

## When you are minding a breastfed baby

Some people are unsure about minding a baby who is breastfed. They may think it would be easier if the baby was not breastfed. This can make it hard for the mother to leave her baby without worrying.



### **Helpful hints for the minder:**

- Cuddle and rock the baby if the baby needs to be settled. Only give a pacifier if the parents have asked for it to be used. Not every baby “problem” is due to breastfeeding. Babies cry for many reasons. Look at these other reasons also - tiredness, wet nappy, boredom.

If the baby will need feeding when the baby is with you:

- Respect the parents’ decision to feed their baby mother’s milk and do not give infant formula without their consent.
- Store mother’s milk in the fridge. Put the container of milk in a jug of hot water to warm it or in a bottle warmer. Do not heat in a microwave or pour the milk into a saucepan to heat it.
- Hold the baby close when feeding. Some babies like to feel the skin of your arm, face or neck when feeding.
- If the parents want the baby fed by cup or spoon rather than by bottle, make sure you know how to feed this way.
- Mother’s milk is unlikely to be a risk to you, however wash your hands well before handling the milk and feeding the baby.
- Mother’s milk may look slightly blue when fresh and the cream may rise to the top. It may turn pale yellow after freezing. Shake the container before using the milk.
- Check with the parents to see if they would like you to try and time feedings so their baby is hungry when collected and ready to fed from the mother.
- If the mother would like to feed her baby while she is with you, offer her a comfortable place to feed, a glass of water and a place to wash her hands.



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



- Mother’s milk is the ideal food for babies. They do not need anything else, not even water, for the first six months.
- Mother’s 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”.
- Mother’s milk is easy to digest so a young baby may want to feed often. This is normal. It does not mean that the mother does not have enough milk.

You can read more information pages at [www.ihph.ie/babyfriendlyinitiative/bfhi\\_link.htm](http://www.ihph.ie/babyfriendlyinitiative/bfhi_link.htm)