AK WIC
BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT SERVICE
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May I… Earning Respect

Working for WIC we see and talk with a lot of families. They come to us for support, encouragement and help. They are coming to us in times of excitement, joy, fear and worry. One of the most important things you can do for them is show them respect by asking permission as you work with them. When you ask permission you open the possibility for a connection between you and your moms. Asking permission is more than just good manners it also allows you to see if there are any boundaries that you are not aware of and builds trust. Here are some key times to ask for permission and earn respect:

Ask permission to start a conversation with her.
It may be easy to know a mother is ready to work with you if she comes into a clinic for an appointment but many times you are calling her on the phone. A great way to start your conversation with her is to ask if this is a good time for her to talk with you. By asking this, you not only see if she is available to talk with you but by asking her permission, your time will be more productive and you will have earned her respect. This will help build a better connection between the two of you and make her feel like her time and input is valuable to you. You will have to be prepared for a mother to say it is not a good time to talk and find out when would be better for her. This may not be as easy for you and you may have to schedule a different time.

Ask permission before giving advice or feedback.
When you are talking with a mother in person or on the phone it is good idea to ask permission before giving advice or feedback on their situation. You can say: "May I share some ideas for…that other mothers have found helpful?" By asking permission and then allowing for the mother to respond, you are involving her, allowing her to respond, preparing her to hear what you will say next and gaining her buy-in while showing her that you respect her. You are allowing her to be in control and for that moment or that day it could be the only thing she feels in control of. The first few days, weeks and months for a new mother can be very overwhelming. Asking permission before you offer advice or feedback will help her feel a part of a possible solution to her concerns or problem.

Ask permission before touch a baby or young child.
You should always ask for permission before touching a baby or young child. Simply ask a mother, "Is it alright if I hold your baby for you while you put your coat on, while you get a diaper for him or her, etc.…" This will allow a mother to be more comfortable with you as you help her and keep her at ease. There may be a special situation or concern she has about someone else touching her baby. Respecting her as a mother and allowing her to be in control will build her confidence and your relationship with her.

Asking for permission is simple, yet so powerful.

Information for this article was summarized from California WIC.

15 Cool and Quirky Facts about Breastfeeding

1. Human milk boosts a baby's immune system big time—helping baby fight viral, bacterial, and parasitic infections,

2. Breastfeeding can actually reduce baby's risk of some diseases later in life.

3. Breastfeeding reduces mama's risk of ovarian and breast cancer, heart disease, and osteoporosis. The longer she breastfeeds, the higher the benefit. In fact, a woman who breastfeeds for 8 years has nearly a 0% risk of breast cancer. Get this—breastfeeding a baby girl actually reduces *her* lifetime risk of breast cancer by 25%!

4. Breastfeeding saves a family approximately $2 to 4 thousand dollars annually (compared to cost of formula).

5. Breastfeeding helps mama heal faster in the postpartum, helping her uterus return to pre-pregnancy size faster and lowering overall postpartum blood loss.

6. Breastfeeding can help mama return to her pre-baby weight. It takes 1000 calories a day on average to produce breast milk. Women are advised to consume an extra 500 calories a day, and the body dips into reserves it built up in pregnancy to make the rest (it's important to consume those extra calories or the body actually goes into "starvation mode" and holds onto the reserves).

7. Producing breast milk consumes 25% of the body's energy; the brain only uses 20% by comparison.

8. On average, babies remove 67% of the milk mama has available—they eat until fullness, not until the breast is emptied.

9. Almost 75% of all moms produce more milk in their right breast, whether they are right- or left-handed.

10. Mama's body is constantly making the perfect milk for baby. Milk changes its nutritional profile as baby grows (milk made for a 3 month old is different than for a 9 month old). Milk can even change day to day—for example, water content may increase during times of hot weather and baby-sickness to provide extra hydration.

11. Human milk contains substances that promote sleep and calmness in babies (who doesn't love that?) Breastfeeding also calms mama and helps her bond to baby.

12. Breastfed infants are at lower risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

13. Mama's breasts can detect even a one degree fluctuation in baby's body temperature and adjust accordingly to heat up or cool down baby as needed. This is one reason skin-to-skin contact in the early days is so crucial.

14. Breastfeeding reduces baby's risk of cavities later on and may lower the chance they will need braces as kids.

15. Breastfeeding mamas sleep on average 45 minutes more a night, compared to those who formula f

By Amy Johnson-Grass (http://www.health-foundations.com/)

If you have any questions or ideas for future newsletter topics contact

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EDUCATION CORNER

New Year Working Resolutions

As the New Year begins it is a great time to think about your work and evaluate ways to improve or work smarter! I often take this time to set new working goals- ways to be more efficient, look at my work priorities and goals and evaluate what else I might want to learn this year. Many people make health or financial resolutions that might be difficult to keep but it can't hurt to look for ways to improve your work and see if you can't make it more fun and enjoyable! Complete the following worksheet. This information does not need to be shared. The more thought and effort you put into this the more helpful it will be for you. Best wishes for a happy and productive 2016!

1. How can I be more efficient at my work?

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2. What are my work goals for this year?

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3. What do I want to learn this year?

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4. What are my top 3 priorities for work this year?

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Reading this newsletter and completing the education offering for the month is worth one continuing education hour for WIC BFPCs and CPAs. Continuing education hours are tracked at your local agency. Click here for a form to track your continuing education.