



Breastfeeding Friendly Health Departments (BFHD):

The Breastfeeding Friendly Health Departments Process was based on the scholarly work completed by Bonnie Brueshoff, Dakota County Public Health Director, in partial fulfillment for her degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice in partnership with 10 local public health pilot sites in rural, suburban and urban Minnesota. The goal of the project was to increase the capacity of health departments to promote breastfeeding in the community and to lead by example.

The Minnesota Department of Health has established a process to recognize local public health departments as breastfeeding friendly based on the Ten Steps for Breastfeeding Friendly Health Departments. This project contributed to the gap in research in providing a process for local public health to follow that complements the existing BFHI used in the hospital setting.

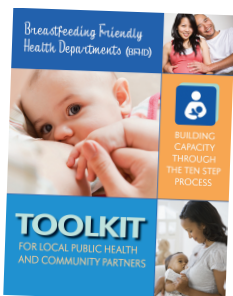
Ten Steps for Breastfeeding Friendly Health Departments

1. Establish a designated individual/group to manage the following tasks including policy review, development, staff orientation and education.
2. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely reviewed with department staff and meets the following criteria including addressing all BFHD ten steps.
3. Coordinate breastfeeding support and promotion with other programs in the health department, private and public health care systems, and community organizations to establish breastfeeding as the “norm” in the community
4. Collaborate with community partners to ensure access to breastfeeding classes for prenatal women
5. Educate the community on breastfeeding support.
6. Encourage racially and ethnically diverse resources within the community.
7. Support mothers in initiating and maintaining breastfeeding up to 12 months and beyond.
8. Through community partners, encourage local public places to provide a breastfeeding friendly environment for families
9. Select businesses each year and provide workplace lactation support training.
10. Facilitate access to information and training for local childcare centers or family child care providers on how to support a breastfeeding mother.

Breastfeeding Friendly Recognition Program

Recognition as a Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department (BFHD) lends credibility and visibility to local public health agencies that choose to complete some or all of the Ten Steps for Breastfeeding Friendly Health Departments. Local public health agencies and tribal health boards are eligible for recognition as a Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels.

For more information: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/oshii/bf/healthdept.html>



Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department Toolkit

The toolkit is designed to help local health departments use evidence-based breastfeeding policies and practices to create a Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department and promote breastfeeding in the community. The toolkit outlines the ten step process and includes resources that support each step. A checklist is included to help explore, understand and take action to complete each step.

To download the BFHD toolkit, the Ten Steps and Tip Sheets:
www.dakotacounty.us (search “Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department”)



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