



## **When your grandchild is breastfed**

You can be very proud that your daughter or daughter-in-law is breastfeeding your new grandchild. Breastfeeding helps your grandchild to be healthy, smart and grow well. It is also good for the mother's health and saves money.

But you may feel left out if you planned to help by giving a bottle to the baby or taking care of the baby for long periods. Your grandchild has a close bond with his/her mother because they are breastfeeding, however there are many things you can still do to help:



If you make positive comments about how well they are doing, this can make the new parents feel good about themselves and the baby.

Sometimes new parents just want someone to listen and acknowledge that it is hard work being a new parent. They do not need you to have an answer or to solve every problem for them.

The new parents may need you to help with the boring housework while they spend time getting to know their new baby. Looking after the new parents can help them feel more able to care for their baby.

Grandparents are very useful to sing to and rock a young baby and to bring the baby for short outings. Giving the new parents a regular short break of an hour may be more welcome than a day long break when they are too tired to appreciate it.

### **Did you know that:**

- Breast milk is the ideal food for babies. They do not need anything else, not even water, for the first six months.
- Breast milk acts like a "paint", lining the baby's tummy to protect from infections and allergies. Giving water or other fluids can wash away this "paint."
- Breast milk is easy to digest so a young baby may want to feed often. This is normal. It does not mean there is not enough milk.
- Delaying a feed to "give time for the breasts to fill up" is not the way breasts work. More milk is made when the baby feeds.
- Not every baby "problem" is due to breastfeeding. Babies cry for many reasons. Look at all the other reasons - tiredness, wet nappy, boredom, too many strange faces - before blaming breastfeeding.
- There are many supports available to new parents. Help to find those that suit best.
- Most new parents are tired, even those who do not breastfeed.

How your own children were fed will effect how you feel about your grandchild breastfeeding. Times change and situations change. If your own children were not breastfed, it may be because there was little encouragement to do so. You can be an encouragement now, so that your grandchild gets a healthy start in life.

