
'Normal, natural'

Group says public breastfeeding should not be taboo

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- Christy Porucznik, assistant professor of Family and Preventive Medicine at the University of Utah, breastfeeding her daughter, Zoey, at the 2006 Breast Feeding Cafe held by the Utah Breastfeeding Coalition at the Salt Lake City Main Library.

Christy Porucznik, an assistant professor of Family and Preventive Medicine at the University of Utah, wants mothers to be unafraid to breastfeed their babies.

In the middle of the television aisle at Costco. On a plane. Standing in front of a crowd during a work presentation. Christy Porucznik has breastfed her daughter in many public places.

She's not afraid to raise some eyebrows. And Porucznik, an assistant professor of Family and Preventive Medicine at the University of Utah, wants other mothers to do the same.

She and other members of the Utah Breastfeeding Coalition are opening the 2nd Annual Breastfeeding Cafe inside Salt Lake City's Main Library in an effort to help society see breastfeeding as normal rather than taboo.

For the entire month of August, one of the shops on the main floor will become an information center where mothers, fathers and families can learn about the benefits of breastfeeding. The cafe also will be a place where new mothers can relax, breastfeed their infants and talk to other moms amid decorated tables.

"Our goal is to demonstrate that breastfeeding is normal," Porucznik said. "We need to start conversations about it, and not just between moms who are breastfeeding, but between all moms, kids and dads."

The cafe coincides with World Breastfeeding Week, which runs Aug. 1 through Aug. 7 and is celebrated in more than 120 countries, according to its sponsor, the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action.

The cafe name was inspired by the book of the same name, *The Breastfeeding Café*, a collection of nursing stories submitted by women and compiled by Barbara Behrmann.

The cafe will feature free classes where parents can learn infant CPR, the basics of prenatal, labor and postnatal massage, and ways to teach babies how to sign. Guests also can learn about

infant massage, make their own baby slings and hear about hypnobirthing, which helps women give birth without using drugs, Porucznik said.

Mothers can add entries to a list of unusual places where they have breastfed their child, which Porucznik hopes will become a highlight.

"We want people to know that breastfeeding is everywhere," Porucznik said. "You might be sitting on a TRAX train and think the woman next to you is just cuddling their child, but it's happening all around you."

The cafe will help the public understand that breastfeeding is the "normal, natural thing to do," said Kathy Pope, coalition spokeswoman.

"We're all affected by breastfeeding," Pope said. "It shouldn't be embarrassing or uncomfortable, because you're not violating any indecency laws. Everyone has a right to eat in public - including a baby."

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Breastfeeding cafe

* **WHERE:** The 2nd Annual Breastfeeding Cafe will be open the month of August on the main floor of the Salt Lake City Main Library at 210 E. 400 South.

* **WHEN:** Cafe times coincide with the library's hours, which are: Mondays through Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sundays, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

* **MORE INFO:** For a class schedule and other information, please visit www.utahbreastfeeding.org

Benefits of breastfeeding

* Breastfeeding is free.

* Breast milk is always ready and needs no preparation.

* It is a booster for a baby's immune system.

* It is environmentally friendly.