

Be a Caregiver Who Supports the Breastfeeding Mother

Research shows that breastfeeding is best for growth and development of infants and offers many health benefits. The caregiver plays a vital role in supporting breastfeeding mothers. What can you do?

Important steps to supporting nursing mothers:

- Talk with the mother to begin to understand her ideas and goals for breastfeeding.
- Reassure breastfeeding moms that they are doing the best thing for their baby.
- Encourage them to breastfeed as long as possible.

Share and plan together:

- Meet with the mother and discuss ideas on breastfeeding
- Find resources and contacts for breastfeeding information
- Ask what you can do to support the nursing mother
- Know how to properly store and prepare breast milk
- Find out who will give the bottle of breast milk to the baby: you or the mother
- Find out if the mother wants to be called at work when the baby is hungry
- Write out the ideas that you and the mother have planned together

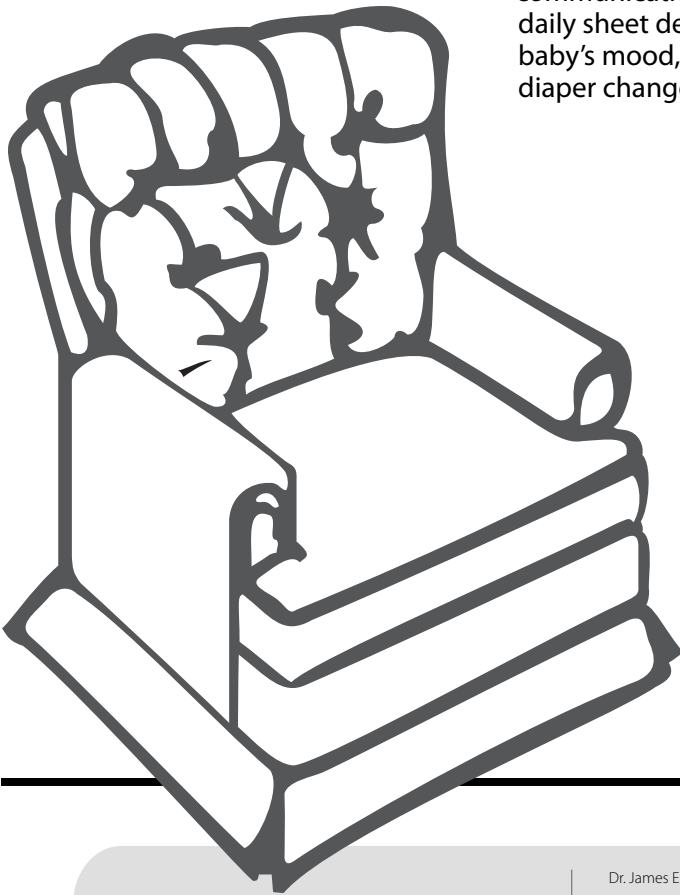
Reassure breastfeeding moms that they are doing the best thing for their baby.



Welcome mothers

It's often difficult when nursing mothers have to return to work. By supporting nursing mothers, we are relieving one of their biggest areas of stress. Consider the following ways to support nursing mothers:

- Invite mothers to breastfeed in your child care home
- Offer mothers privacy to nurse or express milk
- Offer mothers comfortable places to nurse, such as a well cushioned chair or rocking chair with arm rests or pillows
- Provide the mother with a glass of water or let her know she is welcome to bring her own food (snack, lunch, or beverage)



- Be respectful of mothers with different opinions and those from different cultures
- Ask the mother what to do if the baby is hungry shortly before she comes
- Never give a breastfed baby formula or other foods without the mother's consent
- Babies should be fed when they are hungry, not on a schedule
- Know early signs of a hungry baby: fist in mouth, lips pursed, squirming
- Know signs indicating the baby is full: releases nipple, pulls away, arches, turns head
- Develop a format to share communication, such as a daily sheet describing the baby's mood, breast milk intake, diaper changes, etc.

Communicate your needs as a caregiver

As the caregiver, you may have questions for the breastfeeding mother. Write down any questions ahead of time so you remember to discuss them with the mother. Here are some ideas to discuss with the nursing mother:

- Will the baby be using a bottle at all?
- Who will be giving the baby the bottle of breast milk? Are other family members permitted?
- How much breast milk does the baby normally take at a time?
- Discuss options for a small amount of extra breast milk to be stored in case the baby is still hungry
- How does the baby like to be held?
- Find out what the mother wants you to do if she cannot make it to nurse or any other unusual situation
- Is there any health information you should be aware of?

Tip: Offer the nursing mother the choice to nurse her child before going home for the day. This may provide a comforting reunion for the child and mother and make the transition to go home smooth and relaxing

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