

## Breastfeeding Welcome Here!

Organisations and businesses in the west were encouraged to show their support for breastfeeding mothers to celebrate Breastfeeding Awareness Week recently.

At an event in Enniskillen, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) with partners; Western Health and Social Care Trust and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council challenged employers, businesses, local government organisations and the wider community to support women by making breastfeeding more acceptable and encouraging mothers to breastfeed for longer.

Sarah Davidson Health Improvement, Western Health and Social Care Trust said, "Breastfeeding is vitally important for both mother and baby. Breast milk contains everything a baby needs for healthy growth and development, providing the best possible start in life. It reduces the risk of infection, allergies and childhood diabetes and at the same time developing a close bond between mother and baby. Each day a mother continues to breastfeed is another day the child receives important health benefits from their mother. A mother should be proud, however long she chooses to breastfeed her baby."

The CYPSP Western Outcomes Group is recommending the following ways organisations can support female staff or customers who breastfeed:

- Participate in Public Health Agency's (PHA) Breastfeeding Welcome Here scheme
- Develop a policy for breastfeeding mothers returning to work
- Provide a space for mothers to express or breastfeed.
- Signpost to or promote breastfeeding groups and other support.
- Allow staff time to attend antenatal classes.
- Listen to mothers

The PHA's has advice for employers on mothers returning to work [here](#) as well as a sample policy on supporting breastfeeding employees which can be found [here](#).

For mums returning to work, information and advice is available on the PHA's website [www.breastfedbabies.org](http://www.breastfedbabies.org) which also has info on the Breastfeeding Welcome Here scheme and support groups in your local area.

Fermanagh and Omagh Council were commended for signing up to the PHA's Breastfeeding Welcome Here scheme. Breast Friends Support Group has been praised for their help and support to women in this area.

For further information on the campaign contact Priscilla Magee, Western Area Locality Lead at [priscilla.magee@actionforchildren.org.uk](mailto:priscilla.magee@actionforchildren.org.uk)