

Breastfeeding Friendly Business

A Tool Kit



Alimentation
juste



justfood.ca/bfb

Breastfeeding Friendly Business (BFB)



Contents

Welcome

Thank you for becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Business	2
About the Just Food Breastfeeding Friendly Business Project	3
Acknowledgements	3
The Benefits of Breastfeeding	4
Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Place for Your Client	
Breastfeeding Friendly Spaces and Business	5
Management Tips for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business for Clients	6

Resources

Sign: Breastfeeding Friendly	7
Poster: Staff Tips for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business	8
More Information and Support	9

Congratulations on being a progressive leader in recognizing the importance of supporting breastfeeding families in Ottawa!



Thank you for becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Business

By choosing to develop an atmosphere that supports breastfeeding mothers and families within your business, you are helping to remove barriers that can influence a woman's decision to begin and/or continue breastfeeding.

How to participate in the Breastfeeding Friendly Business Project

1. Print the following materials from this kit or download and print from www.justfood.ca/bfb:

- **Breastfeeding Friendly Business Signs:** Please post at least one sign in your business. Consider posting additional signs at your entrance, cash, and reception and on your menus and flyers. By posting signs you are working towards normalizing breastfeeding in Ottawa and showing your customers that you care.
- **This Breastfeeding Friendly Business Toolkit:** Leave the toolkit in a place where it is accessible to all staff.
- **Staff Tips Poster:** Post this poster in an area accessible by all staff members; Train your staff; Talk with them about how to create a supportive environment; encourage staff to tell mothers with babies that they are welcome to breastfeed in your business if they wish.

2. Create a supportive environment for customers. Every business is different. It is understood that most businesses cannot create a room specifically for breastfeeding and this is not necessary. Supporting breastfeeding families means they are welcome to breastfeed anytime, anywhere. Talk to your staff – they may have great ideas about how you can create a more breastfeeding friendly environment for your clients.



About the Just Food Breastfeeding Friendly Business Project

The Just Food Breastfeeding Friendly Project

The project is a response to one of the many actions articulated in the Ottawa Food Action Plan, which grew out of **Food For All**, a partnership project led by Just Food and the University of Ottawa, with funding from the Canadian Institute of Health Research. This 3-year project, completed in 2012, brought together community agencies, local government and over 300 residents in Ottawa to develop an Ottawa Food Action Plan and a Community Food Assessment Toolkit, in an effort to make sure that healthy food is available for everyone in Ottawa.

Working towards a breastfeeding friendly Ottawa involves creating a community where breastfeeding for health and food security is recognized, and appropriate breastfeeding supports are available.

This kit has been created to help local businesses build their knowledge about breastfeeding and provide tools to better support breastfeeding women and their families. As a result, breastfeeding will become normal practice within our community. We encourage you to publicly display the provided signs to demonstrate that you support a Breastfeeding Friendly Ottawa.

Just Food gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ministry of Ontario's Healthy Communities Grant.

This toolkit was modified from the **Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit** created by Sarah Frittenburg, 4th year Dalhousie Nursing student, in collaboration with the Lunenburg & Queens Baby-Friendly Initiative™ Committee. The intent of **Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit** is that it is to be used in the spirit of the Baby-Friendly Initiative™, in building community supports for breastfeeding families.

We thank Shelly Sawyers, Heather Buist, Erin O'Manique, Tania O'Connor, Gillian Dawson, Moe Garahan and Erika Nunes for their contributions to this project.

Just Food
March 2013

Just Food's mission is to work towards vibrant, just and sustainable food and farming systems in the Ottawa region.



The Benefits of Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding has many benefits for the baby, the mother, the community, and the employer.

The Baby

Breastfeeding provides a unique combination of nutrients and antibodies essential to a baby's health and can lower chances the child will have:

- asthma, respiratory infections, ear infections, obesity, diabetes

Breastfeeding also helps with mother-child bonding because it gives the baby time for close contact with the mother.

The Mother

Breastfeeding is also good for the mother. It lowers a woman's risk of:

- breast cancer, ovarian cancer, osteoporosis, heart disease

Commercially sold baby formulas are expensive and must be carefully prepared to avoid contamination. Breast milk is free and takes no time to prepare. As a result a mother will save money and have more time to spend with her family.

The Community

When you support breastfeeding in your business, you show the community that breastfeeding and providing a child with breast milk is important.

Breastfeeding is environmentally friendly. There is no waste from packaging, preparation or leftovers.

As a business that supports breastfeeding, you are a vital part of creating a community that supports breastfeeding.

Make it a part of our culture. Healthier people, healthier relationships, and a healthier community will be the result.



Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business for Your Client

Breastfeeding Friendly Spaces and Businesses

Breastfeeding is the normal way of providing young infants with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development. Virtually all mothers can breastfeed, provided they have accurate information, and the support of their family, the health care system and society at large.

Health Canada recommends that babies be fed only breast milk for the first six months of their lives. Breastfeeding is recommended to continue after solid foods are introduced, up to 2 years of age or longer.

