

The BUSINESS CASE for BREASTFEEDING

STEPS FOR CREATING A BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY WORKSITE



Women in the Workforce

2005 data from U.S. Department of Labor¹ shows:

- 60 percent of women work outside the home
- Mothers are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. workforce
 - 55 percent with children under age 3 are employed
 - 62 percent with children under age 6 are employed
 - 78 percent are employed full-time
 - Growth rate has increased by 80 percent over the last 20 years

Supporting Breastfeeding is
WIN-WIN
for Companies and Employees

Health Impact of Breastfeeding

Recommended by major medical and professional organizations

- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)
- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
- U.S. Surgeon General
- Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN)
- American Dietetic Association (ADA)

Health Impact on Infants

Lower risk of infections and illnesses

- Ear infections
- Respiratory infections
- Dermatitis
- Gastrointestinal disorders

For every 1,000 babies not breastfed, there is an excess of 2,033 physician visits, 212 days in the hospital, and 609 prescriptions²

Impact on Children in Daycare

Health impact is even greater on infants enrolled in daycare centers³

- Daycare attendance is associated with double the odds of needing antibiotic therapy
- Infants breastfed at least 4 months significantly decreased those odds
- Protective effect of breastfeeding on children in daycare persists well into child's second year of life

Impact on Mothers

- Faster recovery from pregnancy and childbirth
- Lower risk of breast cancer
- Lower risk of osteoporosis
- Satisfaction she is giving her baby the best start in life possible

Breastfeeding Makes
Good Business Sense

Lower Absenteeism Rates

Case Example

One-day absences to care for sick children occur more than twice as often for mothers of formula feeding infants.⁴

Lower Health Care Costs

Case Example:

CIGNA reported in a 2-year study of 343 employees an annual savings of \$240,000 in health care expenses, 62 percent fewer prescriptions, and \$60,000 in reduced absenteeism rates⁵

A Lactation Program Gives Your Company Bottom Line Benefits

Lower Turnover Rates

Case Examples

Mutual of Omaha's lactation support program resulted in a retention rate of 83 percent of female employees compared to the national average of 59 percent⁶

A study of multiple companies with lactation support programs found an average retention rate of 94.2 percent.⁷

Lower Health Care Costs

Case Example:

Mutual of Omaha had a yearly savings of \$115,881 in health care claims among families enrolled in the program. Per person costs were \$1,246 MORE for employees who did not participate in the program.⁶

