



**Baby-Friendly Initiative**  
WOOD BUFFALO

# Report to the Community

2020

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# Baby-Friendly Initiative

## WOOD BUFFALO

### **VISION**

*Baby-Friendly Initiative Wood Buffalo:  
Proud to embrace a thriving breastfeeding community .*

### **MISSION**

*To empower a community that inspires and encourages families to breastfeed through the understanding, education, advocacy and support of the Baby-Friendly Initiative.*



## Background

The Baby-Friendly Initiative Wood Buffalo is a multi tier planned project aimed at achieving Baby-Friendly designation as recognized by the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (BCC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) is a global initiative aimed at protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding as a means to enhance safe motherhood, child survival and primary health. In partnership with the Northern Lights Health Foundation and Alberta Health Services, the Baby-Friendly Initiative Wood Buffalo has established a community based interdisciplinary committee. This committee is dedicated to creating and mobilizing key stakeholders to work towards providing families with optimal care for mothers and infants that is supportive of exclusive, long-term breastfeeding.

Over the past seven years, Baby-Friendly Initiative Wood Buffalo has built a strong foundation for supporting breastfeeding in the community of Wood Buffalo and is already showing an impact reflected by improvements in breastfeeding rates.

## 2020 Highlights

- BFI Wood Buffalo participated in the annual Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge a little differently this year. Due to social distancing guidelines and recommendations from the COVID-19 pandemic, the participants were not able to meet in person. Instead, the BFI committee held a virtual “Selfie-challenge” during the week of October 1-7 where people could submit a photo of themselves breastfeeding and were entered in for a door prize. There were also prizes awarded for best costume, oldest/youngest baby latched on and most bizarre place to breast-feed!
- Sessions were available to parents/families via Zoom for prenatal classes, as well as “Mom’s Matter” groups once a week. Many sessions were well attended and support was available regarding a wide range of topics including infant feeding, mental health and even outside yoga classes.
- Fort McMurray Community Public health had their pre-assessment site visit from the BCC-BFI Assessors. They will now move into the **Site Visit** stage of the designation process.
- Fort McMurray Public Health remains a drop-off site for donated milk for the Northern Star Mother’s Milk Bank. Over this past year, the site has collected over 414L of donated milk. In comparison, that would be approx. 103 (4L) jugs of milk at the grocery store! Also, during April 2020 there was a mass flood in the downtown Fort McMurray area and the milk bank donated milk for mothers whose milk supply was affected by being evacuated.
- “Having your Baby at Northern Lights Regional Health Centre (NLRHC)” is a new local resource created to give families an idea of what delivering at the NLRHC would be like and what supports are available before and after. This resource is available in print at some physician offices or online at:  
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/hospitals/nlrhc/nlrhc-having-your-baby.pdf>

