding Friendly' is mostly about attitudes and ensuring staff are aware and trained on what this means. This initiative works with your existing space.