

### **Breastfeeding and Going Back to Work**

Many moms continue to breastfeed when they return to work. Planning ahead helps make going back to work easier.

#### **During Pregnancy**

- Talk with your supervisor about your plans to breastfeed. Discuss different types of schedules, such as starting back part-time at first or taking split shifts.
- Ask the human resource office, your supervisor, or co-workers if they know of other women at your workplace who have breastfed after returning to work.
- Ask about a private area where you can comfortably express your milk. [The 2010 Affordable Care Act requires employers with more than 50 employees to provide breaks and a private space for mothers to express breast milk during the work day.]
- Plan on needing a 10-15-minute pump break for each missed feeding with your baby.

#### **During Your Maternity Leave**

- Take as many weeks off as you can. At least six weeks of leave can help you recover from childbirth and settle into a good breastfeeding routine.
- Contact your local hospital, WIC program or public health department to learn how to get a good breast pump.
- Begin expressing your milk by hand or with a breast pump. Freeze 2-4 ounces at a time to save for your baby after your return to work.

- Help your baby get used to taking breast milk from a bottle a couple of weeks before you return to work. Many babies accept the bottle better from someone other than mom.
- Choose a caregiver who has taken care of breastfed babies before and understands and supports breastfeeding.

## Once You Return to Work or School

- Pump during your breaks or lunch time. If you wait too long to pump, your breasts might leak or hurt, and your milk supply might drop.
- If possible, breastfeed right before you leave your baby at the child care provider and/or when you return after work. This way, you may need to pump less while you and baby are apart.
- Ask your caregiver not to feed your baby shortly before you pick him up so that he is ready to feed when you get there.
- Breastfeed often when you are with your baby at night and on weekends; it will help maintain your milk supply.



**No matter how much you prepare, you'll still need time to adjust. It's normal to feel excitement, guilt, nervousness, sadness, or joy when you return to work. With time, you and your baby will adapt to the new routines, and your confidence will grow.**

