



# Ontario Breastfeeding Committee Newsletter February 2007

## The RNAO continues to advocate for breastfeeding support

A letter from the RNAO was delivered to the Hon. Jim Watson's constituency office, in preparation for a meeting that was held in Ottawa on Monday November 6th, 2006, with the Minister of Health Promotion.

This meeting arose in relation to the work being undertaken by RNAO in collaboration with the Ontario Breastfeeding Committee (OBC) and the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA), as part of the ongoing follow-up to Resolution 7 which passed unanimously at the 2006 RNAO AGM. This resolution calls for government action on improving the protection, support and promotion of breastfeeding in Ontario, by seeking implementation of the WHO/UNICEF Baby-Friendly Initiative provincially.

*"At its April 2006 AGM, delegates from RNAO voted unanimously to support the implementation of BFI in this province in a resolution from the Childbirth Nurses Interest Group (CNIG), the Community Health Nurses Initiatives Group (CHNIG) and the Pediatric Nurses Interest Group (PedNIG). Health departments and other health services across Ontario are actively working on implementing BFI, but recognize that government leadership, policy and investment are critical to the progress of this initiative."*

### The letter invites the Hon. Minister to

- play a key role in improving Ontario's health outcomes through improved breastfeeding rates
- work with the Ontario Breastfeeding Committee, the RNAO and the OPHA in the implementation of the policies of the *Baby-Friendly Initiative* in Ontario.

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## CLSC Samuel-de-Champlain in Brossard QC is the seventh Baby-Friendly facility in Quebec

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006 the BCC designated the fourth community health facility to receive the BFI designation. The external assessment was conducted by a team led by Ginette Belanger.

Congratulations from the members of the OBC

- Appoint a provincial Breastfeeding Coordinator with representation in each of the 14 LHINs.
- Support the inclusion of up-to-date guidelines for breastfeeding services in the current revision of the Reproductive and Child Health sections of the provincial *Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines*.

The OBC has permission to post the letter to the website:

[www.breastfeedingontario.org](http://www.breastfeedingontario.org)



## What's happening in Ontario?

**Toronto Public Health is working towards *Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) designation*** and is well positioned to advocate for exclusive and sustained breastfeeding as well as act as a catalyst for *BFI* in local hospitals. In order to determine compliance with *BFI* in Toronto hospitals and identify gaps in service, Toronto Public Health will:

- (a) assess current hospital policies, practices, professional attitudes and behaviors as they relate to breastfeeding and
- (b) survey mothers about their breastfeeding experience in hospital
- (c) gather information about exclusive breastfeeding initiation rates in hospital and exclusive breastfeeding rates at hospital discharge.

The results of these surveys will be summarized in a "Report Card on Breastfeeding in Toronto". The report card will provide baseline data and will be a useful tool for both Toronto Public Health and hospitals to determine gaps and develop strategies for action. The Board of Health is called on to advocate for provincial policy and funding support for hospitals, public health and community health services to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. Toronto Public Health will continue to champion BFI in public health services, develop a policy that affirms the right of breastfeeding mothers to breastfeed in all public places controlled by the municipality, and support Toronto hospitals to identify challenges and seek solutions.

For more information see  
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-901.pdf>

Please renew your membership and invite your colleagues to join us too! Download a membership form from the website

[www.breastfeedingontario.org](http://www.breastfeedingontario.org)



We will soon have a 'members only' section on the website with great BFI resources available.

## Peel Public Health helps restaurants to support breastfeeding.

Peel Public Health is providing restaurant owner's packaged materials to help them ensure moms are comfortable breastfeeding at a table.

This is just another of the many Peel Public Health initiatives to create and support breastfeeding-friendly public places. Advocating for breastfeeding-friendly public places is mandated as part of the core program standards from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Additionally, breastfeeding rights are protected under the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

For more information contact the Region of Peel - Public Health at  
Tel: 905-799- 7700 or visit their Web site  
[www.peelregion.ca/health](http://www.peelregion.ca/health)

## We want to hear from you!

Please send your news to  
[kventer1@cogeco.ca](mailto:kventer1@cogeco.ca)

## Step by Step, Day-by-Day...

### **Point 2. Train all health care providers in the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the breastfeeding policy.**

The focus of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative external assessment is on breastfeeding outcomes. Nurses and others providing direct breastfeeding care must be able to demonstrate certain skills and effectively teach mothers basic breastfeeding skills. As well as speaking to mothers, the assessment process involves asking specific questions of staff who offer direct breastfeeding care, observing their actions and examining breastfeeding outcomes. Physicians/midwives and other employees must be prepared to answer questions regarding protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding. Education is important to ensure successful outcomes in the assessment process. In these times of fiscal restraint, hospitals and community health services have to be creative in achieving their educational goals.

