



## Care Provider's Information

### *Breastfeeding Support in Childcare Centers*

Most mothers today choose to give their infants the healthiest start in life possible by breastfeeding. Thanks to abundant research, all major health organizations promote breastfeeding as the optimal form of infant and young child nutrition, and call on local communities to provide the support new mothers need to be successful. The breastfeeding rates in Vermont are increasing, and new mothers are seeking childcare centers that will support their efforts.

#### *What can you do to protect and support breastfeeding in your facility?*

- ♥ Establish a supportive breastfeeding policy and be sure that all staff are aware of and follow the policy.
- ♥ Provide training for your staff in proper handling and storage of human milk.
- ♥ Provide positive breastfeeding promotion messages in the center. Loving Support posters are available from the Department of Health.
- ♥ Set aside a place for mothers to breastfeed or pump their milk for infants in privacy (if desired). Make it clear to mothers, staff and other parents that a mother may breastfeed her child wherever she and her child have a legal right to be (established by Vermont Act 117.)
- ♥ Encourage expectant mothers to breastfeed by making information available, including community resources\*. Help mothers connect with other mothers who have successfully combined breastfeeding and working.
- ♥ Provide recognition and encouragement to mothers who choose to breastfeed.
- ♥ Recognize that mothers may have strong feelings about continuing to breastfeed when they are separated from their babies. The knowledge that you support their decision to breastfeed may increase their confidence in you as their childcare provider and translate in to positive community recognition for you.

\* Available from the Vermont Department of Health "Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Project" website at [www.breastfeedvermont.info](http://www.breastfeedvermont.info)

