

BFREE Newsletter

Breastfeeding Resiliency, Engagement, and Empowerment

"Empowering parents to breastfeed every step of the way"

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Letter from the Editor

Dear BFREE Coalition & Community Members,

Happy Fall from the BFREE Team! We hope you and your families are continuing to stay happy and safe as the weather gets colder. We are especially pleased to present the October issue of our newsletter.

We are highlighting the breastfeeding experiences of working parents, focusing on their successes as well as highlighting the new NY legislation that went into effect for nursing parents. We are grateful to all of the parents and organization advocates who shared their stories and experiences.

First, we want to announce that the BFREE Team has started working under their new NY State Department of Health grant as of July 1, 2023. Next, we spotlight the Town of Islip for receiving breastfeeding-friendly worksite recognition. We also highlight efforts to connect with our Spanish-speaking communities in our region.

We then transition to our newsletter's theme on working parents and breastfeeding. We include the interview (in Spanish and English) that Stacey Salgado from the NYS Department of Labor completed with La Fiesta 98.5 Radio Station on the new NY breastfeeding legislation. We are also excited to share our Parents' Perspective, where we spoke with three moms about their various experiences while breastfeeding and working.

Finally, we present our community corner - highlighting our recent efforts to connect with communities on Long Island, especially in August during National Breastfeeding Month.

As always, 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. Please email us at 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



*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.

Starting our New Grant

Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding, and Lactation Friendly New York (BFF-NY)

As of July 1, 2023, BFREE is now supported by the Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding, and Lactation Friendly New York grant.

We are working in two communities in Nassau County: Glen Cove and Hempstead and four communities in Suffolk County: Babylon, Islip, Southampton, and Shinnecock Nation.

Our goals are to:

- (1) promote evidence-based lactation education/management,
- (2) support parents in meeting their breastfeeding/chestfeeding goals
- (3) establish policy and community support for breastfeeding/chestfeeding
- (4) increase breastfeeding/chestfeeding initiation, exclusivity, and duration within the selected communities

If you know a site in one of these communities that would like to become breastfeeding friendly, please fill out the following Google Form below:



<https://forms.gle/7F362wXm1PKEFeg49>



Department
of Health

Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding,
and Lactation Friendly New York

Success Spotlight

The BFREE Team is happy to celebrate Town of Islip in Islip for achieving Breastfeeding Friendly worksite recognition!



Pictured (L-R) are Edgar Cerna, Northwell Senior Director, Operations, Community Relations; Pam Reichert-Anderson and Anastasia Schepers from the BFFREE Team; and Members at Town of Islip including Angie Carpenter – Town of Islip Supervisor, Christopher Nicolino – Director of Labor Relations, Personnel & Safety, and Michael Walsh – Town Attorney.



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 was supported by a NYSDOH "Creating Breastfeeding Friendly Communities" grant, which aims to expand community-based breastfeeding partnerships and reduce disparities in the rates of breastfeeding across New York State. Congratulations to all for being recognized for your hard work, and we thank you so much for collaborating with our team!



Connecting With Our Spanish-Speaking Community

The BFREE Team remains grateful to Yezenia Chaparro (CBC), Paola Duarte (CLC), Sandy McCabe (IBCLC), Marta Blanco (CLC), Italia Granshaw (CLC), and Lizeth Villa 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!

Excitedly, we helped two Spanish-speaking day cares in Islip, Dios con Nosotros and Luna Daycare LLC to achieve breastfeeding friendly designation.

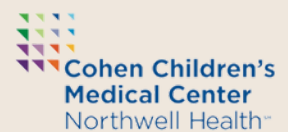


This project is supported by NYSDOH Grant #530461. The content of this newsletter is the responsibility of the Contractor and does not necessarily represent the opinions and interpretations or policy of the New York State Department of Health.



Department of Health

Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding, and Lactation Friendly New York



Working Parents and Breastfeeding

As breastfeeding/chestfeeding parents return to work, there can be a change in feeding routines and raise concerns about how to pump breastmilk safely.¹ Fortunately, there is new legislation that covers nearly all workers for federal lactation break time and space requirements. **The PUMP Act**, which was made effective April 28, 2023, requires employers of all sizes to provide a reasonable amount of break time and clean, sanitary, and private space for expressing milk for up to one year of the employee's child.² This also guarantees the pumping space cannot be a bathroom and all protections apply regardless of the employee's gender.