For those providing *hands on* care, UNICEF recommends a minimum of 18 hours of education including 3 hours of supervised clinical practice. The education should be appropriate to the role of the employee or health care provider. The Ten Steps represent minimum practice guidelines for hospitals and the Seven Point Plan represents minimum practice guidelines for community health services. Therefore in striving for optimal care based on best practice, the BFI provides an evidence-based beginning in the ongoing journey of providing excellent care to childbearing families. Education needs of individual institutions will vary in order to achieve expected outcomes.

Education can be provided to staff in a variety of ways including computer modules, readings, supervised clinical practice, discussion groups, focused education sessions, self-paced learning modules etc. For best results the mode of education should match the materials used.

## ...that's the Baby Friendly way"

For example the UNICEF 18 hour course, *Breastfeeding Management and Promotion in a Baby Friendly Hospital* is not a self-study module and should not be used as one. Effective implementation of policies relies not only on knowledge, but also on the attitudes of the staff. Changing attitudes, though difficult and slower than acquiring knowledge, most likely occurs when a variety of strategies are employed. For complete guidelines regarding education of staff, consult the Guidelines for WHO/UNICEF Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) in Canada, The Seven Point Plan and Practice Outcome Indicators For The Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding in Community Health Services (CHS) March 24,2004 and the Checklist: Breastfeeding Education for Hospital and Community Health Service (CHS) Employees, Physicians and Midwives.

These are available on the BCC website [www.breastfeedingcanada.ca](http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca)

### **Educating Health Visitors Increases Breastfeeding Rates**

Research from Glasgow suggests that babies who are breastfeeding at the first routine health visitor contact at 10 days are twice as likely to be breastfeeding at the second routine health visitor contact at 6 weeks if the health visitor had received training in breastfeeding in the previous two years (OR 1.74). These results remain significant after controlling for socio-economic variables. This observational study of routine practice was designed to examine the health visitor's role in supporting breastfeeding in Glasgow, one of the most deprived cities in Europe. The study is of particular interest as it describes a real life setting where health visitors are in their normal working environment, not everybody is well trained and not everybody has a positive attitude to breastfeeding.

The authors suggest that the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative 3 day course in breastfeeding management may be a suitable training course for health visitors and conclude that this important finding should be used to encourage health service managers to ensure that health professionals who come into contact with breastfeeding mothers receive adequate training.

Tappin D, Britten J, Broadfoot M, McInnes R. The effect of health visitors on breastfeeding in Glasgow. International Breastfeeding Journal 2006; 1:11  
[\[provisional abstract\]](#)

## BFI Assessment Q & A's

***Our health facility is ready to embark on the BFI process, how do we prepare a document review?***

The document review is a very important step, providing insight and determining when pre-assessment can be done. It is the opportunity to review and show-case all the work that has been done and serves as a reference both for the assessment and for reassessment later on.

Suggest you use the [BFI Indicators](#) to compile 3 binders\* with the following:

1. Completed Self Assessment tool with the Indicators and statistics.
2. BF Policy and translations
3. Staff education process with description of education courses, modules etc and tool for ensuring continuing ed.
4. Educational materials distributed to parents
5. Resources - community network for supporting bf families
6. Proof of Code compliance e.g. any freebies?
7. Anything else you have done e.g. participate in BF coalition, world breastfeeding week etc

8. Also, a cover letter requesting document review.

(There may be other important things you want to add for example a description of the breastfeeding clinic or post birth clinic – how do referrals happen, or even copies of breastfeeding care plans if you use them.)

### \* Binders:

1. 1 binder for health facility
2. 1 binder to Marina Green (Chair BCC BFI Assessment Committee)  
4138 Thames Court,  
North Vancouver, BC.V7K 3A5
3. 1 binder to Kathy Venter OBC (BCC Assessment Committee)  
8-2915 Headon Forest Drive,  
Burlington, ON L7M 3Z6

Complete guidelines for the BFI process are available on the BCC website at <http://www.breastfeedingcanada.ca/html/bfi.html>

Keep in touch with the OBC resource persons: for information and support on your journey contact:

Kathy Venter [kventer1@cogeco.ca](mailto:kventer1@cogeco.ca)  
Lori Levere [Lori.Levere@peelregion.ca](mailto:Lori.Levere@peelregion.ca)  
Hiltrud Dawson [h.dawson@beststart.org](mailto:h.dawson@beststart.org)

### **The BFHI working group is proposing a visit**

to designated BFI facilities in Quebec during the Fall of 2007. This will be a fun-filled and energizing experience, to see what "Baby Friendly" really looks like in practice and to network with colleagues traveling the same road. We will need at least 3 days for this tour.

If you or a colleague is interested in participating please contact Kathy Venter [kventer1@cogeco.ca](mailto:kventer1@cogeco.ca) before April 30<sup>th</sup>. 2007 so that arrangements can be made well in advance.

