



# Collaboration for Early Childhood

## Strong Start, Bright Future

October  
2014

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## A PHYSICIAN'S PERSPECTIVE ON Breastfeeding and the Baby-Friendly Initiative

By Karen Walker, MD

Breastfeeding is the optimal method of infant feeding and should be promoted and supported to ensure optimal health for all women and their children. Breastfeeding is the single most powerful and well documented preventive modality available to healthcare providers to decrease the risk of common causes of infant morbidity. It decreases rates of diarrhea, otitis, respiratory infections, leukemia, obesity, necrotizing enterocolitis and sudden infant death syndrome.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months followed by a combination of breastfeeding for one year or longer with complementary foods. There are rarely contraindications to breastfeeding and only in those cases is non-human milk recommended. WHO and UNICEF have outlined 10 steps to Successful Breastfeeding. National strategies have been outlined by the US Surgeon General, the Joint Commission and the CDC to support these steps. The AAP Baby Friendly Project is based on these strategies, which facilitates breastfeeding practices in hospitals and communities.

Breastfeeding is well proven to improve health outcomes and thus lowers the overall cost of healthcare. It is a public health issue and not simply a lifestyle choice. A \$1.00 investment in the creation of a lactation support program results in a \$2.00-\$3.00 return on investment. Eighty-seven percent of mothers express an interest in breast feeding with 70% of them actually initiating breastfeeding. However by six months, the percentage has dropped to less than 35%. When asked, the majority of these mothers felt that they could have breastfed longer if they had received more support from their families, employers and the outside community. Healthcare providers play a critical role as advocates and supporters of breastfeeding.

Physicians Network Breakfast  
Becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Practice: Beyond Breast is Best  
Tuesday, October 28, 2014  
7:15 am-9:00am  
Marion Street Cheese Market  
(100 S. Marion St., Oak Park)  
Jennifer A Perez, MD, FAAP, CLS

Dr. Perez is a practicing Pediatrician, an Instructor in the Department of Pediatrics at Rush University Medical Center and a Certified Lactation Specialist. In 2013, Dr. Perez was awarded the CABC Breastfeeding Friendly Physician Award.

To attend the breakfast presentation at Marion Street Cheese Market, please RSVP to:  
Tatiana Gomez at 708-613-6122 or [tgomez@collab4kids.org](mailto:tgomez@collab4kids.org)

### Breastfeeding and Development

By Karen Walker, MD

Studies substantiate the many health benefits of breastfeeding, but some of the most recent and exciting ones now reveal the profound effects that breastfeeding has on brain development in infants.

DHA (Docosahexaenoic Acid) an omega 3 fatty acid is a vital nutrient important for the growth, development and maintenance of brain tissue. It helps to manufacture myelin that makes it possible for nerves to carry information from one part of the brain to the other. Breast milk is rich in this fatty acid. Cognitive development is related to many factors and the interpretation of breastfeeding's influence on brain development is complicated by the presence of many confounding factors, such as mother's intellect and socioeconomic status. One of the latest studies has teased these factors out. Sean Deoni, assistant professor of engineering at Brown University leads the Advanced Baby Imaging Lab at Brown University. He looked at MRI brain images of infants. They were divided into 3 groups: the first group was exclusively breast fed, the second group had a combination of breast and non-breast milk and the third was exclusively fed non breast milk. The infants who were exclusively breast fed had enhanced development in key parts of the brain compared to those who were fed non breast milk or a combination of the two. The fastest growth was in myelinated white matter with exclusively breastfed babies having 20-30% more. The extra growth was most pronounced in parts of the brain associated with language, emotional function and cognition. This study suggests that exclusive breastfeeding for infants positively impacts healthy brain development and cognition. It is also one of the most cost effective ways to improve cognitive development and early learning. Other studies have also shown improved cognition in breastfed infants, but this is the first study that has illustrated it for us.

### Breastfeeding Resources

#### 1. The Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding—

<http://www.babyfriendlyusa.org/about-us/baby-friendly-hospital-initiative/the-ten-steps>

#### 2. American Academy of Pediatrics, Illinois Chapter -

<http://illinoisAAP.org/projects/obesityprevention/breastfeeding/>  
About Breastfeeding, Illinois Physicians Statement on Breastfeeding, links to various provider resources and campaigns in support of breastfeeding.

## Developmental Screening Corner

Shannon Ellison, M.Ed, the Collaboration's Developmental Screening Coordinator, continues to work with community physicians to provide:

- support around using the Ages and Stages Questionnaires, Third Edition (ASQ-3) and Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE) Online.
- support to implement an effective and efficient developmental screening program.
- support around establishing effective and efficient referral and follow-up procedures for children in need of referrals, so that these practices can continue to provide a high-quality medical home for patients.

**To receive this valuable support for your practice, contact:**

**Shannon Ellison, M. Ed.**

**708-613-6122 or [sellison@collab4kids.org](mailto:sellison@collab4kids.org)**

**ASQ-3 and ASQ: SE** are research based, standardized, valid and reliable developmental screening tools. They are designed to identify those things that children CAN do, but also can identify areas of development where children may benefit from further assessment and possibly additional support. They DO NOT provide diagnoses.

**ASQ-3** focuses on each child's global development (Communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving and personal-social skills).

**ASQ: SE** examines the social and emotional competence of children. This instrument looks at the areas of self-regulation, compliance, communication, adaptive behaviors, autonomy, affect, and interaction with people.

## Parenthesis Family Center

### Parents as Teachers and Parenting Resource Programs

Do you treat Oak Park and River Forest families, with one or more children, prenatal to age three that:

- struggle financially?
- live with depression or other mental illness?
- include children with disabilities or chronic health conditions?
- are isolated?
- have experienced the significant loss of a relative, home, job, etc.?

**Call NOW to learn about Parenthesis programs and very specific ways to connect your practice to them!**

**Gail Shelton**

**708-848-2227 or [GShelton@parenthesis-info.org](mailto:GShelton@parenthesis-info.org)**

**Parents as Teachers** provides personal visits to promote parenting skills, opportunities to connect with other parents, developmental screenings, to support those completed by physicians, and connections to needed services and resources.

**Parenting Resource Program** provides parenting support and resources to all families in the Oak Park and River Forest communities through workshops, parenting coaching, discussion groups, facilitated play groups and much more!!

Our mission is to make sure that all children (birth to age 5) in our local community arrive at kindergarten safe, healthy, ready to succeed and eager to learn.

Physicians Network  
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Early Childhood** | *Strong Start, Bright Future*

