



Today's huddle talk is about how the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) supports the Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) and breastfeeding as a human right by ensuring our spaces are baby-friendly!

What is the BFI?

The BFI is a program that was created by UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1991.¹ It supports and protects breastfeeding in hospitals and healthcare facilities around the world.¹

Why are baby-friendly spaces important?

Breast milk provides infants with the nutrients needed for healthy growth and development. By creating supportive and baby-friendly environments for all families, there is less risk of stigma, distress and fear related to feeding in public.³ This encourages families to feed their children in ways that best suit their needs.³ It is also important to know that breastfeeding is a protected human right. Families can breastfeed freely anywhere, without being asked to cover up.²

What is the SHA's role?

The SHA strives to show respect and support every family by making our facilities baby-friendly spaces.³ It is SHA's policy to support families in feeding their children in the way that works best for them to ensure they are best able to meet their child's needs by:

- supporting breastfeeding in all public places throughout the SHA;

- protecting breastfeeding as a human right³;
- displaying the universal breastfeeding symbol or [SHA poster](#); and
- providing support for employees who wish to continue to breastfeed upon returning to work.³



If you need support to breastfeed at work, speak to your supervisor to make arrangements.

What is the role of SHA staff / volunteers?

In order to support families to safely feed and care for their infants and children in our facilities, it is essential to make our spaces baby-friendly.³

- Know where space is available (not a washroom) should families request a quiet, clean and comfortable space to be able to feed their child (or pump milk) whenever they are hungry. Other families just need our support to be able to immediately tend to their child's feeding cues by not asking them to cover up, leave, or stop feeding in public areas.
- When speaking with breastfeeding families, they may appreciate eye contact while feeding to make them feel welcome and safe.
- It is also important to acknowledge and be respectful of people's preferences regarding the various terms that individuals may use to describe themselves. Some may prefer terms like "birthing parent" instead of "mother" or "chestfeeding" instead of "breastfeeding."



What to do if there is a concern about a family feeding in public³

If there is a concern raised about a family that is feeding in public, acknowledge the concerned individual's discomfort and let them know that breastfeeding is a human right. Inform them that SHA policy is to support families in feeding their children in the way that works best for them. You can also offer to move the concerned individual to a different area. This helps create a supportive environment for the family feeding their child while affirming their right to do so. If you do have questions or need further clarification, ask your manager or supervisor.

Closing

Overall, by respecting and supporting feeding in our facilities, we make a positive impact on the emotional and physical health and well-being of parents, children, and families. All of us play a role in making sure that every family feels comfortable, respected, and supported while they are in our facilities. If you have any questions or want more information about the baby-friendly initiative, please don't hesitate to reach out and we can give you more resources.

Print and post these Staff Tips as a review of this huddle talk and for those unable to attend: [MC-G-0001 Baby-Friendly Spaces Toolkit Poster Tips for Staff - 2024.05.30.pdf](#)

Pre- or Post-Huddle Quiz

This quiz can be used to assess staff knowledge prior to or after the huddle talk.

1. I know what a baby-friendly space is.

Yes No

2. Breastfeeding/chestfeeding is allowed anywhere at any time.

True False

3. Breastfeeding is a protected human right.

True False

4. A parent has the right to breastfeed/chestfeed in public spaces without being asked to cover up or leave.

True False

5. SHA allows employees who wish to breastfeed/chestfeed after returning to work to make arrangements with their supervisor.

True False

Answers: 1. N/A 2. True 3. True 4. True 5. True

References

1. Baby-Friendly Initiative. (n.d.). Breastfeeding Committee for Canada. Retrieved November 14, 2024, from <https://breastfeedingcanada.ca/en/baby-friendly-initiative/>
2. Baby-Friendly Initiative - Clinical Resources. Saskatchewan Health Authority. (n.d.). <https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/intranet/health-provider-resources/clinical-resources/z-list-clinical-resources/maternalchildrens-health-resources/baby-friendly-initiative-clinical-resources>
3. Baby-Friendly Initiative. (n.d.). Moms & Kids Health Saskatchewan. Retrieved November 14, 2024, from <https://momsandkids.sask.saskhealthauthority.ca/pregnancy-birth-newborns/>