**Come and join us –it will be amazing!**

## “Breakfast “of Champions in a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace

It is no myth that breastfeeding is the natural way to feed a baby and that formula feeding can have its risks. Infants fed formula can be at a higher risk for diabetes, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), respiratory illnesses, ear infections, childhood cancer, gastrointestinal infections and diseases, and other problems such as obesity and heart disease. Moms who formula feed can also be at a higher risk of developing breast cancer and could have a slower recovery time after giving birth. Breast milk is not only the “breakfast” of champions but the “champion” of breakfasts ...and lunch, and supper, and any snack in between!

Breast milk and those who are nourished by it are not the only champions in this story. A local resident of Nipigon, Megan St. Jean, works at the local Job Connect/Superior Training & Employment Program (STEP) office. Megan recently returned to work full time at STEP after a year of maternity leave. Her determination to continue breastfeeding Jessyka, her 12 month old daughter, led her to a place she thought could only exist in her dreams.

“I had actually informed my employer that I would be returning to work part time”, says Megan, because continuing to breastfeed my baby was a top priority with me.” Little did she know that Vernon Ogima, her supervisor from YES Employment Services, would provide her with the opportunity to resume work full time and breastfeed on demand as well.



From left to right:  
Megan St. Jean (mom and Job Connect/STEP employee), holding baby Jessyka St. Jean, Karen Tamminen (caregiver) and Vernon Ogima (YES Employment)

*“We always try to accommodate our front line staff”, claims Vernon, “and in Megan’s case it meant that she could come back to work sooner, so it was a win-win situation for everyone.”*

A typical day at the STEP office for Megan includes two visits from Jessyka’s caregiver, Karen Tamminen, who delivers the one year old to her Mom when Jessyka decides it’s time to nurse. At those times when Jessyka’s caregiver is unable to whisk her over to Mom, then Megan is free to leave the office and attend to her baby’s needs.

In addition to receiving support for breastfeeding, Megan encourages other breastfeeding moms through The Breastfeeding Connection, a group that provides telephone support for breastfeeding moms. The Breastfeeding Connection was created through the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program, a program for pre and postnatal moms, that is run out of The Family Place, an Ontario Early Years Centre, in Nipigon.

*Submitted by Karin Mackenzie.*

Send your “Baby Friendly” story for inclusion in the news letter  
[kventer1@cogeco.ca](mailto:kventer1@cogeco.ca)

## OBC NOTICE BOARD

• **Save The Date!**  
A BFI Implementation Workshop is planned for May 11<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Thunder Bay where the first BFI designated Community Health Service in Ontario is located!  
Register by April 20<sup>th</sup>. 2007

• The Ontario Baby Friendly Initiative in Community Health Services (Ont. BFI in CHS) has been formed to create opportunities for representatives of community health services to share and problem solve various aspects of implementing the *7-Point Plan* in their local health service agencies to meet the goals for BFI.

**Next Meeting Monday June 4, 2007  
starting at 8:45 a.m.  
by teleconference.**

For more information contact Hannele at  
Telephone (705) 942-3103 ext 244  
Fax (705) 541-7308  
[Hannele\\_Dionisi@ahu.on.ca](mailto:Hannele_Dionisi@ahu.on.ca)

• **BFI questions?** Contact the OBC for information and support. We have a strong group of resource people who would be happy to assist you on your journey.

Contact  
[Lori.Levere@peelregion.ca](mailto:Lori.Levere@peelregion.ca)  
[Kventer1@cogeco.ca](mailto:Kventer1@cogeco.ca) or  
[h.dawson@beststart.org](mailto:h.dawson@beststart.org)

• The new BFI poster is available from Thunder Bay and District Health Unit:

Display one in your facility to get folks thinking about what "Baby Friendly" means. The posters will be distributed by OBC for a nominal fee.

For information contact  
Donna at [donnaz39@cogeco.ca](mailto:donnaz39@cogeco.ca)  
Or Laura at [laura.prodanyk@tbdhu.com](mailto:laura.prodanyk@tbdhu.com)

The Ontario Baby Friendly *Hospital* group extends an invitation to network with other hospitals working on BFI:

This group meets to network and share strategies for implementation of the Baby Friendly (Hospital) Initiative.

**The Next Meeting is**  
Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup> 2007  
9 – 11 am

**By Teleconference**

For more information contact  
Kathy Venter [kventer1@cogeco.ca](mailto:kventer1@cogeco.ca) or  
Hiltrud Dawson [h.dawson@beststart.org](mailto:h.dawson@beststart.org)

### Revised BFHI Resources

• **Breastfeeding Promotion and Support in a Baby-friendly Hospital, a 20-hour course for maternity staff**

This course replaces the "18-Hour Course". Can be used by facilities to strengthen the knowledge and skills of their staff towards successful implementation of the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding and the International Code of Marketing. (Link below.)

[3.1 Guidelines for Course Facilitators including a Course Planning Checklist \[pdf 256kb\]](#)  
[3.2 Outlines of Course Sessions \[pdf 1.5Mb\]](#)  
[3.3 PowerPoint Slides for the Course \[ppt 2.8Mb\]](#)