

## Why is Breastfeeding so Important?

*"Health Canada recommends babies be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months, and then continue to be breastfed (along with the introduction of other foods) for up to 2 years and beyond."*

- Breastmilk provides the best nutrition for healthy growth and development and decreases the risk of infection, allergies, diabetes, childhood cancer, heart disease and crib death.
- Mothers benefit from a decreased risk of cancer, osteoporosis and a healthier weight loss after the baby is born.

## Benefits to Breastfeeding Anywhere, Anytime!

- Healthiest Choice
- Convenient and safe
- Tailor Made
- Right temperature
- Increased Success
- Happier Baby
- Endless Supply
- No Hassles

## We want to hear from you!

Have you visited a public place that was 'breastfeeding friendly'?

Please let us know and we'll thank them for their effort and positive contributions to supporting breastfeeding families.

Have you encountered any problems with breastfeeding in public?

Please let us know and we will offer to assist the business or public place to become breastfeeding friendly.

For more information  
contact us at:  
[www.okanaganbreastfeeding.org](http://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

Image on Cover: Courtesy of the Breastfeeding  
Café: [www.breastfeedingcafe.com](http://www.breastfeedingcafe.com)

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## Building a Breastfeeding Friendly Community



### Information for Families

*Because you can breastfeed  
and still have a life!*



Okanagan Breastfeeding Coalition

## What is 'Breastfeeding Friendly'

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

- Having a comfortable place to breastfeed.
- Not being asked to breastfeed in the restroom.
- Not being asked to cover up.
- Being supportive of a mother's choice to breastfeed her child wherever they happen to be.

## Breastfeeding in Public

In order to carry out everyday activities and lead a normal life, women who are breastfeeding need to feed their babies anytime, anywhere.

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

There is no better way to increase community support for breastfeeding than by actually breastfeeding in public!

- Creates a community culture that sees breastfeeding as the normal and accepted way to feed babies.
- Influences the younger generation, who will be parents one day.

## What is the 'Breastfeeding Friendly' Community' Initiative

Public places such as restaurants, retail stores, community centers and libraries are encouraged to adopt a 'Breastfeeding Friendly' Policy.

Public places that are involved with this initiative make the following commitments:

- Sign a letter of intention to protect your right to feed your baby whenever and wherever you need to in their space.
- The staff involved understand what 'breastfeeding friendly' means and are prepared to offer a welcoming attitude and environment.
- Display a "Breastfeeding Welcome Here" sticker at their public entrance to identify their place as Breastfeeding Friendly.

A list of participating public places is available at your local health unit and at our website: [www.okanaganbreastfeeding.org](http://www.okanaganbreastfeeding.org)



**Look for this sticker on your outings!**

## What if I'm Uncomfortable Breastfeeding in Public?

Some women feel comfortable and confident right from the start. For others, it takes a little practice. Here are some tips:

- Get comfortable breastfeeding in private first. Start with family and friends present in the comfort of your home.
- Practice in front of a mirror—you'll see that it can be done without drawing attention to yourself.
- Begin by breastfeeding in public places that are welcoming.
- Attend a group for mothers in your community. You will enjoy the support and learn from other breastfeeding mothers. Contact your local health unit for a list of groups in your community.

*"It's wonderful as a breastfeeding mom to go into a business 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 unwelcome in a place we usually don't continue to go there."*

Kaili, Summerland

*"Knowing that a place is breastfeeding friendly gives me confidence that I can go there and not be concerned about having to leave at a moment's notice when my daughter needs to be fed"*

Amber, Penticton