Community members have identified that there is a need to support breastfeeding families who are using services in the community. Some mothers are concerned that if they breastfeed in public, it may make others feel uncomfortable. This may keep mothers away from entering businesses and may influence their decision to breastfeed at all.

The rights of breastfeeding women are protected under the Federal Labour Standards Maternity-Related Reassignments and Leave, Maternity Leave and Parental Leave (Pamphlet 5). The Ontario Human Rights Commission recognizes breastfeeding as a human right as outlined in the Policy on Discrimination Because of Pregnancy and Breastfeeding. This means that women have the right to breastfeed their babies anytime, anywhere.

We encourage you to post the **You are Welcome to Breastfeed Here** sign, also available for download on the website. Displaying a Breastfeeding Friendly Sign tells people that your business is a friendly or welcoming environment for breastfeeding families. It also tells mothers that you and your staff respect the decision to breastfeed and will do your best to support breastfeeding mothers' rights.

Management Tips for Creating A Breastfeeding Friendly Business for Clients

Business owners and managers can help a woman be more comfortable breastfeeding in her community. The following tips can help create a breastfeeding friendly place:

- Make use of the materials provided in this kit. After your employees have learned how to support breastfeeding, display the **You are Welcome to Breastfeed Here** sign to show the public that breastfeeding is welcome in your workplace.
- Make your workplace family friendly by having a place for a parent to change diapers.
- If there is room, provide a breastfeeding area for a woman who chooses to breastfeed in private. A small, clean space (separate from the bathroom) with a chair is all that is required.
- Hang **Staff Training Poster** in a central area where staff can find it and use it when needed. This poster can also be found in the resources section of this document and can be downloaded from the website here.
- Use your efforts to your advantage. Advertise your business as breastfeeding friendly. Research shows that families go to public places that are welcoming and supportive to families and breastfeeding mothers.
- Help create policies and procedures specific to your business that will help your employees support women who are breastfeeding. It is also important to support your own employees who are breastfeeding babies.
- Participate in local activities for **World Breastfeeding Week**.
Check with OPH and local breastfeeding support groups regarding local events.

See links below for contacts.

Resources

Breastfeeding Friendly Sign

Cut out and display this sign: you can download more copies at justfood.ca/bfb



You are
welcome to
breastfeed
here.

Bienvenue
aux mères
qui allaitent.

Ottawa | Public Health
Santé publique

Ontario

Just Food | Alimentation
juste

Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business



Tips for Staff

The following are some ways that you can make a mother who is breastfeeding feel more comfortable:

- ♥ Ask a woman with a baby where she would like to sit.
Allow her to pick a spot where she will be comfortable breastfeeding, if she chooses.
- ♥ Talk to her in a comfortable manner. Ask her about her baby.
- ♥ Making eye contact with a mother who is breastfeeding shows her that you are comfortable with it and that you support her.
- ♥ If a customer expresses a concern about a woman breastfeeding in public:
 - ♥ Explain that you are a Breastfeeding Friendly Business and it is your policy to support breastfeeding
 - ♥ Explain that The Ontario Human Rights Commission recognizes breastfeeding as a human right as outlined in the Policy on Discrimination Because of Pregnancy and Breastfeeding. This means that women have the right to breastfeed their babies anytime, anyplace.
 - ♥ Offer to move the concerned customer to another seat instead of offering another seat to the breastfeeding mother. This supports the fact that breastfeeding her baby is a right.

Please do not ask a nursing mother to breastfeed in the washroom.
It is uncomfortable and most mothers will find it disturbing and offensive.



To learn more, visit justfood.ca/bfb

For more Information and Support

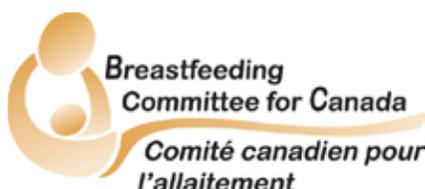
Ontario Human Rights Commission

ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-discrimination-because-pregnancy-and-breastfeeding

ohrc.on.ca/en/pregnancy-and-breastfeeding-brochure

Free, bilingual on-line course on breastfeeding: If you are interested in learning more about breastfeeding this course is set up in an easy to access Topics format. Once you successfully complete the course, you can request a Completion Certificate.

beststart.org/courses



The **Baby-Friendly Initiative** is a world-wide program to help hospitals and community health agencies adopt best practices to protect, promote and support breastfeeding.

breastfeedingcanada.ca

Ottawa Public Health offers many supports and services to expectant and young families including Baby Express Drop-ins, Breastfeeding Support Drop ins and Ottawa Breastfeeding Buddies.

Ottawa.ca/health or call the Ottawa Public Health Information Line 613-580-6744.

La Leche League: lllc.ca

Ottawa Food Action Plan: Toward a Breastfeeding Friendly Ottawa

justfood.ca/foodactionplan/toward-a-breastfeeding-friendly-ottawa.php

