

Prenatal Considerations



Most parents decide how they plan to feed their babies before or during pregnancy.



Providing parents with prenatal education, counselling and support can improve breastfeeding rates.



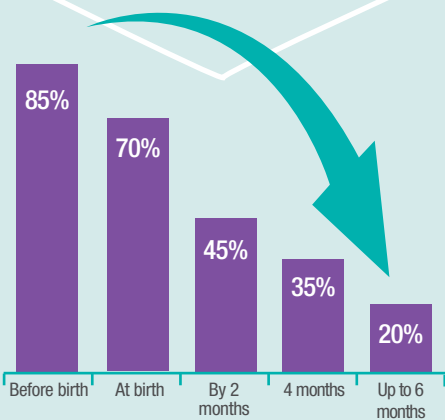
Health care providers and organizations play an important role helping prenatal parents make informed decisions about feeding their babies.

IN SIMCOE MUSKOKA

over **90%** of parents plan to breastfeed

INCLUDING over **85%** of parents who plan to breastfeed exclusively

The number of babies who breastfeed exclusively at birth is significantly lower (almost 70%) and continues to drop off in the first weeks after birth.



PRENATAL PLANS MATTER



75-85%

OF PARENTS BEGIN FEEDING their babies the way they had planned to before birth



SKIN-TO-SKIN CONTACT after birth is associated with exclusive breastfeeding initiation

IN SIMCOE MUSKOKA **75%** of pregnant parents learn about the **IMPORTANCE OF SKIN-TO-SKIN**



PRENATAL CLASS ATTENDANCE IS ASSOCIATED WITH **15-20% higher** breastfeeding rates compared to those who did not attend

SOME PARENTS MAY NEED EXTRA SUPPORT

Some parents may need extra support to plan to breastfeed exclusively if they:

- are under 25 years of age
- use tobacco or other substances
- previously gave birth
- were underweight or obese pre-pregnancy.

Factors that influence how parents plan to feed their babies often have underlying social and economic influences.



THREE WAYS HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

1

Assess prenatal parents for *barriers and risk factors* that may impact their decisions about feeding their babies

2

Provide tailored education, counselling and support

- Talk to parents often throughout their pregnancy about how they plan to feed their baby
- Support parents to make informed decisions
- Discuss the importance of skin-to-skin contact.

3

Refer parents to Health Connection for **prenatal classes/programs** and 211 for community social supports.



TWO WAYS HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATIONS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

1

Create an organizational environment supportive of breastfeeding

- Provide infant feeding education for all employees
- Implement policies that support breastfeeding
- Work towards Baby-Friendly Initiative designation.

2

Collaborate with community partners to:

- Ensure prenatal parents receive consistent information to make informed decisions
- Understand and address factors affecting breastfeeding rates
- Protect, promote and support breastfeeding.