



# Welcome families to breastfeed or chestfeed **ANYTIME, ANYWHERE**

## Breastfeeding or chestfeeding is a human right

Not only is breastfeeding or chestfeeding important for the health and well-being of children, parents, families, and communities, it is a human right protected by the [BC Human Rights Code](#).

### To “make breastfeeding or chestfeeding your business,” you and your staff can:

- Create a welcoming, feeding-friendly environment for all families.
- Follow the tips below to help families feel welcome to feed anytime, anywhere.
- Be part of a positive change in your community and support the far-reaching health, social, cultural, economic and earth-friendly benefits.

## It's good for business

### A breastfeeding or chestfeeding-friendly environment has its benefits:

- It improves the service you provide, and invites visits from new and returning clients. This can bring a positive reputation to your organization.
- It is supportive of staff who have returned from parental leave who feed milk to their children – this can increase staff retention, job satisfaction, attendance and productivity.

## Helpful tips

- Be welcoming, friendly and supportive to all families.
- Display the international breastfeeding or chestfeeding symbol (shown above) in windows and on doors for the public.
- Discuss with staff why supporting breastfeeding or chestfeeding is important.
- Have an up-to-date policy that supports breastfeeding or chestfeeding and share it with all of your staff regularly.
- Offer comfortable seating or a space for families who breastfeed or chestfeed.
- Ask families where they would like to sit – allow them to choose a spot where they will be comfortable. It is not appropriate to ask a family to cover up or feed their child in a bathroom.



# Frequently asked questions

## 1. How long do families breastfeed or chestfeed for?

The internationally recommended health standard is exclusive breastfeeding or chestfeeding for the first six months. After six months, babies can continue to receive human milk along with solid foods for up to two years of age and longer. Check out [HealthLink BC: Breast/chestfeeding resources](#).

## 2. What are the laws around breastfeeding or chestfeeding in public?

In British Columbia, all families have the legal right to breastfeed or chestfeed their children in any public area. It is discriminatory to ask a family to stop breastfeeding or chestfeeding, move, or cover-up. Learn more at [Human Rights in British Columbia: Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment](#).

## 3. Why do families need to breastfeed or chestfeed in public?

Families need to be able to feed their babies responsively to meet their needs any time, anywhere. Creating breastfeeding or chestfeeding-friendly spaces allows families to actively participate in their community. This promotes the health and well-being of children, parents, families, and communities.

## 4. How can I support my staff who breastfeed or chestfeed?

Create a flexible work schedule to support staff to breastfeed or chestfeed and/or pump; and/or store their milk. Employees may need additional time on top of their regular breaks. Before their return from maternity/parental leave, have a discussion with staff about accommodating their needs. Learn more about [creating a lactation-friendly space in your workplace](#).

## 5. What will it cost my business or organization to support breastfeeding or chestfeeding?

It is free and good for business. Families just need a comfortable space to feed their babies. Families who prefer privacy may ask for a quiet, private area – it does not have to be a special place. A bathroom is not acceptable for this purpose.

## 6. How do I respond to guests who are concerned about breastfeeding or chestfeeding in public?

Show a positive attitude towards all families. Remind concerned guests that it is discriminatory to ask a family to stop breastfeeding or chestfeeding, cover up, or move somewhere else. You could offer to move the concerned guest to another area.