



BREASTFEEDING NETWORK

Best Practice Guidelines for Supporting Breastfeeding In the NICU

Ten P's for Practice

Human milk offers significant and unique benefits to the health and development of premature infants! Breastfeeding provides physiological and emotional support for the NICU mother.

Yet breastfeeding rates are lowest for our tiniest and most vulnerable babies.

A concerted approach to breastfeeding is needed to ensure that premature infants receive the short- and long-term benefits of breast milk and breastfeeding.

It's do-able!

1. Policy

A written policy is developed by a multidisciplinary team and communicated to all NICU personnel and families.

2. Personnel education

All personnel involved in the care of NICU babies receive comprehensive ongoing training and evaluation of basic competencies and skills necessary to implement the policy.



3. Parent education

Health care professionals encourage and inform mothers of NICU babies and their support networks about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.



4. Protect milk supply

Breastfeeding or milk expression is initiated early and is done frequently and consistently with easy access to efficient breast pumps.



5. Plan

An individualized written feeding plan is developed that begins at admission and continues until baby transitions to effective feeding at the breast.

6. Priority

Human milk is the primary source of nutrition for all NICU infants.



7. Parent power

Mother and family are empowered to be involved in baby's care and feeding through close and frequent contact throughout the hospital stay.



8. Practice

Mother and baby are given the opportunity and encouragement for frequent practice at the breast prior to discharge home.



9. Post-discharge

Outpatient support is provided post-discharge for assisting mother in reaching her breastfeeding goals.



10. Progress

Breastfeeding outcome goals are established, regularly monitored and evaluated.

A plan to meet these goals is developed and implemented by a multidisciplinary team.



Promote, protect, and support breastfeeding as a vital part of the health and development of Michigan's children, their families, and the community!