# 2019 Highlights in Pictures

Quintessence Breastfeeding

Selfie Challenge



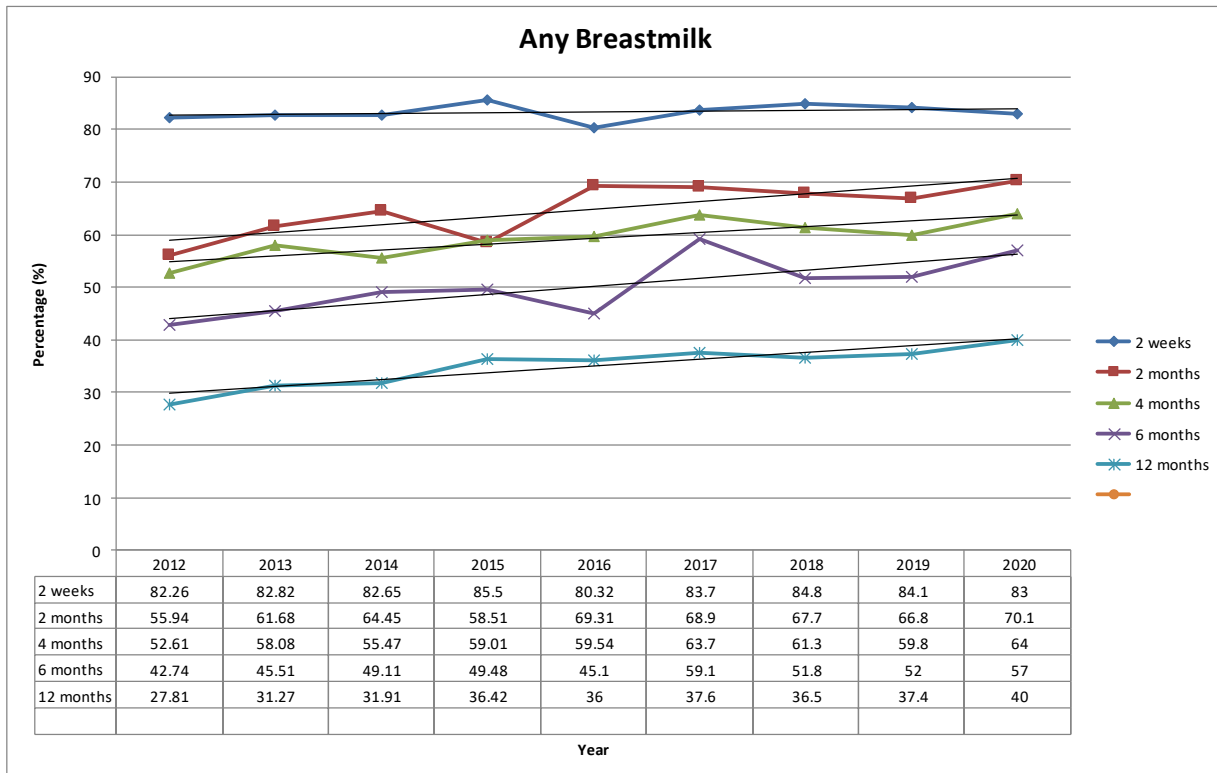
# Performance Measurement

Infant feeding surveillance is a requirement to achieve Baby Friendly designation. Data will be used to demonstrate improvement during and following implementation of the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada's Baby-Friendly Initiative Integrated 10 Steps & WHO Code Practice Outcome Indicators for Community Health Services.

**Requirements:**

- Report that the rate of exclusive breastfeeding at entry to service (Healthy Beginnings visit) is at least 75% over the course one year **OR**
- Report that the rate of "any" breastfeeding (exclusive and breastfeeding with supplementation of breast-milk substitutes) is at least 75% with demonstration of improvement in breastfeeding rates over three years. (Breastfeeding Committee for Canada, 2012)

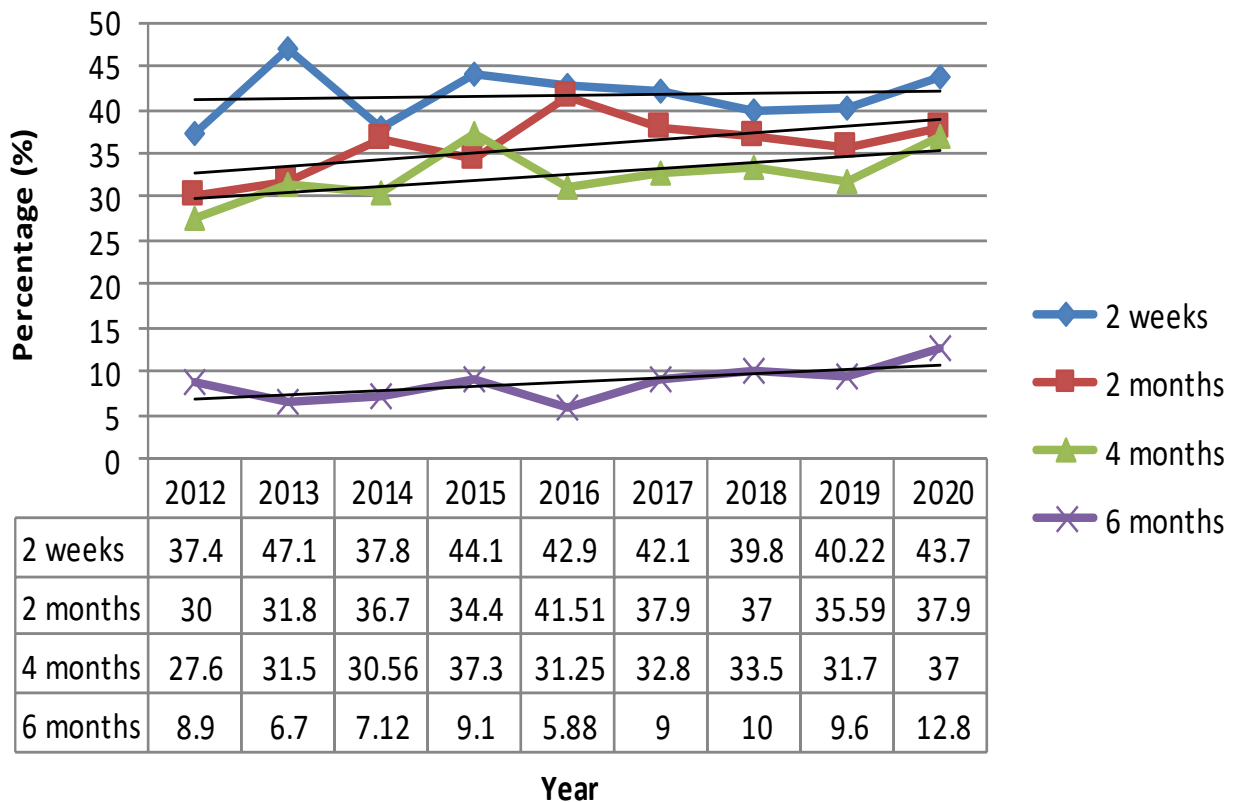
Data is collected at each contact with the family including the Healthy Beginnings home visits and each Well Child Clinic appointment at Fort McMurray Public Health.



