

Breastfeeding Family Friendly Communities

FOR A MORE BREASTFEEDING, CHESTFEEDING, & HUMAN MILK FEEDING FAMILY-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY



BROADENS THE COMMUNITY SCOPE OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) AND UNICEF GUIDELINES USING A COMMUNITY BASED APPROACH



Health Equity

Envision a world in which parents, families, and babies leverage their expertise by transforming systems in order to live full and healthy lives.



Remove Social Barriers

Work to remove social and community pressures and barriers to create a healthier, more welcoming community for breast/chestfeeding and human milk feeding families.



Racial and Gender Equity

Unapologetically committed to racial and gender equity, BFFC developed as a community initiative to recognize and support the lactation goals of families in all areas of community life.



Bring Together Diverse Group

Bring together a diverse group of organizations, agencies, and community members to focus on the gaps in lactation, supporting all areas of community life from government to healthcare, community lactation support to faith based programs, businesses to education.



Policy System Change

Use the "Ten Steps" as a system to promote Policy, System, and Environmental changes that reach those who have been historically marginalized and as an equity lens to carry out all components of the initiative.



Set High Expectations

Expect healthcare leadership and providers to promote and provide education on optimal infant feeding practices with all families, especially those who have been marginalized, ignored, or denied breast/chestfeeding support and resources.



Innovative strategies

Nurture a more chest/breastfeeding family friendly community through innovative strategies, as an integral part of the First Food Equity Movement.



Supporting Local Communities

Support communities and community members to come together and create a local BFFC Designation Team that leads the community in satisfying the requirements of the Ten Steps to a Breastfeeding Family Friendly Community.



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The Breastfeeding Family Friendly Community (BFFC) Ten Steps Designation signifies that the community has made real strides to support all chestfeeding/breastfeeding families to succeed in their infant feeding goals for the health of the child, family, and community.

Step 1. The community's elected or appointed leadership has a written statement supporting breastfeeding that is routinely communicated to all.

- **Written Policy/Proclamation:** Supports all ten steps, Share on media, Discuss annually, Distribute widely
- **Ensure Family Voices Are Part of the Leadership Decision Making:** Integral part of community decision making

Step 2. The community as a whole provides a welcoming atmosphere to chest/breastfeeding families.

- **Display Signage:** Install "Breastfeeding Welcome" signs at community gathering places, visitors bureau, social media.
- **Train First Responders:** Breast, chest, and human milk feeding carried out wherever the parent is lawfully allowed to be.

Step 3. Optimal chest/breastfeeding is supported by health leadership.

- **Engage Healthcare Leaders:** Ensure understanding of optimal infant feeding.
- Initiate within the first hour of birth, exclusive for the first 6 months, after 6 months, safe and adequate complementary foods while continuing to chest/breastfeed for up to 2 years and beyond.

Step 4. During pregnancy, all families in the community are informed about the benefits of chest/breastfeeding, as well as about the risks of unnecessary formula use, and where to access support as needed.

- **Culturally Competent Healthcare:** Culturally appropriate non-commercial materials distributed through community, i.e. health providers, social organizations, faith-based groups, community-based groups, local grocery stores, local pharmacies

Step 5. Health care in the community is breastfeeding-friendly.

- **Ensure Family-Friendly Healthcare:** Perinatal care centers, clinics, and offices, Well trained healthcare personnel, Family friendly dentist chiropractors and other health professions

Step 6. Community chest/breastfeeding support groups and lactation services are fully available.

- **Collaborative Lactation Support:** Regular communication between professionals, Examining and addressing gaps in care, Robust partnerships

Step 7. The businesses and social organizations in the community welcome chest/breastfeeding families.

- **Families Feel Comfortable:** Businesses go beyond the legal requirements and now are welcoming families, i.e. pledges, resources, signage, recognition programs

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

- **Follow the Code of Marketing:** Healthcare facilities, local grocery stores, and local pharmacies will not promote commercial infant or related toddler formula through ads or samples.

Step 9. The US Business Case for Breastfeeding is promulgated by local government and the Chamber of Commerce or equivalent.

- **Protect and support lactating employees:** Workplace accommodation, break time, a private space to express milk. Share State and Federal laws. Involve Chamber of Commerce.

Step 10. Education systems, including childcare, K-12, colleges and universities, are encouraged to include chest/breastfeeding-friendly curricula at all levels.

- **Normalize lactation in education:** To become the normative behavior, people of all ages should be exposed to chest/breastfeeding as part of all health and family education.

See the website for a complete list of measures and suggested approaches. Breastfeeding Family Friendly Communities and the Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute. Ten Steps to a Breastfeeding Family Friendly Community. Chapel Hill (NC): Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute, UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; 2023.



GILLINGS SCHOOL OF GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH
Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute



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