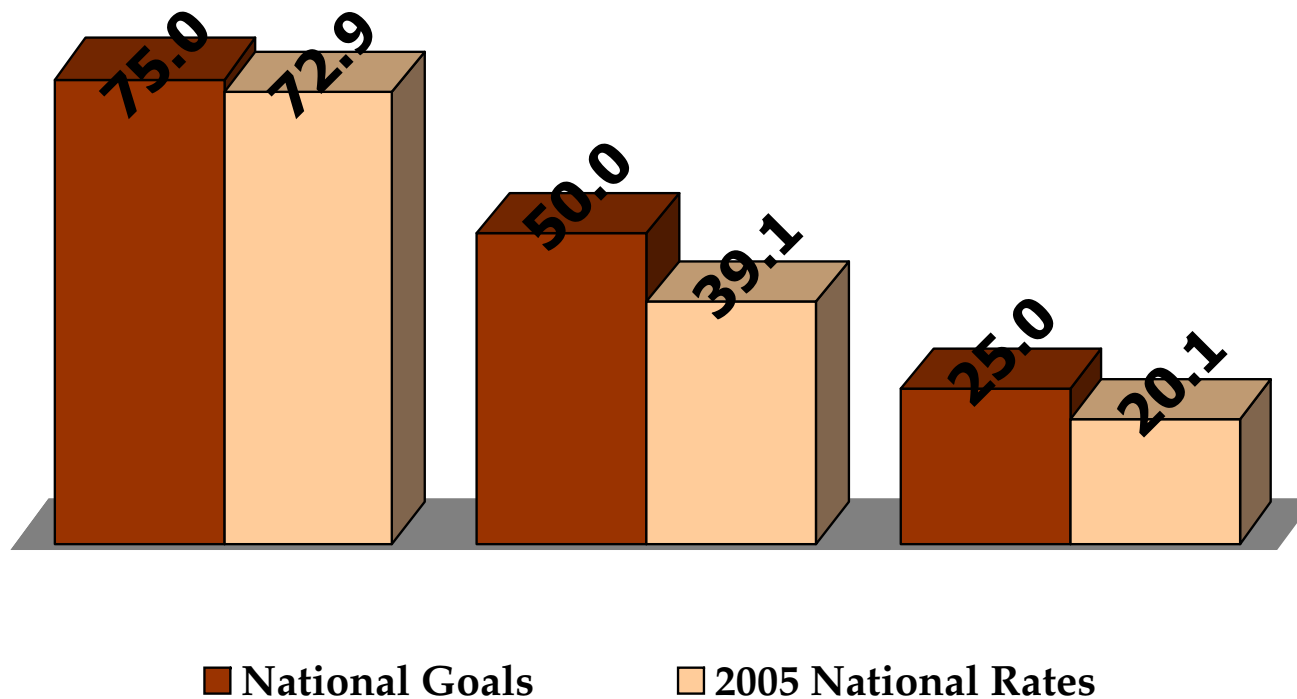
Other Benefits⁸

- Earlier return from maternity leave
- Higher employee productivity and morale
- Higher employer loyalty
- Recognition as a “family friendly” business

Easy Ways to Support Breastfeeding Employees

2005 Breastfeeding Rates

Compared to Healthy People 2010 Goals⁹



Basic Needs of Breastfeeding Employees are Minimal

- Time and space to express milk regularly
- Support from supervisors and colleagues
- Information on how to successfully combine breastfeeding with employment
- Access to health professionals who can assist with breastfeeding questions and concerns

Components of a Lactation Support Program

Gradual Return to the Workplace

Basic Needs

- Gradual phase back to work to allow mother and baby time to adjust to the separation

Flexible Options

- Part-time for a period of time
- Job sharing
- Telecommuting
- Flexible scheduling (ex: taking off Wednesdays for a period of time)

Private Room for Milk Expression

Basic Needs

- 4' x 5' space minimal
- Access to nearby running water
- Electrical outlet
- Lock on door

Private Room for Milk Expression

Flexible Options

- Private locked office, conference room, or other space
- Lactation room set up in small office space
- Construct walls to enclose a small space in a larger room, women's lounge, or other area
- A restroom is **NOT** a sanitary place to breastfeed or express milk!

Room Amenity Options

- Lock on door
- Safe, clean environment
- Chair and shelf or table for breast pump
- Access to nearby running water
- Breast pump equipment options
 - Employee could bring her own
 - Company could purchase or rent a durable pump that more than one mother can use
 - Company could provide or subsidize a portable pump designed for working mothers to take to and from work

Milk Storage Options

- Employee could use her own personal cooler
- Company could provide a small college dorm room sized refrigerator located in the lactation room
- A public shared refrigerator could be used if desired by mothers and co-workers

Time to Express Milk

Basic Needs

- Two to three 15-20 minute breaks during a typical 8-hour work period (plus time to go to the site)

Flexible Options

- Use regular allotted breaks and lunch period
- Excess time that may be needed can be made up before or after work, as part of lunch period, or at other times negotiated with supervisors

Education

Basic Needs

- Prenatal information on breastfeeding
- Postpartum assistance in the hospital, at home, and back at work

Education

Flexible Options

- Prenatal and postpartum breastfeeding class
- Informational materials and videos
- Company contract with a lactation consultant or other lactation expert to provide prenatal education and postpartum assistance
- Individualized back-to-work consult with the contract lactation expert
- Referrals to community classes and lactation experts

Support

Basic Needs

- Support from company managers, supervisors, and co-workers
- Mother-to-mother support

Flexible Options

- Worksite lactation support policy
- Training for supervisors and co-workers
- Mother-to-mother support group
- Electronic list serves or company web-based connection network

Model Companies and Public Agencies

Large Companies and Public Agencies (500+ employees)

- Various departments and agencies of the Federal Government
- Boston University Medical Center
- California Public Health Foundation Enterprises
- CIGNA (Philadelphia, PA)
- Fort Lewis and Madigan Army Medical Center (Tacoma, WA)
- Mutual of Omaha
- Home Depot Corporate Office (Atlanta, GA)
- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
- Pizza Hut Restaurant Service Center (Dallas, TX)
- Sea World (San Diego, CA)
- Texas Instruments (Dallas, TX)

Model Companies

Mid-sized companies (100-499 employees)

- Patagonia (Ventura, CA)
- Sears Roebuck & Co. #2179 (Medford, OR)

Model Companies

Small companies (1-99 employees)

- Andaluz Birth Center (Portland, OR)
- Childhood Health Associates of Salem
- HCG Software, LLC (Portland, OR)
- Pecan Ridge School (Canton, TX)
- Western Environmental Law Center (Eugene, OR)

Beginning a Lactation Support Program in Your Company

- Establish as part of company health benefit services
- House within the wellness division
- Convene a task force with key company stakeholders to identify needs and solutions
- Gain assistance from community resources
- Promote the program with all employees, supervisors, and co-workers to gain buy-in and support

Who Can Help

- International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs)
- Health professionals from hospitals or doctor's offices
- Local breastfeeding coalitions
- WIC Program
- La Leche League
- Community groups such as March of Dimes, Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies, and other local groups

References

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