

# PREPARING SIBLINGS FOR NEW BABY AND THE BREASTFEEDING LIFE

by Corporate Lactation Services (CLS)



## EACH CHILD HAS A SPECIAL ROLE IN THE FAMILY

For many parents, adding a new baby to the family is an exciting time, but also a time to begin thinking about how your other child(ren) might react towards the new baby. They may have a strong reaction when the baby arrives, especially with breastfeeding them. You can expect that there will be some natural interest from your child or toddler as well as some on-looking and questions, even if you have begun preparing while you were still pregnant.

There may be some who will feel the need to be included and/or express wanting to “try” breastfeeding too. The choice on how you plan to handle this will be yours. Preparing yourself and your other child(ren) by thinking about how to best explain breastfeeding and what words to use on what is happening will help ease the transition for all of you. One of the keys to a smooth transition is that every member of the family still feels important and special!

Corporate Lactation Services

## IN THIS ISSUE

**EACH CHILD HAS A  
SPECIAL ROLE IN THE  
FAMILY**

**PREPARATION**

**THINGS TO TALK ABOUT**

**TANDEM BREASTFEEDING**

**KEEPING THE NUMERO  
UNO “NUMERO UNO”**

**TIME FOR BABY AND YOU**

**SUPPORT THROUGH CLS**

## PREPARATION

As your pregnancy advances, your child may start to notice the physical changes and ask questions about your growing belly. Keep the explanations SIMPLE and HONEST. This is a perfect time to bring up how your baby will need to eat to continue to grow. Include the words you plan to use for breastfeeding and words that you will want them to use when they are talking about your breasts or breastfeeding. Exploring this early on may help them feel excited and keep them from feeling left out when your baby is finally here.

## THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

- Breasts make milk
- Show them pictures of breastfeeding, women pumping and/or surround yourself with other nursing moms. A La Leche League meeting is a great place for this. Let them know that newborn babies spend a lot of time nursing, sleeping, crying and need to be held much of the time.
- Teach them about infant feeding cues like rooting and small mouth movements as baby begins to wake up. Teaching your child these signs may give them a job to let you know when they see baby starting to act hungry. This may also help them to know baby is getting hungry and to expect that you will be spending some time feeding after this.



- Talk about things they can do when baby is breastfeeding such as bringing you water, story time, snack time, coloring time, and music time. It may be helpful to have a special basket with items your child helps to pick out that you can quickly grab when you sit down to nurse. Items such as books, puzzles, blocks, big Legos, cars, etc. Games such as “I Spy” or “Simon Says” can also help keep your toddler/child busy while you are nursing. ~ Read *We Nurse Around the World* to your toddler/child. This is a booklet featuring eight nursing mammals in their natural habitat that Corporate Lactation Services can provide if you are interested. Let your CLS lactation consultant know if you would like this booklet.
- Pick out a designated area or special spot where they can be close if they choose while you are breastfeeding.
- Have a special baby doll/toy picked out that they too can hug while you are breastfeeding.

- Talk about some of the special things they can do with baby. They can make baby smile, sing to our new baby, read to our new baby, love and gently hug our new baby and help with bath time.
- Teach them that babies cry to communicate for many reasons. In time, baby will learn to smile, laugh and talk too.
- Tell them stories about what they were like as a newborn and how you took care of them. Possibly show some pictures of when they were a baby.



## TANDEM BREASTFEEDING

If your child/toddler is still breastfeeding or has expressed wanting to breastfeed again, it will be up to you. Tandem breastfeeding is when both the newborn and the older sibling are breastfeeding. The recommendation is that you breastfeed the newborn first since your older child will be getting more of their nutrition from other food sources. Your milk will still have colostrum and its important nutrients to meet your baby's needs. It is also perfectly safe for your older child. Some older siblings may have already been weaned and then express a desire to nurse from possibly the curiosity of watching the baby breastfeed. You can decide

whether you would like to try tandem nursing or not. Many toddlers just want to know if you will say yes. If given the opportunity, most will simply touch or kiss the breast and then be off to something else. If you would prefer not to offer, you might give your toddler a little of your milk in a cup to taste. Or, simply distract with another activity.

## KEEPING THE NUMERO UNO "NUMERO UNO"



Sometimes it is hard not to get excited about the new baby and guests may bring gifts for the baby and no one else. They might make great comments that refer only to the baby and forget that the siblings are there. Keep a stash of little gifts put away so they can feel included or allow them to open the baby's gifts. Saying something positive about the sibling like what a great help they are, how lucky you are to have them help bring water, help dress the baby, sing songs or just for being the best big brother or sister means a lot to them.





Also, consider planning a special outing or time with your toddler/older child while dad or a grandparent watches baby for a short time. Give your toddler/older child a few options on an event that will be with just you. Possibly, a trip to the library to pick out some books, a walk to the park, a trip out for a special treat. Then, you could plan to breastfeed your baby just before you leave and then just be a short distance from home, planning to return within an hour or so when baby is ready to eat again. This is an opportunity for your older child/toddler to see how important they still are to you. Children love to feel secure, important and like they are still “numero uno”.



## TIME FOR BABY AND YOU

Make time for yourself. When people ask what they can do to help with the baby, do not be shy or feel bad if you simply would love for them to cook, clean or babysit the others so you can spend time with your baby. Plan a special outing for your partner/friends and family to take your other child(ren) out while you spend time to bond with your new baby and treat yourself to some “me time” too. Be good to yourself! Also, keeping a sense of humor can go a long way in keeping a smile on your family’s face!



## CORPORATE LACTATION SERVICES

We are here to provide support you in meeting your breastfeeding goals.



**CONTACT US!**  
**1-888-818-5653**

My Lactation Consultants name and telephone extension is:

