

MOTHER SUPPORT GROUPS

have an important role in the continuation of breastfeeding support for families in the community. They can provide women and their families with timely and accurate information as well as practical and emotional support to promote optimal breastfeeding.

BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding matters because it is a low-cost way of providing the best nutrition for the baby. It protects the baby against common illnesses both in the short and long-term. It reduces the risk of cancer and other conditions in the mother. The cost of not breastfeeding is huge for families and nations. Breastfeeding is also a climate-smart decision and key to the [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

WHO and UNICEF recommend:

- ▶ Early initiation of breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth.
- ▶ Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life.
- ▶ Continued breastfeeding up to 2 years of age or beyond, with the introduction of nutritionally adequate and safe complementary (solid) foods at 6 months.



WARM CHAIN OF SUPPORT FOR BREASTFEEDING: The Warm Chain places the mother-baby dyad at the core and follows the first 1,000 days timeline. It strives to link different actors by coordinating efforts at all levels to provide a continuum of care. Each actor or link in the Warm Chain may already be part of an existing initiative such as the BFHI or a community health programme. With consistent messages and proper referral systems throughout the warm chain, the mother-baby dyad will benefit from ongoing support and breastfeeding counselling. All mothers are then empowered with a more satisfying and effective breastfeeding experience. A warm chain of support will help build an enabling environment for breastfeeding and protect against industry influence.

As a member of **MOTHER SUPPORT GROUP**, you can support breastfeeding in many ways

1. Provide a comfortable environment antenatally and postnatally for the exchange of information and experiences related to breastfeeding.
2. Help mothers/parents overcome challenges and reach their breastfeeding goals.
3. Advocate for all parents to have access to skilled breastfeeding counselling and support from health facilities and communities.
4. Reinforce support for breastfeeding families that targets all members of the family and the community by developing appropriate and consistent communication messages.
5. Promote the use of existing breastfeeding training tools and programmes, both online and face-to-face that are not affiliated with commercial companies under the WHO's International Code.
6. Empower mothers with strategies to enable them to combine breastfeeding and work.
7. Work together with others to ensure a continuum of care for the breastfeeding dyad.
8. Do not accept any gifts, samples, sponsorship or displays of infant formula, bottles or teats from companies.
9. How else can YOU protect, promote and support breastfeeding?



World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA)



This card was developed in collaboration with
[La Leche League International \(LLLI\)](http://www.la lecheleague.org)