An improvement in "any" breastfeeding is noted for all age groups over the past several years

# Performance Measurement

## Exclusive Breastfeeding



In the past year we have seen significant improvements in exclusivity rates across all age groups. Several initiatives have been put in place (including earlier visits with client after delivery and increased follow-up calls) which has helped support families reach their goal of exclusive breastfeeding.

In 2020, we have seen our highest rate of breastfeeding at 6 months of age. At 6 months, solid foods are often introduced at this point which accounts for the lower rates of exclusive breastfeeding as this data does not account for solid foods in addition to breastmilk.



## What's next?

- Engage our community physicians by providing education specifically tailored to their learning needs.
- Increase the amount of information given to families prenatally by working with physician offices to offer infant feeding support.
- Continue to ensure that all new public health staff are oriented to the Infant Feeding Policy.
- Ensure that all clinical staff have received at least 20 hours of breastfeeding education in addition to three hours of clinical observation. Staff that require education consist of casual employees and any new employees.
- Continue to engage public health staff in learning about breastfeeding management and promotion. Encourage continuing education.
- Continue to ensure all practices within public health are compliant with the *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes*.
- Continue to engage acute care partners by assisting them to: improve staff education, increase the practice of skin-to-skin and mom and baby togetherness, and reduce the inappropriate distribution of products that fall within the scope of the *International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes*.
- Engage the community through our website and social media. Improve visibility of the program in the community through community events and use of BFI Wood Buffalo promotional items and breastfeeding cut outs.
- Fort McMurray Public Health will continue to work with the Breastfeeding Committee of Canada to develop a plan to move forward with the Site-assessment stage of the designation process. Due to Covid-19 extra unique measures will need to be involved to ensure the assessment can go ahead safely. Stay tuned in 2021!





## Summary

The Baby-Friendly Initiative is known to be a time of intense exploration and learning and all part of an organizations journey to success. Facilities across Canada spend many years working towards the minimum standards outlined by the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada. Because of the sturdy foundation for maternal child care and infant feeding in Wood Buffalo, the finish line for the BFI designation is finally in sight.

There have been several successes that include the Baby-Friendly Initiative website, and community events and building relationships with our partners and community. Seeds have been planted in the Wood Buffalo region, throughout the North Zone, and across the province of Alberta. The momentum must now be carried as work is completed towards final designation as well at within the Alberta Health Services organization.

## Thank you

Baby-Friendly Initiative Wood Buffalo would not be possible without the support of the Northern Lights Health Foundation, Alberta Health Services and the community of Wood Buffalo. It is an amazing opportunity for Fort McMurray Public Health and Baby-Friendly Initiative Wood Buffalo volunteers to lead Alberta in becoming "Baby Friendly."

