

POLICIES SUPPORTING BREASTFEEDING

POLICY: The child care center will support and accommodate families who wish to provide human milk for their infant.

PURPOSE: To support families in feeding their infant human milk until a minimum of 2 years of age and as long as parent and infant desire, per American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines.

Many families in the U.S. feel that their child care center is unsupportive of their desire to provide human milk for their infant.

PROCEDURE:

1. The child care center will have policies, procedures, and attitudes that support and accommodate breastfeeding/chest feeding families in providing human milk for their infant.
2. There are four main evidence-based practices associated with Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Centers:
 - a. Having a written policy on breastfeeding.
 - b. Having a suitable space within the center where mothers can breastfeed or express their milk.
 - c. Having educational materials available. For example, flyers from <https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/resources/wic-breastfeeding-support>
 - d. Resources on breastfeeding support available to parents. For example, <https://womenshealth.ucsf.edu/whrc/breastfeeding-resources-bay-area>
3. Post signs near your entrance such as "Breastfed Babies are Welcome Here" to show your support. A template is available in section L-15.
4. Infant care staff should be knowledgeable in the storage, preparation, and serving of human milk.
5. The CDC considers human milk a food, and not a bodily fluid for the purposes of storage and handling. It can be stored next to other foods in the fridge or freezer. Handling of human milk without gloves has **not** been shown to transmit HIV nor Hepatitis B, so it does not fall under the list of bodily fluids that require universal precautions such as gloves. Professionals who frequently handle human milk may choose

to wear gloves if they wish, or if site policy requires it. (Source: CDC, 2022. www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/faq/index.htm#precautions).

6. If parents ever request to breastfeed/chest feed their child on-site at the child care center, they shall be allowed to do so without being asked to stop, cover up, or leave. (California state law, Welfare and Institutions Code 11218, section 43.3 states that "a mother may breastfeed her child in any location, public or private, except the private home or residence of another, where the mother and the child are otherwise authorized to be present."
7. In the past, the AAP's guidelines used to recommend breastfeeding until at least 12 months old. As of 2022, the AAP has officially changed their guidance to firmly recommend breastfeeding for a **minimum of 2 years** and continuing to breastfeed for as long as parent and infant desires. See [AAP Recommends Longer Breastfeeding Due to Benefits](#)
8. The center shall **not** prohibit parents/legal guardians from supplying human milk after the age of 12 months old, if the parent/guardian is requesting it. A plan for accommodation should be made. Toddlers continue to benefit from human milk beyond infancy, including having less severe and less frequent illnesses. Human milk can provide one third of a toddler's nutritional requirements in the second year of life.
9. The center should have lactation accommodation policies for staff needing to express milk during the workday, in accordance with [State Law on Lactation Accommodation](#). If your staff feel supported in breastfeeding/chest feeding their own infants, this will enhance the culture of breastfeeding support for the staff, for the families you serve, and for the community.
10. Childcare providers' policies and attitudes significantly impact how long a family will breastfeed/chest feeding their infant for.

References:

[AAP 2022 Policy Statement: Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk](#)

[WHO Breastfeeding Recommendation](#)

[The State of Our Breastfeeding Friendly Childcare Programs](#)