



# BFREE NEWSLETTER

Breastfeeding Resiliency, Engagement, and Empowerment

“Empowering parents to breastfeed every step of the way”



## Letter from the Editor

Dear BFREE coalition and Community members,

Happy Spring from the BFREE team! We hope that you and your families are staying safe and healthy as we enter the Spring season. We are pleased to present our April 2026 issue of our newsletter.

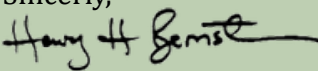
In this issue, we are highlighting the protective characteristics of breastfeeding/chestfeeding, especially as it pertains to allergic and autoimmune diseases. We would like to express our deepest appreciation to Kimberly Susa, RD, CDN, CSPCC and Danielle Cretella, RNC for sharing their expertise and experiences with us.

First, we introduce our topic, breastfeeding/chestfeeding and its impact on allergic diseases. We provide background information and share incredibly useful information provided by experts and parents.

Next, we showcase our recent successes. We congratulate the Southampton Union Free School District and the Town of Babylon for receiving Lactation Friendly Worksite Designation. We also highlight some of our recent efforts to connect with communities on Long Island.

Lastly, we introduce and celebrate the opening of our new lactation support group, intended to serve the Glen Cove Community! We are pleased to introduce our newest lactation facilitator, Monica Mena, RN, CLC, who will facilitate our new group.

We are sincerely appreciative to all of this edition’s contributors, to the entire BFREE Steering Committee for its active engagement and sage advice, and to each of you, our many collaborators, for your collective passion in support of breastfeeding/chestfeeding. Please email us at [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu) to share feedback and any potential contribution ideas for future newsletters!

Sincerely,  
  
Henry Bernstein, DO, MHCM, FAAP  
Principal Investigator  
Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding, and Lactation Friendly New York

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\*The BFREE Team understands that the language around breastfeeding can be very gendered and risks alienating marginalized populations. While we are encouraging more inclusive language, such as “parents” over “mothers”, “partners” over “fathers”, and “human milk” over “breast milk”, we also wanted to stay true to the voices that generously contributed to this newsletter. We hope to continue educating ourselves and expand the inclusivity of our work to promote healthy infant feeding for all parents.

# BREASTFEEDING AND ALLERGIC DISEASES



Allergic diseases, like asthma and food allergies, are considered a significant public health problem. Often common in childhood, they can negatively impact one's quality of life [1]. Fortunately, one of the many benefits of breastfeeding/chestfeeding is the transfer of immunity from mother to child. More specifically, breastmilk is the most essential food for newborn development and the maturation of the immune system [1]. Colostrum, the first milk produced after birth, has the highest concentration of immunological and anti-inflammatory activity, two major contributors to allergy prevention [1].



Image source: <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/php/about/index.html>

Previous studies have found that breastfeeding can reduce the risk of asthma in children up to three years of age and protect against eczema in children up to two years of age [1]. Specifically, exclusively breastfeeding for the first 3-4 months of life can decrease the incidence of eczema [2]. Current studies demonstrate mixed findings on the development of food allergies. While there are studies that show that a late introduction of allergenic foods can increase a child's risk of developing allergies, there is no evidence that recommends introducing allergenic foods prior to six months [1].

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# BREASTFEEDING AND ALLERGIC DISEASES

Breastfeeding/chestfeeding serves as an indispensable tool in helping infants develop their long-term biological defense systems. Therefore, we must continue to work as a community to promote lactation and empower breastfeeding/chestfeeding parents to support the health and wellbeing of their families.



## TERMS TO KNOW:

**Immune System:** A biological system that protects the body from infection by keeping harmful substances out of the body and removing any foreign invaders that enter the body. [3]

**Allergies/Allergic reactions:** When one's immune system recognizes a harmless substance as a harmful foreign invader and "attacks" the substance, causing symptoms like runny nose or itching. [3]

**Allergic diseases:** Long-term health conditions as a result of repeated allergic reactions [4]

**Asthma:** A condition in which one's airways narrow, making breathing challenging and resulting in other symptoms such as wheezing, coughing, or shortness of breath. It can be triggered by allergies to air particles, such as dust, pollen, or pet fur. [5]

**Atopic Dermatitis:** Commonly referred to as eczema, it is an allergic skin condition that causes skin to itch, flake, or patch. [6]

1. Koukou Z, Papadopoulou E, Panteris E, Papadopoulou S, Skordou A, Karamaliki M, Diamanti E. (2023) The Effect of Breastfeeding on Food Allergies in Newborns and Infants. *Children (Basel)*. 10(6):1046.
2. Meek JY and Noble L (2022) Technical Report: Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk. *Pediatrics*. 150(1).
3. John Hopkins Medicine. (2019). Allergies and the Immune System. John Hopkins Medicine.
4. Mayo Clinic. (2024). Allergies - Symptoms and Causes. Mayo Clinic.
5. Mayo Clinic. (2025). Asthma. Mayo Clinic.
6. Cleveland Clinic. (2022). Atopic Dermatitis: What It Is, Symptoms, Causes & Treatment. Cleveland Clinic.



# AN EXPERT OPINION: BREASTFEEDING AND ALLERGIES




## **Kimberly Susa, RD, CDN, CSPCC**


Kimberly Susa, RD, CDN, CSPCC is a Registered Dietitian at North Shore University Hospital, where she specializes in neonatal nutrition. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics from Queens College and completed her dietetic internship with Northwell Health in 2017. Kimberly is a Board Certified Specialist in Pediatric Critical Care Nutrition and has extensive experience providing individualized nutrition care to critically ill infants, including conducting comprehensive assessments, developing customized enteral/parenteral feeding plans, and tracking growth metrics.

She has been involved in multiple quality improvement initiatives and research projects within neonatal nutrition and is passionate about education, regularly mentoring dietetic interns and presenting to healthcare professionals. Kimberly has been recognized for her work with the Hospital Hero Award and has contributed to professional publications, including *Support Line*.

Outside of her professional role, Kimberly is a mother of two and a proud dog owner. She enjoys baking, reading, hiking, and spending time outdoors in the warm weather.



*The BFREE Team had the pleasure of interviewing Kimberly Susa, RD, CDN, CSPCC. In this interview, she discusses the importance of breastfeeding as a source of nutrition, offers advice for mothers at all stages of their breastfeeding journey, and addresses common related misconceptions.*

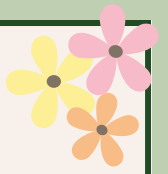


***Q: Can you discuss the overall nutritional benefits of breastfeeding?***

Breast milk is the gold standard for infant nutrition, providing an ideal balance of macronutrients, micronutrients, and bioactive components that adapt to meet an infant's needs and over long periods of time. For all infants—both term and preterm—it supports growth, brain development, and immune protection.

In the NICU, the benefits of human milk are especially profound. For preterm and medically complex infants, breast milk provides critical protection against infections and serious complications such as necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC). Its unique components, including antibodies and human milk oligosaccharides (HMOs), help shape the developing gut microbiome and support immune and gastrointestinal health in a way that cannot be replicated by other means.

While fortification of breast milk is often necessary to meet the higher nutritional needs of preterm infants, human milk remains the foundation of optimal nutrition in this population. Its dynamic and protective properties make it an essential part of promoting both short- and long-term health outcomes for my patients.



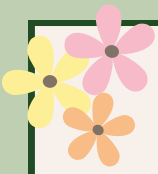
***Q: What recommendations/advice do you have for mothers that are navigating infant nutrition for the first time?***

For mothers navigating infant nutrition for the first time, my biggest recommendation is to ***give yourself grace and reach out to others for support.*** Feeding your baby is a learning process for both of you, and it's normal to have questions, challenges, and moments of uncertainty along the way.

If you are planning to breastfeed, early and frequent milk removal (whether at the breast or with a pump) is key to establishing a good supply. Don't hesitate to ask for help, whether it be from lactation consultants, nurses, or your healthcare team. Small adjustments in positioning, latch, or pumping technique can make a big difference.

It's also important to focus on your baby, not just the feeding method. Pay attention to cues such as hunger signals, wet diapers/stools, and growth rather than comparing your experience to others. ***Every baby is different, and feeding plans often need to be individualized-*** especially for preterm or medically complex infants.

Finally, remember that your well-being matters too. Rest, nutrition/hydration, and support are essential, and feeding should work for your whole family. Whether breastfeeding, pumping, supplementing, or formula feeding, the goal is a well-nourished baby and a supported, confident parent.



***Q: What recommendations/advice do you have for mothers...who are worried about possible food sensitivities/allergies while breastfeeding?***

For mothers concerned about food allergies, it's important to know that in most cases, there is no need to avoid specific foods while breastfeeding. Unless your baby has a diagnosed allergy or is showing concerning symptoms (such as blood or mucus in stools, persistent rash, vomiting, or poor growth), maternal dietary restrictions are not recommended. In fact, a varied maternal diet can help expose infants to different proteins in small amounts, which may even support tolerance.

***If an allergy is suspected, it's best to work with your child's pediatrician before eliminating foods***, as unnecessary restrictions can be challenging and may impact maternal nutrition. When needed, targeted elimination with close monitoring can help identify true triggers.

***Q: What recommendations/advice do you have for mothers...who are introducing solid foods to their baby?***

When it comes to introducing solid foods, early and consistent exposure to common allergens is now encouraged. Foods such as peanut, egg, dairy, and wheat can typically be introduced around 4–6 months of age, once a baby is developmentally ready for solids. Introducing these foods one at a time and continuing regular exposure may help reduce the risk of developing allergies.

For infants at higher risk- such as those with severe eczema or a known food allergy- introduction may need to be more carefully planned in collaboration with a healthcare provider.

***Q: What are common misconceptions about nutrition for mom and for baby in relation to breastfeeding?***

There are many misconceptions about nutrition during breastfeeding, both for mom and baby. One common myth is that mothers need to follow a highly restrictive diet. In reality, most women can eat a varied, balanced diet without avoiding specific foods unless a true allergy or intolerance is identified in their infant.

Another misconception is that certain foods will significantly increase milk supply. While adequate calories, hydration, and frequent milk removal are important, there is limited evidence that specific “lactation foods” dramatically boost supply.

For infants, a common concern is that fussiness, gas, or normal stool patterns are signs of a food intolerance. In most cases, these are typical infant behaviors and not related to maternal diet. Misinterpreting these signs can lead to unnecessary dietary restrictions or early discontinuation of breastfeeding.

There is also a misconception that breast milk alone may not be “enough,” leading families to supplement prematurely. For most healthy infants, breast milk fully meets nutritional needs in the early months of life, with the exception of vitamin D supplementation.

Finally, many parents worry that breastfeeding limits flexibility or requires perfection. In reality, infant feeding can be individualized to work for the family as a while. ***Whether exclusively breastfeeding, pumping, supplementing, or a combination of the above, success looks different for every family.***

***Q: For mothers who have questions about infant nutrition, what resources do you recommend (these could be people, groups, online sources, books, etc.)?***

One of the best resources for specific questions regarding your infant's nutrition is your healthcare team. Never hesitate to reach out to your pediatrician, lactation consultant, or dietitian if something does not sit well with you or any concern should arise. These are the experts in the field when it comes to infant nutrition and breastfeeding.

For breastfeeding-specific support, La Leche League International is an excellent resource, offering both educational materials and peer support through local groups and hotlines. Programs like WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) can also be incredibly valuable for providing access to nutrition education, lactation support, and community-based resources for families. Also be sure to take advantage of any local breastfeeding support groups. Many hospitals and OBGYN practices offer both in-person and virtual postpartum support groups for breastfeeding mothers. These can be a great resource for learning and also allow you to meet other parents in a similar situation.

The internet can also be a great source of information; however, I would advise caution when choosing your sources. There are a lot of social media influencers on various platforms that swear by different methods of increasing breast milk supply. Many of these influencers do not have a background in healthcare and do not follow evidence-based practices. Social media can also set unrealistic expectations on what a normal breast milk supply may actually look like. Rather, we should look to trusted sources of information like the ones mentioned above or the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and World Health Organization (WHO).



***Q: Is there anything else we did not cover in this interview that you would like to share?***

One of the most important things I like to remind families is that there is no one “perfect” way to feed your baby. While we rely on evidence-based recommendations to guide care, every feeding journey is unique- especially for families navigating prematurity or medical complexity.

In my work in the NICU, I see firsthand how much dedication, resilience, and love goes into feeding an infant, whether that means pumping around the clock, working toward breastfeeding, or adapting plans along the way. Supporting parents in meeting their goals while also ensuring their baby is growing and thriving is always the priority.

I also encourage families to seek support early and often. Feeding challenges are common, and having the right guidance from the start can make a meaningful difference in both confidence and outcomes. ***Above all, a well-nourished baby and a supported parent is what matters most.***



# A Maternal Perspective: Breastfeeding and Allergic Diseases



**Danielle Wiebke, RNC**

*Labor and Delivery nurse for 18 years*

*Mother of two*

My proudest accomplishment is being a mom of 2. Working full time, I managed to breastfeed both my babies for 13 months each (pumping during work hours).

With my second child, Teddy, breastfeeding came more naturally- latching was easier, routines were smoother, and I was generally more comfortable as a mother. However, I knew it was too good to be true...

When Teddy was around 3-4 months old, he started having terrible diaper rashes that would not resolve no matter what we would do (including a ton of naked time), terrible gas pain, projectile vomiting, and raw eczema on his face, neck, and upper torso. We consulted the pediatrician, became very familiar with him, and put all the pieces together that Teddy probably had some sort of food sensitivity. Formula was offered but we made the difficult decision to continue on our breastfeeding journey—it was something I gave my daughter and **I wanted to make an honest effort to be able to provide breastmilk for my son.**

When Teddy was 5 months old, I gave up eating dairy and soy as we noticed when I ate these things his symptoms would worsen. Over time, his belly slowly started to improve but his eczema or diaper rash did not. Peanut butter and beef seemed to trigger reactions, so I gave those up too. We saw a pediatric dermatologist and allergist. We did skin testing and beef and milk caused reactions, then blood testing did not confirm that result. We were so confused.


At 8 months old, we decided to introduce peanut butter (we have a peanut butter loving family) and thankfully he tolerated it well- I incorporated that back into my diet. At 9 months, we tried the “**dairy ladder**” and royally failed. I followed a few allergy groups on social media and tried to use their recommendations partnered with my wonderful pediatrician’s advice. At around 13 months old, we stopped breastfeeding. We reintroduced dairy and things worked out. We have not made the transition to full dairy milk- only lactose free- because if it works, why mess with it?!

Through this whole process I realized how strong I am. I altered my day-to-day life, but that worked for me and I understand how that might not work for everyone. Sometimes I look back and I think I am crazy for going through all of that. We could’ve given up and just used formula, but I had an amazing support system through my mother, husband, and our pediatrician.


Teddy is still a picky eater, but we go with the flow and are patient with him. ***I still feel proud to be able to share my journey with you.***

***Dairy/Milk Ladder:*** A gradual reintroduction of dairy allergen, starting with foods with the least amount of milk allergen to the most allergenic foods (1).

1. Buyuktiyaki, B., Soyer, O., Bingol, G., Can, C., Nacaroglu, H. T., Bingol, A., Arik Yilmaz, E., Aydogan, M., & Sackesen, C. (2024). Milk ladder: Who? When? How? Where? with the lowest risk of reaction. *Frontiers in allergy*, 5, 1516774. <https://doi.org/10.3389/falgy.2024.1516774>



*The BFREE team had the privilege of hearing one parent’s story of grit, love, and dedication. By sharing her story, we hope to inspire other parents to seek breastfeeding support within their communities.*

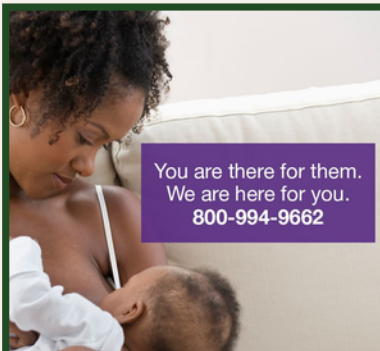


# LACTATION FRIENDLY SUCCESS SPOTLIGHTS

The BFREE Team is happy to have celebrated with Town of Babylon Annex for achieving NYS Lactation Friendly Worksite recognition! In particular, we would like to thank their site champion, Rob Labiento, for putting in a great amount of effort to support employees along their breast/chestfeeding journey.



Pictured (L-R) are Councilman DuWayne Gregory; Ashley Ciccariello, Director of Youth Bureau; Emma Yeung, from the BFREE team; Kelly McNulty; Rob Labiento, Director of Health and Wellness; and Leya Khan, from the BFREE team.



You are there for them.  
We are here for you.  
800-994-9662

Office on Women's Health  
National Breastfeeding  
Helpline: 1-800-994-9662

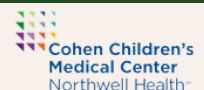
Call anytime M-F 9:00 am-  
6:00 pm to talk with a health  
information specialist in  
English or Spanish

This work is supported by the NYSDOH "Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding, and Lactation Friendly New York" grant which aims to increase local capacity and support to improve the continuity of care for breastfeeding/chestfeeding, especially in low income, racially and ethnically diverse communities with the overarching goal of reducing breastfeeding/chestfeeding disparities in these communities. Congratulations to all for being recognized for your hard work and you have our deepest gratitude for working with our team.



Department  
of Health

Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding,  
and Lactation Friendly New York



The BFREE Team would like to highlight Southampton District Office for achieving NYS Lactation Friendly Worksite recognition! In particular, we would like to thank their site champion, Darren Phillips, for putting in a great amount of effort to support the members of the community and their breast/chestfeeding journey.



Pictured (L-R) are Kate Metzendorf from the BFREE team, Joanna Pavao, Thea Fry, Darren Phillips, and Leya Khan, from the BFREE team.

In collaboration with our fellow BFFNY grantee, St. Peter's Health Partners, the BFREE team had the opportunity to present at the 2026 New York Statewide Breastfeeding Coalition Annual Education Conference. The presentation, titled *Advancing Worksite Lactation Support: Community Based Strategies*, discussed the importance of workplace lactation support and best policies and practice for creating a lactation friendly workplace. Thank you to NYSBC for this opportunity!



ST PETER'S HEALTH  
PARTNERS  
Community Health Programs



Department  
of Health

Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding,  
and Lactation Friendly New York



## Advancing Worksite Lactation Support: Community-Based Strategies

Christine Hernandez, MEd, St. Peter's Health Partners  
Kate Metzendorf, BA, Cohen Children's Medical Center at LIJ Medical Center



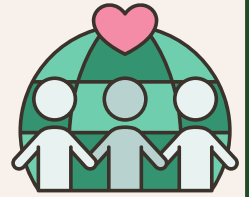
# CONNECTING WITH OUR SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The BFREE Team is grateful to Paola Duarte (CLC), Sandy McCabe (IBCLC), Marta Blanco (CLC), Italia Granshaw (CLC), Michelle Saavedra-Cedeno (CLC), Lizeth Villa, Maria Rosales, Carmen Nunez, Dhayan Mego, Ana Quinones, Sandra Marte, and Miguelina Vera, the community health workers from the Perinatal and Infant Community Health Collaborative (PICHC), and the community health workers from Harmony Healthcare for their excellent facilitation and translation in our ongoing Spanish Lactation Support Groups to promote culturally and linguistically competent services. We would also like to thank our subcommittee for Spanish-Speaking Communities for recommending this valuable initiative and working tirelessly to advocate for the community!

We have continued to partner with the radio station La Fiesta 98.5. We were fortunate to have Lizeth Villa, advocate/EMT/mom; and Dunia Martínez, mom; join the radio station to speak about “Motherhood and Breastfeeding”. Please click [here](#) to view the interview.



Pictured (L-R) are Lizeth Villa; Maira Morales, La Fiesta On-Air Personality; Dunia Martínez.



# COMMUNITY CORNER



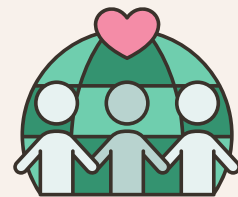
Health Fair at St. Rosalie's Church

On November 4<sup>th</sup>, the BFREE team tabled at the Health Fair at St. Rosalie's Church. We got to speak to so many moms and parents of the Southampton community!

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, the BFREE team tabled at the Nassau County Department of Health's Community Baby Shower. We are thankful for the chance to educate others about our support groups and learn about the resources available for expecting and postpartum mothers in Nassau County!



Nassau County DOH's Community Baby Shower



# COMMUNITY CORNER



Southampton Employee Benefits Fair

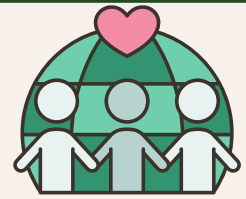
On December 5<sup>th</sup>, the BFREE team tabled at the Southampton Employee Benefits Fair. We had a wonderful time speaking to town members and fostering our long held connection with Southampton Town Hall.



On December 12<sup>th</sup>, the BFREE team tabled at the Teen Parent Conference. We loved sharing information about our support groups and how we support moms of all ages in Suffolk County!



Teen Parent Conference



# COMMUNITY CORNER



Harmony Healthcare:  
Pregnancy, Birth, and Beyond

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, Dr. Bernstein and the BFREE team attended Harmony Healthcare's Pregnancy, Birth, and Beyond Program Graduation and were recognized for their support of the program. Congratulations to all the graduates!

On January 23<sup>rd</sup>, the BFREE team tabled at the Community Baby Shower at Pronto. We promoted our prenatal classes Wyandanch support group as well as connected with community members and organizations.



Pronto Community Baby  
Shower

# Introducing Our New Lactation Facilitator!



## **Monica Mena, MS CAM, BSN RN, CLC, NY-SAFE**

Monica Mena is a bilingual registered nurse and lactation counselor devoted to advancing maternal and infant health through education, advocacy, and culturally responsive care. With a strong foundation in maternal-child health, Monica has built her career around supporting women during some of the most transformative seasons of their lives—pregnancy, birth, and early motherhood.

She began her work as a maternal home nurse visitor in 2018, guiding first-time mothers through pregnancy and early childhood development. Today, Monica serves as a Lactation Counselor at South Shore University Hospital in Bay Shore, where she provides bedside breastfeeding support and clinical guidance to new mothers. She also teaches childbirth education and breastfeeding support classes at NYU Langone, empowering families with knowledge, confidence, and practical tools before and after birth.

Monica is the founder of Mommy2Bee, a home visiting and maternal education program designed to provide personalized, culturally competent support to families in their homes. She is also the founder of Madre Sana, an 501C3 initiative rooted in nurturing the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of mothers—particularly within underserved communities.

Across every role—clinician, educator, founder, and advocate—Monica leads with compassion, discipline, and a deep belief that informed, supported mothers create stronger families and healthier generations. Monica will be facilitating our Hempstead lactation support group every 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month at 11am and our Glen Cove lactation support group every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 11am.



**Welcome to the Team, Monica!**  
**We are so lucky to have you.**



# FREE VIRTUAL BABY BASICS CLASS

- Expecting and new parents (and their families) are invited to our FREE monthly prenatal classes!
- Topics include:  
breastfeeding/chestfeeding, nutrition, car seat safety, postpartum depression, jaundice and more!

## Join any session by:



### ZOOM LINK

[bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport](https://bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport)

**1st Monday of each Month**

**6:00 - 7:00 PM in English**



### PHONE

+1-646 931 3860

Meeting ID: 640 219 8145

Passcode: 1



[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM  
/BFREE.COALITION](https://www.facebook.com/BFREE.COALITION)



[@BFREE.TEAM](https://www.instagram.com/BFREE.TEAM)

**Hosted by healthcare professionals.**

**Questions/technology concerns? Email [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu)**



**BREASTFEEDING  
RESILIENCY,  
ENGAGEMENT, AND  
EMPOWERMENT**

**Cornell Cooperative Extension**  
Suffolk County



**Department  
of Health**

Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding,  
and Lactation Friendly New York



## CLASE VIRTUAL GRATUITA SOBRE CUIDADOS BÁSICOS PARA BEBÉS

- ¡Todos están invitados a nuestra clase prenatal mensual GRATUITA, diseñada para futuros y nuevos padres, madres y sus familias!
- Durante la sesión, abordaremos temas clave como: lactancia materna y nutrición, seguridad en el asiento del coche, depresión postparto y apoyo emocional, ictericia en recién nacidos, y mucho más.

### Acompáñanos en cualquier sesión:



#### ACCEDE VÍA ZOOM

[bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport](https://bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport)



#### TELÉFONO

+1-646 931 3860

Meeting ID: 640 219 8145

Passcode: 1

**primer lunes  
de cada mes**

**6:00 - 7:00 PM (Ingles)**



[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM  
/BFREE.COALITION](https://www.facebook.com/BFREE.COALITION)



@[BFREE\\_TEAM](https://www.instagram.com/BFREE_TEAM)

Dirigido por profesionales de la salud.

Preguntas o si necesita ayuda con la conexión, escriba al email [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu)



**BREASTFEEDING  
RESILIENCY,  
ENGAGEMENT, AND  
EMPOWERMENT**

**Cornell Cooperative Extension**  
Suffolk County



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**BFREE: BREASTFEEDING  
RESILIENCY,  
ENGAGEMENT, AND  
EMPOWERMENT**



# FREE Lactation Support Groups

Organized by the Breastfeeding Resiliency, Engagement, and Empowerment (BFREE) Coalition

Open to all expecting and new parents (and their families)!

**Sessions are led in English and Spanish.**

## In-Person Lactation Support

*Spanish Speaking Facilitators / Translation Available During Sessions*

**Nassau County  
Department of Health:  
Health Resource Center**  
40 Main Street (Suite C)  
Hempstead, NY 11550

**When:** 1st and 3rd  
Wednesday of each Month

**Time:** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Westhampton Free  
Library**  
7 Library Avenue  
Westhampton Beach, NY  
11978

**When:** 4th Friday of each  
Month

**Time:** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Sun River Health  
Wyandanch**  
1556 Straight Path  
Wyandanch, NY 11798

**When:** 2nd and 4th Tuesday  
of each Month

**Time:** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Pronto of Long Island**  
128 Pine Aire Drive  
Bay Shore, NY 11706

**When:** 1st & 3rd Thursday of each Month

**Time:** 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

**Glen Cove Public Library**  
4 Glen Cove Ave  
Glen Cove, NY 11542

**When:** 4th Wednesday of each Month

**Time:** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

## Virtual Lactation Support

**Sessions in English:** • Every Tuesday 7 to 8 pm  
• 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month 12 to 1 pm

**Sessions in Spanish:** • 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month 6 to 7 pm

### JOIN HERE:



[bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport](https://bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport)



+1-646 931 3860

Meeting ID: 640 219 8145 | Passcode: 1

Please direct any questions to [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu)

To receive updates and  
contact our team, scan  
below:



Department  
of Health

Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding,  
and Lactation Friendly New York



Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension



Cohen Children's  
Northwell Health



BFREE: BREASTFEEDING  
RESILIENCY,  
ENGAGEMENT, AND  
EMPOWERMENT



# Apoyo GRATUITO a la lactancia

Organizado por el Breastfeeding Resiliency, Engagement, and Empowerment (BFREE) Coalition

¡Abierto a todos padres embarazados y nuevos padres (y sus familias)!

Las sesiones se imparten en inglés y español.

## Apoyo a la lactancia materna, en persona

Traducción / Facilitadores al Español Disponible Durante las Sesiones

**Nassau County**  
**Department of Health:**  
**Health Resource Center**  
40 Main Street (Suite C)  
Hempstead, NY 11550

**Cuando:** Primer y tercer  
miércoles de cada mes

**Hora:** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Westhampton Free**  
**Library**  
7 Library Avenue  
Westhampton Beach, NY  
11978

**Cuando:** Cuarto viernes de  
cada mes

**Hora:** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Sun River Health**  
**Wyandach**  
1556 Straight Path  
Wyandach, NY 11798

**Cuando:** Segundo y cuarto  
martes de cada mes

**Hora:** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Pronto of Long Island**  
128 Pine Aire Drive  
Bay Shore, NY 11706

**Cuando:** Primer y tercer jueves de cada mes

**Hora:** 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

**Glen Cove Public Library**  
4 Glen Cove Ave  
Glen Cove, NY 11542

**Cuando:** Cuarto miércoles de cada mes

**Hora:** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

## Apoyo a la lactancia materna, virtual

**Sesiones en inglés**

- Every Tuesday 7 to 8 pm
- 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month 12 to 1 pm

**Sesiones en español:** • 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month 6 to 7 pm

### ÚNETE AQUÍ:



[bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport](https://bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport)



+1-646 931 3860

Identificación de la reunión: 640 219 8145 | Código de acceso: 1

Si tiene alguna pregunta, dirijase a [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu)

Para recibir las actualizaciones y  
contactar a nuestro equipo,  
escanee debajo:



Department  
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Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension



Cohen Children's  
Northwell Health



Glen Cove  
Public Library



**New!**



## Lactation Support Group in Glen Cove



Join us at our free, drop-in, in-person **breastfeeding support group** to get advice, meet other parents, and share experiences!  
No registration necessary.

### **BEGINNING IN APRIL 2026**

**When:** 4th Wednesday of each Month

**Time:** 11:00am - 12:00pm

**Where:** Glen Cove Public Library  
4 Glen Cove Avenue  
Glen Cove, NY 11542

Sessions will be held in English and Spanish.

All pregnant or breastfeeding parents and families are welcome. For more information, please call 516-838-6416 or email [bfree@northwell.edu](mailto:bfree@northwell.edu).



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Glen Cove  
Public Library



**New!**



## Grupo de apoyo a la lactancia en Glen Cove



Participe en persona en **nuestro grupo gratuito de apoyo a la lactancia** para recibir consejos, conocer a otros padres y compartir experiencias. No se necesita registrarse de antemano.

### **A PARTIR DE ABRIL DE 2026**

**When:** Cuarto miércoles de cada mes

**Time:** 11:00am - 12:00pm

**Where:** Glen Cove Public Library  
4 Glen Cove Avenue  
Glen Cove, NY 11542

Las sesiones se ofrecerán en inglés y español

Todos los padres embarazadas y familias son bienvenidas. Para más información, llame al 516-838-6416 o envíe un email a [bfree@northwell.edu](mailto:bfree@northwell.edu).



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## **FREE VIRTUAL LACTATION SUPPORT**

Everyone is invited to FREE weekly lactation support groups for expecting and new parents (and their families)! Sessions are available in English and Spanish. Sessions entirely in Spanish are led by bilingual and bicultural lactation professionals.

### **Join any session by:**



#### **ZOOM LINK**

[bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport](https://bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport)



#### **PHONE**

+1-646 931 3860  
(Meeting ID: 640 219 8145  
Passcode: 1)



#### **FOLLOWING OUR FACEBOOK PAGE**

<https://www.facebook.com/BFREE.Coalition>

### **Sessions in English:**

- Every Tuesday 7-8 pm
- 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month 12-1 pm

### **Sessions in Spanish:**

- 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month 6-7 pm

**HOSTED BY lactation professionals (IBCLCs, CBCs, CLCs). Any questions/technology concerns? Email [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu)**



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## **APOYO VIRTUAL GRATUITO PARA LA LACTANCIA**

Todos están invitados a los grupos semanales gratuitos de apoyo a la lactancia para futuros y nuevos padres (y sus familias). Las sesiones están disponibles en inglés y en español. Las sesiones totalmente en español son dirigidas por profesionales de la lactancia bilingües y biculturales.

