**Background**

Completion of this Assessment is required to fulfill the Breastfeeding Goal in the 2022 Nutrition Services Plan. The purpose of this goal is to assess what education is currently provided to parents in late pregnancy (third trimester) to prepare them for breastfeeding during the early days and weeks following birth. The 2023 Nutrition Services Plan will build on this by focusing on the breastfeeding education and support provided in the early postpartum weeks. This Assessment is to be completed by local agency breastfeeding coordinators, with input from CPA staff.

Why is this important? The weeks leading up to birth and shortly after are critical periods for providing information to parents about what they can do to get breastfeeding off to a good start. WIC staff have the opportunity to help parents identify their breastfeeding expectations, learn what is most important for them to succeed, and to set up a support system.

During the past 2 years, most local agencies shifted to remote services, and breastfeeding groups were put on hold. Staff now try to prepare parents for breastfeeding with one or more quarterly phone contacts. This is challenging and often parents are not getting the information they need. This Assessment has been designed to capture what is currently provided as well as offering ideas for ways to improve the sharing of breastfeeding information with parents. Resources that are available through the state agency are also listed.

We encourage breastfeeding coordinators to meet with CPAs to discuss current efforts to prepare participants for breastfeeding. We understand the difficulties that remote services have caused, and your responses will **not** be used to criticize or judge your current practices. Instead, we want you to feel inspired to improve the ways breastfeeding information is shared with prenatal participants.

**Instructions for Breastfeeding Coordinators**

1. Gather input from staff on what breastfeeding information is currently provided to parents in late pregnancy.
2. Complete the Assessment as honestly as possible. Respond to questions using the 1 to 5-point rating scale below:

**1**= not doing and not ready to start

**2**= want to start

**3**= started and may want to do more

**4**= already doing quite a bit with room for improvement

**5**= we’re superstars!

1. Review the results as a staff. Collect ideas for ways to make improvements to current practices, prioritize these ideas, and then select one strategy that your agency will focus on for the remainder of the year. Record the strategy in the box on page 6.
2. Save the completed Assessment to your computer.
3. Return it to bonnie.ranno@dhsoha.state.or.us as an attachment on or before **May 6, 2022**.

|  **1**= not doing/not ready to start **2**= want to start **3**= started and may do more **4**= already doing/room for improvement **5**= we’re superstars! |
| --- |
| **Assessment Area** | **Using the key above, check the response that describes your agency’s readiness level** | **Status** | **Ideas for Future Efforts** |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |  |  |
| **A. Staff roles, skills, and training**  |
| 1. All WIC staff use participant centered counseling skills when talking with parents about breastfeeding.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. All parents planning to breastfeed meet with a WIC CPA in late pregnancy to develop a plan for breastfeeding success in the early weeks.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff yield/refer parents with special concerns about breastfeeding to their local agency breastfeeding expert or community lactation consultant.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B. Prenatal Breastfeeding Education and Support** |
| 1. WIC staff prepare parents to advocate for themselves and their infants during the hospital or home birth experience.

Resources: [My breastfeeding plan](https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYPEOPLEFAMILIES/WIC/Documents/bf/breastfeeding-plan.pdf); [I am a breastfeeding baby (crib card)](https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYPEOPLEFAMILIES/WIC/Documents/bf/breastfeeding-crib-card.pdf) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff encourage parents to fully breastfeed, unless contraindicated.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Parents planning to combine breastfeeding and formula feeding are offered education to reduce impact on breastfeeding and potential health risks.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff teach parents infant behavioral cues including feeding cues and sleep patterns and how these relate to breastfeeding success.

Resources: [Healthy sleep for you and your baby; Understanding your baby’s cues](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/collections/all/infant-cues) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff teach all parents planning to breastfeed key topics for breastfeeding in the first few days and weeks. Some examples include nursing in the first hour after birth, holding newborns skin to skin, frequent and effective feeding, colostrum, transitional milk, preventing/managing engorgement, stooling patterns, and weight gain.

Resource: [Why babies breastfeeding often](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/collections/all/why-babies-breastfeed-often); [Making more milk for your baby](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/products/making-more-milk-for-your-baby-handout) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff teach parents how to manually (hand) express milk. When possible, staff check parent’s understanding by using return demonstration using a breast model.

Resource: [Hand Expression](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/products/hand-expression) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff help parents prepare for breastfeeding after returning to work or school.

Resource: [Breastfeeding Employee Rights Flyer](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/products/breastfeeding-mothers-know-your-rights) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff document breastfeeding contact in the data system including key parent strengths, concerns, information provided, plan for follow up including any referrals provided.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Optional: Add other assessment areas you want to evaluate for your agency.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Overall Comments:**

Summarize your local agency’s strengths in providing breastfeeding education to parents during late pregnancy, to prepare them for breastfeeding in the early postpartum period.

Summarize the areas that staff have identified as areas for improvement. Prioritize the ideas generated, focusing on what is realistic to accomplish.

**For 2022 Nutrition Services Plan:**

What is one activity your agency will implement to strengthen breastfeeding education provided to parents during late pregnancy, to prepare them for breastfeeding in the early postpartum period? Record the activity in the box below.

(Additional activities may be listed if desired, but that is *optional*.)