



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Bryna Warshawsky, Acting Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2013 April 18

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## **BREASTFEEDING VIDEOS**

### ***Recommendation***

*It is recommended that Report No. 046-13 re “Breastfeeding Videos” be received for information.*

### **Key Points**

- Breastfeeding promotes optimal nutritional, immunological and emotional benefits for the growth and development of infants. The World Health Organization recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life with continued breastfeeding and appropriate complementary foods up to two years of age and beyond.
- In an effort to enhance the quality of information and support that is available to new breastfeeding mothers, the Early Years Team has embarked on an initiative to produce a series of breastfeeding videos. Three videos have been produced in 2012.

### **Background**

Breastfeeding provides optimal nutritional, immunological and emotional benefits for the growth and development of infants. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life with continued breastfeeding and appropriate complementary foods up to two years of age and beyond. Literature suggests breastfeeding initiation rates are relatively high; however, the rate of exclusive breastfeeding at six months is dramatically lower. In part, this can be related to a mother’s lack of confidence in her ability to produce enough breast milk. A mother’s self-confidence to breastfeed is positively associated with and predictive of breastfeeding duration. Confidence and self-efficacy is enhanced as mothers understand the principles of breastfeeding and develop problem solving abilities that enable continued breastfeeding.

### **Public Health Nurses Support Breastfeeding**

Public Health Nurses are in a unique position to provide a combination of support, reassurance, teaching of breastfeeding techniques, and information to help mothers. It is not purely about what information is provided, rather it is how the information is delivered that is often most significant. Mothers need to feel confident in their ability to meet their infants’ nutritional needs through breastfeeding and need to be able to access information in multiple ways. The Early Years Team provides education and support through a variety of strategies that include Well Baby/Child and Breastfeeding Clinics, telephone counseling through the Health Connection and Infantline, ‘All About Breastfeeding’ classes, clinic talks, provision of information on the Health Unit website, print resources and social marketing. Incorporating a multi-strategy plan for mothers to obtain the information they need and develop their breastfeeding skills ensures a client-centered approach that allows mothers to access information and support in the way that best suits their personal learning needs.

## Breastfeeding Videos

Technological advances are changing the landscape of the way in which families receive information. The internet is a frequently accessed information source as it can be convenient, informative and enjoyable. In an effort to enhance the quality of information and support that is available to new breastfeeding mothers, the Early Years Team developed a plan to produce a series of breastfeeding videos. The videos build on the knowledge that breastfeeding confidence is positively associated with and predictive of breastfeeding duration. Lack of breastfeeding confidence has been found to be significantly related to maternal perception of insufficient milk supply, the most cited reason for the premature discontinuation of breastfeeding. Confidence and self-efficacy are enhanced as mothers understand the principles of breastfeeding and develop problem solving abilities that enable continued breastfeeding. The series of three videos provide professional information to help mothers feel assured in their ability to produce a sufficient milk supply. They are intended to provide the type of support, reassurance, and teaching available from public health nurses. The links to the breastfeeding videos are listed below:

- [Breastfeeding Support - Introduction](#)
- [Supply – Do I Have Enough Milk?](#)
- [Milk Supply – Strategies for Increasing Your Milk Supply](#)

## Conclusion/Next Steps

The Breastfeeding Videos enhance the multi-strategy approach to support breastfeeding that is being implemented by the Early Years Team. The strategies support the Baby-Friendly Initiative and the Health Unit's progress in achieving Baby-Friendly designation by contributing to the ten steps to support successful breastfeeding including postpartum education and support, encouragement of exclusive and sustained breastfeeding, and discouragement of the use of artificial teats or soothers. The intended goal of the Early Years Team is to create a breastfeeding video library over the next two years that addresses a variety of breastfeeding topics. Three additional videos will be created in 2013.

This report was prepared by Ms. Ruby Brewer, Manager, Early Years Team.



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<p><b>This report addresses</b> the following requirement(s) of the Ontario Public Health Standards: Child Health, Requirement # 5, #6, #7.</p>
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