

Breastfeeding-Friendly Communities

This booklet outlines for local governments the essential health values breastfeeding mothers contribute to community wellbeing: food security, a strong economy, climate action and reconciliation.



Breastfeeding Benefits

Babies: Protects from infections and boosts brain development

Moms: Protects from breast cancer

Communities: Less spending on health care services

Environment: No packaging and waste

Local governments can positively influence breastfeeding rates by creating public spaces where mothers feel safe to breastfeed.

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Food Security

Food security is a priority for the BC Government – to give everyone access to affordable, nutritious and safe food.

Human milk is food, as important as food grown on farms and in community gardens.

Human milk is the easiest for infants to digest. It is nutritious and adapts to their growing needs. It protects against infectious diseases. Human milk is readily available and inexpensive.

Breastfed babies will always have a safe, clean and secure supply of food – food security at its best.





Economy

Breastfed babies have lower rates of childhood infectious diseases. This means a financial gain for families with fewer hospital visits, less time off work by parents to care for a sick child and fewer day care or school absences for these children.

Mothers who breastfeed have lower rates of breast cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Breastfeeding, compared to formula feeding, can save families \$100 to \$1,000 per month per infant. Such savings are beneficial for all families.

Climate Action

Human milk produces zero waste. Agriculture, manufacturing, transportation or packaging is not required.

A local government that supports breastfeeding is taking a positive climate action step.



**Breastfeeding
anytime, anywhere,
is eco-friendly.**





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Reconciliation

Colonialism negatively affected traditional family caregiving roles and lowered the rates of breastfeeding in Indigenous populations.

Supporting breastfeeding is an important step toward Truth and Reconciliation. Action 19 is a call to close the gap in health outcomes, including in maternal health, infant and child health and chronic diseases.

Breastfeeding correlates directly with improving all of these areas.

What Can You Do?

Recommendations for local governments

→ Please familiarize yourselves with the KCR & Interior Health Breastfeeding Journey Mapping report. The recommendations by healthcare providers and mothers express a complete picture of breastfeeding care gaps and concerns before birth, while in hospital, back home and in the community.



www.breastfeedingchange.ca

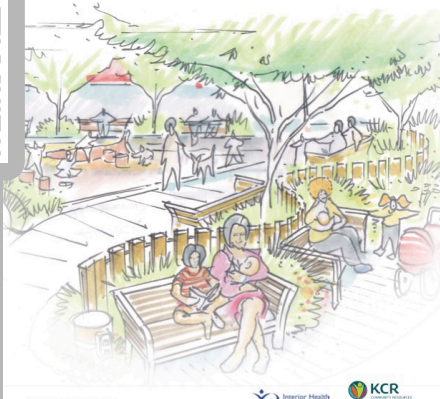
→ Review your local government policies and plans to include breastfeeding.

→ Adopt additional policy to support the British Columbia Human Rights Code which states that mothers have the right to breastfeed their baby, when and where they choose. It is discriminatory to ask a woman to cover up or breastfeed somewhere else.



Breastfeeding-Friendly Public Spaces

A TOOLKIT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



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Interior Health

KCR
Kamloops Community Resources

For more information on implementing resolutions, bylaws, and policies to normalize and support breastfeeding:

- Meet with your local Interior Health – Healthy Community Development (HCD) team members.
- Read the Comprehensive Toolkit for Local Governments – Coming in November 2023. A link to the Toolkit will be provided in the Interior Health Healthy Communities Newsletter. It will also be posted at www.breastfeedingchange.ca.



References

Front Cover

Breastfeeding Journey Mapping Report, 2020. Interior Health and KCR-Community Resources, page 40.

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1. Food Security

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2. Economy

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3. Climate Action

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4. Reconciliation

At the edges of embodiment: Determinants of breastfeeding for first nations women, 2013. *Breastfeeding Medicine*, 9(4), R. Eni et al.

Rediscovering empowerment with breastfeeding in an urban First Nation’s population, 2019. *BMC Pregnancy Childbirth*, 15, 509, D. Schroeder et al.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015. See pages 18 and 19, calls to close the gaps in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in Canada.

What Can You Do?

British Columbia Human Rights Code, Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment, 2016.