

10 Steps to a Breastfeeding-Friendly Community Self-Assessment

Step 1. Government - Policy Proclamation

The community's elected or appointed leadership has a written statement supporting breastfeeding that is routinely communicated to all.

Step 2. Welcoming Atmosphere

The community as a whole provides a welcoming atmosphere for chest/breastfeeding families.

Step 3. Health Leadership

Optimal chest/breastfeeding is supported by health leadership.

Step 4. Pregnant Families Informed

Community educates family members during pregnancy and encourages them to support the new parent as they return to work or school and throughout their chest/breastfeeding journey.

Step 5. Breastfeeding Friendly Health Care

Health care in the community is breastfeeding-friendly.

Step 6. Community Lactation Support

Community lactation support groups and services are fully available, including peer-to-peer lactation support providers, International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs), and other skilled lactation support.

Step 7: Breastfeeding Friendly Businesses

The businesses and organizations in the community welcome chest/breastfeeding families.

Step 8: Adherence to the Code of Marketing

Local businesses and healthcare clinics/offices follow the principles of The International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes.

Step 9: Business Case for Breastfeeding Promoted

Business Case for Breastfeeding is promulgated by the government and the Chamber of Commerce (CoC) or equivalent.

Step 10. Educational Systems Supportive Curricula

Education systems, including childcare, K-12, colleges and universities, are encouraged to include breastfeeding-friendly curricula at all levels.

Background Definitions

- **Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding:**
Developed under the **Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI)** by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, this framework provides evidence-based clinical standards for supporting breastfeeding in maternity care settings.
 - **Ten Steps to a Breastfeeding Family Friendly Community:**
An expansion of the BFHI's Ten Steps, this framework adapts the principles to the community level. It emphasizes leadership, business and organizational engagement, public education, healthcare integration, and equitable access to lactation support so that families are supported not only in hospitals but throughout their communities.
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Step 1: Leadership Support for Breastfeeding - The community's elected or appointed leadership has a written statement supporting breastfeeding that is routinely communicated to all.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	Your community has a signed proclamation and/or policies that include action steps to support all the steps to becoming a Breastfeeding Family Friendly Community. Proclaim every 3 years. (1i)
	Your community routinely shares the signed proclamation/policies via social media and other local media outlets.
	Your community ensures that local media outlets host an annual discussion with chest/breastfeeding experts on this issue.
	Your community distributes a copy of the Ten Steps designation and the local policy/proclamation at least annually, ideally during World Breastfeeding Week or National Breastfeeding Month .

Important Links

- See the NACCHO blue print <https://www.breastfeedingcontinuityofcare.org/blueprint>
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Step 2: Welcoming Atmosphere for Breastfeeding Families - The community as a whole provides a welcoming atmosphere for chest/breastfeeding families.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	Your community has posted chest/breastfeeding “Welcome” signage next to the community’s welcome signs or in other prominent locations. (e.g., City operated parks, swimming pools, senior centers, etc.) (2i)
	Your community displays a chest/breastfeeding “Welcome” seal/logo on community websites and/or social media, or makes flyers available at visitor centers.
	Your community enforces federal or state laws that support public chest/breastfeeding.(e.g., North Carolina law states that mothers have the right to breastfeed anywhere they are legally allowed to be)

Step 3: Support from Health Leadership - Optimal chest/breastfeeding is supported by health leadership.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	The Designating Team or your local Breastfeeding Coalition identifies the health leaders in your community, such as the local health department director, WIC office director, hospital board members, or head nurse at the local hospital. (3i)
	The defined health leaders have confirmed and approved the World Health Organization's definition of optimal infant feeding, or an equivalent, and this definition has been disseminated to healthcare providers and community leaders.

Step 4: Information During Pregnancy - Support from family members can help make it easier for new parents to continue breastfeeding even after they return to work or school. This support remains an important factor for the entirety of the breastfeeding journey.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	Healthcare systems in your community distribute non-commercial materials about the benefits of chest/breastfeeding and the risks of unnecessary formula use to faith-based and community organizations (4i)
	Community-based organizations distribute non-commercial materials about the benefits of chest/breastfeeding and the risks of unnecessary formula use.
	Distributed materials are culturally appropriate and reflective of the population served.
	Distributed materials include information on where to access chest/breastfeeding support as needed.

