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You know that breastfeeding is one of the most effective methods of preventing illness and protecting the health of infants and mothers. There are numerous benefits that breastfeeding affords mothers and their children, including a 22% reduction in risk for childhood overweight and obesity.¹

The Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) is working with clinicians to promote and support breastfeeding. The enclosed breastfeeding toolkit will assist health care providers to optimally support breastfeeding mothers.

The toolkit has two purposes:

1. It provides clinicians with concise information for families about the benefits of breastfeeding and available resources to support breastfeeding families in the Chicagoland area. *This is aimed at helping mothers successfully sustain breastfeeding.*
2. It offers in-depth information for clinicians and families on policies that do or could support, promote, and protect breastfeeding in the City of Chicago. *This aimed at guiding families and providers who wish to be advocates for policies that support breastfeeding.*

We suggest the toolkit be used in the following ways:

- Engage all expectant and breastfeeding mothers—and other family members—in a conversation supporting the choice to breastfeed and addressing questions and concerns about breastfeeding.
- During this conversation with families, provide the patient information from the toolkit. Here is a sample script to initiate this conversation:

Breastfeeding for at least 6 months is one of the best things you can do for your child's health, now and in the future. There are a few things that can make it work for you. Here is some information about those, along with some interesting facts about breastfeeding. Let me know if you want to discuss this information or any specific concerns or challenges you may have.

For families and providers ready to advocate for policies that support breastfeeding, we suggest involvement in Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative projects in Chicago, described in the toolkit.

Additional copies of the toolkit materials, including Spanish versions, are available at <http://www.clocc.net>. Further breastfeeding and Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative information is available at <http://www.healthypaceschicago.org>.

Sincerely,

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¹ Ip S, Chung M, Raman G, et al. Breastfeeding and maternal and infant health outcomes in developed countries. Evidence Report/Technology Assessment No. 153 (Prepared by Tufts-New England Medical Center Evidence-based Practice Center, under Contract No. 290-02-0022). AHRQ Publication No. 07-E007. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. April 2007.