

# Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding



## Rationale:

Early care and education programs play an important role in providing all infants access to the varied and nutritious foods they need for healthy growth and development during their first year. Human milk is the ideal food for babies. Research overwhelmingly shows that exclusive breastfeeding for six months, and continued breastfeeding for at least a year or longer, dramatically improves health outcomes for children and their mothers. The early care and education program can help working mothers and their infants increase their breastfeeding duration by providing an environment that supports breastfeeding.

Reviewed by:

- Kathy Kachur, RD, NJ Early Care and Education Learning Collaborative (NJ ECELC) Trainer
- Florence Mojta Rotondo, IBCLC, RLC, Breastfeeding Coordinator, New Jersey WIC Services
- Mary Turbek, RN, IBCLC, New Jersey WIC Services
- Daniel Schober, Ph.D., M.P.H, Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition

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# Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Policy

{Name of Early Care and Education Center} subscribes to the following recommendations for promotion and encouragement of breastfeeding and infant feeding practices:

## Staff Behaviors

- ★ Staff members will encourage and support breastfeeding mothers to continue breastfeeding.
- ★ Caregivers/teachers should feed infants on cue unless the parent/guardian and the child's primary care provider give written instructions otherwise.
- ★ Infants should always be held for bottle feeding.
- ★ Staff members will receive professional development training on promoting and supporting breastfeeding two or more times per year.

## Center Policies

- ★ Breastfeeding mothers will have a clean, welcoming place to breastfeed or express their milk.
- ★ A refrigerator will be made available for the storage of expressed milk.
- ★ No infant is fed the expressed human milk of another infant's mother.
- ★ A mother's milk is for her child only.
- ★ Breastfeeding promotional materials will be displayed to encourage and support breastfeeding mothers. Culturally-appropriate, educational breastfeeding materials will be offered to enrolled families with infants and pregnant women.
- ★ Cow's milk is not fed to children under 1 year of age.
- ★ Formula fed infants, under 1 year of age, drink the formula recommended for them by their health care professionals.
- ★ Formula mixed with cereal, fruit juice, or any other foods will not be served unless written instructions are provided by the child's primary care provider.
- ★ Infants are not permitted to have bottles in the crib and will not be allowed to carry a bottle while standing, walking, or running around.
- ★ A plan to introduce age-appropriate solid foods (complementary foods) to infants will be made in consultation with the child's parent/guardian and primary care provider.