



What Every Parent Needs to Know About...

Finding the Right Childcare for Your Breastfed Baby

Choosing the right childcare provider can be a daunting task for any parent. Finding the right one for a breastfed baby can seem even more complex. Asking the right questions can help you make the right decision. Read on for our list of “must ask” feeding-related questions. (Questions for “staff” assume you are exploring a non-residential care center, but these questions should also be asked of providers in residential centers.)

- Do you have a written, formal policy on the care of breastfed babies? May I see such documents?
- How familiar are you with the American Academy of Pediatrics’ guidelines on breastfed babies in childcare centers? (Read specifics here: http://nrckids.org/files/CFOC3_updated_final.pdf p. 506.)
- What kind of training does your staff receive on handling of breast milk?
- How must breast milk be brought in? Frozen, or refrigerated?
- How must it be labeled?
- How is breast milk stored?
- What do you do with unfinished breast milk after a feeding?
- How long can labeled breast milk be left in refrigerator? How about the freezer? What do you do with it after that time?
- Do you and your staff follow parental guidelines on a feeding plan, or do you use feeding schedules?
- Does your staff know how to do paced bottle feeding?
- How does your staff know when a baby is hungry?
- What cues does your staff look for to see if a child is full or done during a feeding?
- Do you ever give a breastfed infant formula? If so, what would the circumstances be?
- If a child is showing signs of hunger and there is no breast milk available, what does your staff do?
- My baby is _____ weeks/months old; about how many ounces of milk would you think he/she would need in the _____ hours that he/she would be in your care?
- How do you go about offering solid foods to a breastfed infant?
- Do you give pacifiers to breastfed babies?
- Do you have a room or area available for breastfeeding (or pumping) at drop-off/pick-up? May I see that space?
- When can I visit the childcare center for a tour or observation?
- When choosing a childcare center for your baby, you’ll want to consider many topics, from sleep habits to safety, schedules to vaccinations, staffing ratios to communication. The questions above can help you ensure the provider you settle on supports you and your breastfed baby.