

UW Extension Family Living Program  
Guidelines for Providing Nutrition Education on Breastfeeding

**Purpose.** As sources of reliable nutrition and food information, Family Living Colleagues, including WNEP Coordinators and Nutrition Educators, may be providing nutrition education for pregnant women and families of newborn infants. This nutrition education should provide a framework and reinforce the message that breastfeeding is the norm for feeding almost all newborns, and include information on the benefits of breastfeeding for infants, families and society. The goal of this document is to clarify the role of Family Living colleagues in providing nutrition education for breastfeeding mothers and in support of breastfeeding, and the role to be played by other educators and health care professionals on breastfeeding support.

**Background.** Family Living colleagues provide research-based education to help people obtain optimum levels of health and fitness. People provided nutrition education may include pregnant women or women with newborns, and their families. This nutrition education should appropriately include breastfeeding as the norm for feeding newborns. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Policy Statement on Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk says:

“The American Academy of Pediatrics reaffirms its recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for about 6 months, followed by continued breastfeeding as complementary foods are introduced, with continuation of breastfeeding for 1 year or longer as mutually desired by mother and infant.”(AAP, 2012).

The WNEP program provides nutrition education through the USDA-funded Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed). The EFNEP offers nutrition education for limited income pregnant women and families with young children, to improve their dietary practices. SNAP-Ed offers nutrition education aimed at promotion of healthy eating habits and prevention of chronic disease in the SNAP and low-income population. The guidance of both programs supports the framing of breastfeeding as the norm for infant feeding, and supports activities around the promotion of breastfeeding. SNAP-Ed requires that all nutrition education related to breastfeeding be conducted in collaboration with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC). To provide such collaboration, the Family Living Programs and Wisconsin WIC have developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU, see LINK) to coordinate all nutrition education activities for WNEP and WIC eligible audiences. Based on guidance and available resources, it is necessary that Family Living and WNEP determine how this and other topics and audiences “fit” within programming priorities. In general, WIC, lactation consultants and trained health care providers can offer support for the “how-to’s” and problem-solving related to breastfeeding; Cooperative Extension colleagues offer education on the “why’s” and benefits of breastfeeding.

**Guidelines.** Support for the act of breastfeeding is not a service for which FLP colleagues (including WNEP) are trained or supported. Breastfeeding mothers requiring such support should be referred to WIC and/or their health care provider. Below are examples of the education appropriate for FLP/WNEP to provide to program participants, and the supports that should be provided by WIC or other trained health care providers:

<b>Family Living Programs Breastfeeding Education</b>	<b>WIC &amp; Other Health Care Professionals Breastfeeding Support</b>
Breastfeeding recommendations, and rationale for these recommendations	Infant latch for breastfeeding, and assessing adequacy of breast milk intake
Nutrition and health benefits of breastfeeding, for infants, families and society	Working through concerns or problems with breastfeeding, including breast pain and soreness, cracked and bleeding nipples, engorgement and infections
Food safety for handling of pumped and stored breast milk	Use of breast pumps and other techniques for expressing breast milk
Resources for support and education for breastfeeding women: includes family, healthcare providers, WIC	Information on modifications to maternal diet or supplements to the breastfeeding infant to address concerns with medical conditions such as allergy, colic, and chronic diseases
Education on recommended feeding practices for healthy infants, such as paying attention to hunger and satiety cues during feeding	Breastfeeding mothers' use of supplements and medications

### Questions?

Family Living and WNEP colleagues who can help you think about these Guidelines and how they may apply to your programming include: Beth Olson, Gayle Coleman, Shelley King-Curry and Bev Phillips.

### References.

1. The American Academy of Pediatrics, Section on Breastfeeding. Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk. Pediatrics 2012; 129:827-841. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/02/22/peds.2011-3552.full.pdf+html>
2. USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education Guidance, 3/29/2013. <http://snap.nal.usda.gov/national-snap-ed/snap-ed-plan-guidance-and-templates>
3. USDA Food and Nutrition Service. The Expanded Food Nutrition and Education Program Policies, 2013. <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/food/efnep/pdf/program-policy.pdf>

\*In rare instances, support for the act of breastfeeding might be given by a FLP colleague provided as a special-grant funded project. The FLP colleagues would be provided training and support by an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC.)

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