Step 5: Breastfeeding-Friendly Healthcare - Health care in the community is breastfeeding-friendly.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	All maternity care centers in your community are designated Baby-Friendly or hold an equivalent state-level designation that supports chest/breastfeeding . (5i)
	At least 50% of prenatal and postnatal outpatient care clinics in your community have applied for or documented breastfeeding-friendly support and training.

Step 6 Availability of Lactation Support - Community lactation support groups and services are fully available, including peer-to-peer lactation support providers, International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs), and other skilled lactation support.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	Your community has established or confirmed the availability of active chest/breastfeeding support groups . (6i)
	Your community has established or confirmed the availability of Lactation Consultants: International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs) and other skilled lactation support services.
	Make a comprehensive resource list of the lactation support (support groups, IBCLCs, classes, etc) in your community.
	Special attention is given to ensuring that lactation support services meet the needs of marginalized and underserved communities.
	At least one in-person or virtual meeting has been held annually to coordinate chest/breastfeeding support efforts in your community.
	Your community has communicated information about available lactation support services to the public at least once annually.

Step 7: Welcoming Businesses and Organizations - The businesses and organizations in the community welcome chest/breastfeeding families.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	Your community has calculated the number of businesses needed to meet the Breastfeeding Family Friendly Community requirement: X (Total population / 500). (7i) Example: For a population of 300,000 people, the calculation would be: $300,000 \div 500 = 600$. This means at least 600 businesses should sign a form stating they welcome chest/breastfeeding in their place of business and display welcome signs or a “Breastfeeding Welcome” logo.
	At least one business for every 500 people in your community has signed a form stating they welcome chest/breastfeeding in their place of business.
	These businesses display welcome signs or a “Breastfeeding Welcome” logo.

Step 8: Adherence to the Code of Marketing - Local businesses and healthcare clinics/offices follow the principles of The International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	Healthcare facilities in your community provide chest/breastfeeding education and support to parents without promoting commercial infant formula through ads or free samples.(8i)
	Locally-controlled grocery stores in your community do not promote commercial infant or related toddler formula through preferential shelf placement or ads.
	Locally-controlled food markets and convenience stores in your community do not promote commercial infant or related toddler formula through preferential shelf placement or ads.
	Locally-controlled pharmacies in your community do not promote commercial infant or related toddler formula through preferential shelf placement or ads.
	Non-locally controlled grocery stores, food markets, convenience stores, and pharmacies in your community are encouraged to display lactation support information near infant formula/foods and to prevent local advertising of formula.

Step 9: Workplace Accommodation for Lactating Employees - Business Case for Breastfeeding is promulgated by the government and the Chamber of Commerce (CoC) or equivalent.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	The current state of the laws concerning mandated business support for chest/breastfeeding is made available to all Chamber of Commerce members, similar business groups, and other businesses (e.g., U.S. Dept. of labor materials provided by local chest/breastfeeding organization or health department) annually .(9i)
	The Chamber of Commerce, or a similar organization, disseminates the US Business Case for Breastfeeding, WABA maternity care , or equivalent materials annually .

Step 10: Education Systems Include Breastfeeding in Curriculum - Education systems, including childcare, K-12, colleges and universities, are encouraged to include breastfeeding-friendly curricula at all levels.

(Y/N) or (1-10)	Measure
	The local School District or Department of Education provides books and/or images that illustrate chest/breastfeeding as the norm.(10i)
	Chest/breastfeeding-friendly curricula are introduced at all levels of education.
	Your community's preschools and early education centers include chest/breastfeeding-friendly curricula in their programs.
	Your public school system has introduced chest/breastfeeding-friendly curricula at all educational levels.
	Universities in your community include chest/breastfeeding-friendly curricula in relevant courses or programs.

Looking for Guidance or Support?

All the information you need to implement the 10 Steps is available on the [Breastfeeding Communities website](#). If you would like support in areas such as writing your first meeting agenda, developing a 1-year strategic plan, and assistance with overcoming challenges in a sustainable way, Breastfeeding Family Friendly Communities (BFFC) can help.



What BFFC Can Provide:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community awareness tools • Stakeholder engagement strategies • Collective impact trainings to build capacity • Strategies to build supportive community • Advocacy engagement assistance • Networking hub with other communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-design materials for distribution • Provide child care curriculum bundles • Technical assistance for building an impactful digital presence • Event organization assistance & event promotional materials • Self-appraisal tools & progress measures
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For groups entirely made up of parents and members of nonprofits, we offer 3 - 5 hours of free consulting. Other groups, please reach out for our rates.

Contact us at Contact@BreastfeedingCommunities.org for a needs assessment.