Link to Resources and Tips:

[Resources: Working & Pumping Tips](#)

[Resources: Upcoming Webinar 10/12/23](#)

KellyMom is a website developed by a mom of three and an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) and provides evidence-based information on breastfeeding/chestfeeding and nursing. This specific resources site provides information on tips for nursing parents as they return to work on storage, expressing milk, and lactation support.³

The State University of New York at Albany is hosting a free upcoming webinar open for registration discussing the role of legislation in supporting pregnant and breastfeeding employees in the workplace.⁴

BFREE

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¹ <https://lila.org/breastfeeding-info/working-and-breastfeeding/>

² <https://www.usbreastfeeding.org/the-pump-act-explained.html#:~:text=The%20law's%20expanded%20enforcement%20provision,rail%20carrier%20and%20motorcoach%20employees.>

³ <https://kellymom.com/bf/pumpingmoms/pumping/bf-links-pumping/>

⁴ <https://www.albany.edu/cphce/role-legislation-supporting-pregnant-and-breastfeeding-employees-workplace>

Updates to Laws Surrounding the Rights of Nursing Mothers in the Workplace in NY State, with Stacey Salgado

We have continued to partner with the radio station La Fiesta 98.5. We were fortunate to have Stacey Salgado, Project Coordinator at the New York State Department of Labor, join the radio station to speak about the legislation that went into effect on June 7, 2023, that expands the rights of nursing mothers in the workplace in NY State. Please click [here](#) or the image below to view the interview between Stacey Salgado and La Fiesta's host Ana Maria (in Spanish) below with an English Translation of the questions and answers that follow.



REFORMAS DE LAS LEYES SOBRE DERECHOS DE MADRES LACTANTES EN NY



Updates to Laws Surrounding the Rights of Nursing Mothers in the Workplace in NY State

Ana Maria

Why are you an advocate for breastfeeding in the workplace and what work do you do in this area?

Stacey Salgado

In my current role with the NYS Department of Labor, I provide outreach to women workers across our state under the federal Fostering Access, Rights, and Equity Grant, otherwise known as FARE. The goal of FARE outreach is to empower women with information on their employment rights and benefits. The Rights of Nursing Mothers in the Workplace is one of the topics I provide information on.

As a mother of two children myself, I know how challenging breastfeeding can be, let alone trying to juggle work, family, and feeding your baby. I also know that expressing breast milk is not something that only happens outside of work hours. Having the opportunity to express breast milk in the workplace plays an important role in maintaining milk supply and being able to provide this great nutrition for your baby for moms who choose to/are able to breastfeed.

Ana Maria

What are the benefits of breastfeeding for the mother/parent, baby, and employer?

Stacey Salgado

If we think about this full circle, there are many connections we can make stemming from the benefits of breastfeeding. For example, breast milk shares antibodies from the mother with her baby which help babies develop a strong immune system and protects them from illnesses. So, parents of breastfed infants generally miss less work to care for sick children. And this can correlate to reduced health care costs for breastfed infants and lower medical insurance claims for businesses.

Employees are more likely to return to work after childbirth if they feel supported in their decision to breastfeed, eliminating the costs of hiring temporary staff or recruiting, hiring, and training replacement staff. Nursing mothers who have a workplace that is supportive to expressing breast milk at work are more likely to have increased morale and job satisfaction.

Updates to Laws Surrounding the Rights of Nursing Mothers in the Workplace in NY State

Ana Maria

There are laws that protect a mother's right to express breast milk in the workplace. What updates have there been to these laws that mothers and employers should be aware of?

Stacey Salgado

Up until recently, New York State's labor law stated that employers were required to make "reasonable efforts" to provide a private space close to the work area where employees could express breast milk. On June 7, new legislation went into effect that expands accommodations for nursing mothers in New York State workplaces. All employers in New York State, regardless of size and industry, are now required to provide a private space in close proximity to the work area with a table, seating, electricity, and access to running water. By law, this space cannot be a bathroom.

If an employee wants to express breast milk at work, they must first notify the employer in writing. This can be by letter, email, or text message. The employer has to respond in writing and has 5 days to make arrangements. The employee has the right to express breast milk at work for up to 3 years after delivery. They have the right to take a break for at least 20 minutes every 3 hours during their work shift. Breastfeeding breaks may be paid or unpaid. Also, it is important to note that employers cannot discriminate against an employee for their decision to express breast milk at work, nor can they allow a discriminatory environment towards the breastfeeding employee by other employees.

Ana Maria

What should a mother do if she is not being given these benefits in the workplace?

Stacey Salgado

The NYS Department of Labor is here to answer questions and take labor law complaints. Our Labor Standards Division enforces the labor law and investigates complaints. You can call 1-888-52-LABOR or email LSAsk@labor.ny.gov to get in touch.

I also want to note that NYS labor law protections apply to all workers, regardless of immigration status. The NYSDOL provides free interpretation services to members of the public who are accessing our services. We also provide written vital documents translated into the top 12 languages in the state spoken by limited-English proficient individuals.

NYS Department of Labor Resources and

Contact Information

Resources

1. Policy on the Rights of Employees to Express Breast Milk in the Workplace ([English](#), [Spanish](#), [Haitian Creole](#))
2. [Your Rights as an Employee to Express Breast Milk at Work \(P690\)](#)
3. [Rights of Nursing Employees to Pump Breast Milk at Work - Information for Employers \(P691\)](#)
4. For More Information visit the NY Department of Labor (NYSDOL): <https://dol.ny.gov/breast-milk-expression-workplace>

Complaint number: 1-888-52-LABOR (1-888-525-2267)

Locations on Long Island with NYSDOL staff
where labor law complaints can be made:

Location	Address	Number
Labor Standards Garden City District	400 Oak St, Suite 101, