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January/February
2026

breastfeeding



What Does a Breastfeeding Mom Look Like?

Shelby Hayes, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

When you hear the term “Breastfeeding Mom”, what picture pops into your head? Do you see a woman who never had to supplement or who exclusively nurses and never pumps or uses bottles? Does she need to do *all* of the above?

The big answer is **No**. You can be a “Breastfeeding Mom” in many ways.

Mothers who **supplement or exclusively pump and give their baby breast milk through a bottle**, are “Breastfeeding Moms” too.

If you think about your **breastfeeding plan that you made when you were pregnant**, most moms will say that their **actual breastfeeding situation is not what they expected or planned for**. Many factors can be a cause; from **incorrect advice, mother and baby being separated, baby being born premature, having a C-Section** and so on.

Point being, **no matter what has happened with your breastfeeding journey**, if you are exclusively breastfeeding, partially breastfeeding, or exclusively pumping **you still are called a “Breastfeeding Mom.”** Breastfeeding is **NOT all or nothing**. Every breastfeeding journey is different. **Be proud of yourself that you are doing the very best for your baby.**

Source: Kellymom

The Sunshine Vitamin

Breast milk alone does not provide infants with enough vitamin D. Shortly after birth, **most breastfed infants will need an additional source of vitamin D** through a supplement. The **risk for vitamin D deficiency increases when there is limited exposure to sunlight** (like the months of January and February) or when an **infant is not consuming an adequate amount of vitamin D**.

The **Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the American Academy of Pediatrics** recommend that **breastfed and partially breastfed infants receive 400 International Units (IU) of vitamin D daily** beginning in the first few days of life. **Check with your infants doctor regarding where to buy, what kind the recommend and when to offer it.**

Families who **do not wish to provide a supplement directly to their infant** should **discuss the risks and benefits of maternal high-dose supplements** with a health care provider. Because adequate **sunshine exposure varies and sunshine exposure may increase the risk of skin cancer**, **vitamin D supplementation is recommended** for breastfed infants.

Source: CDC

Q: Why is it important to have a good latch?

Answer: A good latch is **necessary for effective breastfeeding and the transfer of milk**. Getting a good, deep latch will **prevent nipple pain and damage**. It also allows **your baby to fully “empty” your breasts**, which helps you **establish a strong milk supply and avoid clogs or mastitis**.

A **poor latch results in a poor flow of milk to the baby**, even if the mother is capable of producing plenty of milk. If not corrected quickly, **inadequate milk transfer can lead to poor weight gain, dehydration and failure to thrive in the baby**, and **sore or cracked nipples, blocked milk ducts and mastitis in the mother**.

It takes practice, for both, you and your baby. You **know you have a good latch if it feels comfortable and pain free**, your baby's mouth opens wide **around your breast, not just the nipple**, and you hear or see your **baby swallowing**.

Source: USDA

Prenatal Breastfeeding Classes

Shelby Hayes, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

Are you already **planning to breastfeed**, but would like to know **more** about how to **get started from the hospital** to make a **smooth transition to home**? Or are you **unsure of what feeding method** would work best for your family and want to learn more about **how breastfeeding effects baby, you, Dad & other caregivers**?

Come join us for our quarterly Prenatal Breastfeeding Class! These classes are held at the **Livingston County Health Center**, located at **800 Adam Drive**, from **6–7 p.m. on Thursday evenings**.

Breastfeeding provides **important health benefits** for your baby, including **immune protection**, **easier digestion**, and a **reduced risk of infections and chronic illnesses**. It also supports bonding and can **benefit moms by aiding recovery after birth**.

This class will help you feel prepared by covering what to know before delivery, what to expect in the hospital, and how planning ahead—such as understanding skin-to-skin contact, early feeding cues, and lactation support—can make your hospital stay smoother and less stressful.

The class will go over the **benefits of breastfeeding**, **what to expect before and after delivery**, **how to determine a good latch**, **baby weight gain**, **pumping**, **milk storage**, and **MORE!**

The class dates for **2026** are listed below. If you plan to attend, please **RSVP by calling or texting Shelby at 660-654-5743**.

Wishing you all safe and happy travels this Holiday season!

Source: Missouri WIC



Mom of the Month

Lexie Schmitz & Penelope

Breastfeeding is often described as a natural and beautiful experience, but for many mothers, it is also a journey filled with challenges, learning, and growth. As a mother of two, I’ve lived both sides of that story—one marked by obstacles and another shaped by determination and self-discovery.

When I had my first child, a baby boy, breastfeeding didn’t go as planned. He was born with a tongue and lip tie that made latching difficult, and despite our best efforts, nursing was painful and frustrating. I eventually turned to pumping and bottle-feeding for several months before switching to formula. I felt a mix of guilt and relief, but my priority was ensuring my baby was fed and healthy.

Nine years later, I welcomed my second child—a beautiful baby girl. This time, I set a clear goal: to breastfeed for at least a year. She latched easily from the start, though not perfectly. Those early months were tough, with pain, engorgement, and constant pumping. There were moments I wondered if I could reach my goal.

Around the six-month mark, something shifted. My body found its rhythm, the engorgement eased, and breastfeeding began to feel natural. That milestone taught me an important lesson: be gentle with yourself.

One of the most rewarding parts of this journey is knowing what breast milk provides. It’s not just nourishment—it’s protection. Breast milk contains antibodies that help shield babies during those vulnerable early months, and every feeding feels like an investment in my daughter’s health.

There are still hard days, but knowing I’m giving my little one the best possible start keeps me going. And here’s something I believe deeply: whether it’s breast milk or formula, a fed baby is a happy baby. Every mother’s journey is unique, and what matters most is that our babies are loved and nourished.

PRENATAL BREASTFEEDING CLASSES

2026

JANUARY
15TH

APRIL
16TH

JULY
16TH

OCTOBER
15TH

**Classes will be held @ the
livingston county health center
from 6-7 p.m**

R.S.V.P. Shelby Hayes
660-654-5743

Livingston County Health Center

660-646-5506 livcohealthcenter.com



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