

## The Baby-Friendly Initiative

The Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) is part of a global effort to implement current, evidence-based practices that protect, promote and support breastfeeding.

The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) was launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 1991. Global criteria were developed to describe minimum standards for maternity services to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. The global criteria are regularly reviewed and updated and reflect current research and experience in many countries.

The Breastfeeding Committee for Canada is the national authority for the Baby-Friendly Initiative. **The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding in Canada** provide critical management procedures and key clinical practices for hospitals/birthing centres and community health services providing care to perinatal families and families with young children.

## Baby-Friendly Initiative Ontario

**Baby-Friendly Initiative Ontario (BFI Ontario)** is a not-for-profit, volunteer organization consisting of health care professionals, service providers and consumers within Ontario who are interested in protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding through the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Initiative.

**BFI Ontario is the provincial authority for BFI in Ontario.** In partnership with the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC), BFI Ontario is responsible for the implementation of BFI in Ontario and is the contact between hospitals/birthing centres and community health services and the BCC for all matters related to BFI Pre-Assessment and External Assessment.

Members of BFION network with other members, share information and resources through email bulletins, social media, discussions at meetings, and the Members Only section of our website. Members also enjoy a discounted rate if they attend the BFION Expo which is held every few years.

### BFI Ontario's Vision

Ontario has a Baby-Friendly culture.



### BFI Ontario's Mission

To protect, promote, and support breastfeeding in the province of Ontario through the adoption, implementation and maintenance of the Baby-Friendly Initiative.

## How to get involved

BFI Ontario welcomes anyone who is interested in protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding through the implementation of the BFI. General membership meetings are held virtually 4 times per year.

A membership fee is required to sustain the operations of BFI Ontario. Individual and group memberships are available. Please visit our website at [www.bfiontario.ca](http://www.bfiontario.ca) to learn more.

### **The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding in Canada**

#### **Critical Management Procedures**

- 1.a. Comply with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes and relevant World Health Assembly Resolutions.
- 1.b. Have a written Infant Feeding Policy that is routinely communicated to all staff, pregnant women/persons and parents.
- 1.c. Establish ongoing BFI monitoring and data-management systems.
2. Ensure that staff have the competencies (knowledge, attitudes and skills) necessary to support mothers/birthing parents to meet their infant feeding goals.

#### **Key Clinical Practices**

3. Discuss the importance and process of breastfeeding with pregnant women/persons and their families.
4. Facilitate immediate and uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact at birth. Support mothers/birthing parents to respond to the infant's cues to initiate breastfeeding as soon as possible after birth.
5. Support mothers/parents to initiate and maintain breastfeeding and manage common difficulties.
6. Support mothers/parents to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months, unless supplements are medically indicated.
7. Promote and support mother-infant togetherness.
8. Encourage responsive, cue-based feeding for infants. Encourage sustained breastfeeding beyond six months with appropriate introduction of complementary foods.
9. Discuss the use and effects of feeding bottles, artificial nipples and pacifiers with parents.
10. Provide a seamless transition between the services provided by the hospital, community health services and peer-support programs.