### **Acompáñanos en cualquier sesión:**



#### **EQUIPOS DE ZOOM**

[bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport](https://bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport)



#### **TELÉFONO**

+1-646 931 3860

(Identificación de la reunión:

640 219 8145

Código de acceso: 1)



#### **SÍGANOS EN NUESTRA PÁGINA DE FACEBOOK**

<https://www.facebook.com/BFREE.Coalition>

### **Sesiones en Inglés:**

- Todos los martes 7-8 pm
- Primer y tercer jueves de cada mes 12-1 pm

### **Sesiones en Español:**

- Primer y tercer martes de cada mes 6-7 pm

**Dirigido por profesionales en lactancia (IBCLCs, CBCs, CLCs). Si tiene preguntas o necesita ayuda con la conexión, escriba al email [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu)**



**BRUCE A. BLAKEMAN**  
NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE

# Hempstead Lactation Support Group



Join us at our free, drop-in, in-person lactation support group to get advice, meet other parents, and share experiences!

**1st & 3rd**

**Wednesday of Each Month**

**11:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Sessions held in English and Spanish.

All parents and families are welcome.  
For more information, please email [hassan@nassaucountyny.gov](mailto:hassan@nassaucountyny.gov)

In partnership with:



Department of Health

Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding, and Lactation Friendly New York



Cohen Children's Medical Center  
Northwell Health



Harmony Healthcare  
Long Island

**Nassau County Department of Health  
Health Resource Center**  
40 Main St. Suite C, Hempstead, NY 11550  
516-572-2978



# PRONTO

*of Long Island Inc.*

*People helping People*



## Lactation Support Group



Join us at our free, drop-in, in-person **breastfeeding support group** to get advice, meet other parents, and share experiences! No registration necessary.

### New Dates in Person!

**When:** 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month

**Time:** 12:00pm - 1:00pm

**Where:** Pronto of Long Island Inc.  
128 Pine Aire Drive  
Bay Shore, NY 11706

Can't make it in-person?

Join virtually from 12-1pm through this link: [bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport](https://bit.ly/BFREElactationsupport)

\*Sessions will be held in English, and a Spanish translator will be available.

All pregnant or breastfeeding parents and families are welcome. For more information, please call 631-231-8290 or email [mcolon@prontolongisland.org](mailto:mcolon@prontolongisland.org)



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# Westhampton Free Library

## Lactation Support Group



Join us at our free, drop-in, **in-person breastfeeding support group** to get advice, meet other parents, and share experiences! No registration necessary.

**When:** 4th Friday Of The Month

**Time:** 11AM-12PM

**Location:** Westhampton Free Library

7 Library Avenue

Westhampton Beach, NY 11978

**Bilingual Sessions  
(English & Spanish)**



All pregnant or breastfeeding parents and families are welcome.



For more information:  
email [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu)



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EMPOWERMENT**



# Lactation Support Group in Wyandanch



Join us at our free, drop-in, in-person **breastfeeding support group** to get advice, meet other parents, and share experiences!  
No registration necessary. All pregnant or breastfeeding parents and families are welcome.

**When:** 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the Month

**Time:** 11AM-12PM

**Where:** Sun River Health  
Conference Room  
1556 Straight Path  
Wyandanch, NY 11798

Sessions will be held in English, and a Spanish translator will be available.

For more information:

Contact BFREE:

✉ [bfree@northwell.edu](mailto:bfree@northwell.edu)

☎ 516-838-6416

Contact Sun River Health:

✉ [yiguerrier@sunriver.org](mailto:yiguerrier@sunriver.org)

☎ 631-626-9701



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## ***Earn Lactation Friendly Designation to Support Breastfeeding in Your Community***

BFREE works with  
**community spaces,**  
**worksites,** and  
**medical practices** in  
these communities:




BFREE guides your organization through each step  
to earn designation


- Provides lactation supplies
- Creates a lactation policy

### *Why become lactation friendly?*

- Fosters an inclusive and welcoming breastfeeding environment for all families
- Supports parents returning to work or school
- Promotes infant health through continued breastfeeding or chestfeeding

*Interested? Please contact us!*

 [bfree@northwell.edu](mailto:bfree@northwell.edu)

 [www.bfreecoalition.org](http://www.bfreecoalition.org)

 [@bfree.team](https://www.instagram.com/bfree.team)

# Contact Us!

To learn more about the BFREE Team and to access our free resources, please click below:



BFREE Website



BFREE Facebook



BFREE Instagram

To receive updates and ask questions about our support groups, please scan below:

