

## **Simple Ways to Support Breastfeeding Mothers**

Breastfeeding is the natural, normal way to provide optimal nutritional, immunological, and emotional nurturing for the growth and development of infants (and children). It is not that breastfeeding builds stronger, healthier and smarter babies. They are NORMAL! Babies who are fed artificial baby milk are at a disadvantage because formula is NOT equal to breastmilk in terms of nutrients, enzymes, growth factors, hormones, immunological and anti-inflammatory properties or in infant growth and developmental outcomes.

As breastfeeding is the normal way to feed babies, it should not be something that needs to be hidden or that mothers who choose to breastfeed in public should be ashamed of. Everyone in the community should embrace breastfeeding moms and support them, as it is also the community that benefits from this important choice. Breastfeeding:

- Builds NORMALLY healthy babies
- Reduces health care costs and saves tax dollars
- Is environmentally friendly (and always has been!)
- In public is protected by BC's Human Rights Code
- Is started by 92% of mothers on Vancouver Island

Actions that undermine breastfeeding are often based on misinformation and misunderstanding. Education and discussion is the key to shifting attitudes and beliefs around breastfeeding! It's easy to believe that the impact of one person is too small to make a difference in the scheme of things. However, the power of "one" is strong, and when one determined individual networks with others championing similar agendas, change happens. **You can make a difference!**

***Here's a list of some simple things you can do to promote breastfeeding in your community.***

- **Smile** at every mother you see breastfeeding.
- **Thank** the management of restaurants, stores and public places that treat breastfeeding mothers and babies respectfully.

- **Check** that your favourite businesses are supportive of breastfeeding mothers.
- **Look** around your **health care waiting room** to see if there are breastfeeding materials. If infant formula manufacturers produce them, these materials send a mixed message to new parents. Share your concerns with your health care provider.
- Look at the health, nutrition and childcare materials offered by your **school district** to see if breastfeeding is included. Suggest to the school board, principals and teachers of relevant classes that accurate information on breastfeeding is important to future parents.
- **Join others** in your community in the celebration of World Breastfeeding Week, held annually October 1-7. Look for local activities and events in which to participate (or even volunteer!), like the 2008 Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge!

The purpose of The Challenge is to celebrate breastfeeding and show support for breastfeeding women and their families. 2008's Challenge is the first ever global synchronized breastfeeding event to set a world record for most babies nursing simultaneously.

***Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge 2008***

**SilverCity Victoria at Tillicum Centre**

**October 11, 2008**

**Doors open: 10 am**

**Latch-on count: 11 am sharp**

For more information about the Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge, visit [www.babyfriendly.ca](http://www.babyfriendly.ca)

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