



FAQs

What is 'Leeds Breastfeeding Friendly'?

Leeds Breastfeeding Friendly is a campaign to encourage and support the mums of Leeds to breastfeed their babies. We see the babies of Leeds as the future of Leeds and want to give them the best possible start to help realise their full potential.

Although breastfeeding is the most natural way to feed a child and has huge health benefits, many mums are put off because they are made to feel uncomfortable when feeding in public.

So, as well as giving mums the information and motivation to breastfeed we also want to work with residents and businesses to create an environment in which breastfeeding mums are welcomed, supported and made comfortable.

What makes it different from other campaigns?

Unlike other campaigns, **Leeds Breastfeeding Friendly** has been developed in partnership with real local mums. Everything that we are doing is based on the experience, passion and ideas of real local mums. Not only does this get people involved, but it also gives us the confidence that it will work – it's designed for mums, by mums!

Why is it being launched here?

Although most people are aware of the health benefits of breastfeeding, the number of mums in Leeds that choose to do it is still relatively low. Because breastfeeding is least common in more disadvantaged areas, increasing breastfeeding could make a significant difference to health and wellbeing within some of Leeds' most disadvantaged communities.

Why is breastfeeding so important?

Breastfeeding brings a wide range of health benefits to both babies and mums: fewer infections and protection against conditions such as obesity and diabetes in later life for babies; easier weight loss and protection against some forms of cancer for mums.

The better health that results from breastfeeding results in fewer doctors appointments and hospital admissions. This results in huge costs savings for the NHS which can be directed to other services.

What's so bad about bottle feeding?

It's not that bottle feeding is bad, it's just that breastfeeding is better – it's natural and more nutritious. However, because the bottle feeding companies have so much money to spend on advertising their formula milk, they have convinced generations of mothers that bottle is best. We need your help to reverse this trend.

Can I really make much of a difference?

Definitely! One of the main reasons mums in Leeds stop breastfeeding – or decide not to start in the first place – is how uncomfortable and unsupported they feel when feeding in public. Not only will you be helping practically by providing a nice place to feed, you'll be sending a strong, public message of support to our mums. This will help make them feel more confident about feeding in public and encourage the wider public to follow your example.

What's in it for me?

A public display of support for the mums of our city can only strengthen the reputation of your business, with customers and staff. It clearly demonstrates that you run a responsible and ethical business, with a genuine commitment to the local community and your customers. More specifically, you could see a sudden increase in footfall and sales from breastfeeding mums!

What does it cost?

Nothing! Just a small commitment in time to undertake the following tasks:

- Display the **Leeds Breastfeeding Friendly** campaign materials in your venue to let mums know you are breastfeeding friendly
- Ensure you and your staff actively welcome breastfeeding mums and allow them to breastfeed in all public areas
- Educate staff in the benefits of breastfeeding and how to deal with members of the public who are negative towards breastfeeding mums either vocally or through their behaviour.

What do I need to do?

To become the best and most popular breastfeeding venue, there are a number of things you can do to make your venue breastfeeding friendly for mums:

- Provide comfortable seating that can be moved around if necessary
- Have the option of a private area if the mum requests it (but NOT in a toilet and should not be used to move mums to if another member of the public complains)
- This space should have enough room for the mums partner / other children should they wish to sit with them
- Provide free drinking water for breastfeeding mums.

Do I need to prepare my staff?

Your staff won't need any training, but you will need to inform them about your membership of the scheme and what it means for their role, especially if they are customer-facing. As you can see, the whole concept is very straightforward to explain and is likely to enhance your reputation as an employer.

What do I do if I run out of posters or postcards?

Contact: Sally Goodwin-Mills

Tel: 07712 214 867 **Email:** sally.goodwinmills@leeds.gov.uk

What do I do if a mum wants more information?

Simple! Give her a leaflet – and a smile – and encourage her to download the free **'Baby Buddy'** App which has been designed to help parents give their baby the best start in life.

