

NEWS RELEASE

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HEALTH UNIT ACHIEVES BABY FRIENDLY DESIGNATION

On November 25, the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, in partnership with other community agencies and stakeholders, celebrated achieving **Baby-Friendly Initiative™ (BFI)** designation. The BFI designation was awarded to the Health Unit by the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada, on behalf of the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

BFI is a global program by the World Health Organization and UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) to implement practices that protect, promote and support breastfeeding. The Breastfeeding Committee for Canada has a vision to establish breastfeeding as the cultural norm for infant feeding within Canada.

Currently in Ontario, only seven health units have been awarded BFI designation. Achieving BFI status is one of the benchmarks Ontario health units must achieve to meet the Ontario Public Health Standards.

To become Baby-Friendly, the Health Unit followed a detailed ten step process involving community partners, mothers and families. The process includes:

- having supportive policies in place
- ongoing education for all staff
- informing pregnant women about the importance and process of breastfeeding
- supporting all mothers with infant feeding

For more information on the **Baby-Friendly Initiative™**, call the Health Unit at 705-474-1400 or 1-800-563-2808, or visit www.healthunit.biz.

Quote

"I am very proud of the work our staff and the community have done to achieve BFI designation. With only 7 of 36 health units in Ontario with BFI designation, this is a very prestigious achievement. This means our community supports mothers and families to provide the best start possible for their babies."

- Dr. Jim Chirico, Medical Officer of Health/Executive Officer
North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit

Quick Facts

- To support the World Health Organization's **Baby-Friendly Initiative™**, the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit has made a promise to . . .

Welcome all families.

Assist parents to make informed decisions about infant feeding.

Provide a comfortable atmosphere for breastfeeding.

Support Health Canada guidelines to:

- recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months
- promote breastfeeding for up to two years and beyond with the addition of other foods.

Ensure our staff receives up to date breastfeeding training.

Work with other community groups to provide consistent care and support to families.

- Breastfeeding Committee for Canada www.breastfeedingcanada.ca

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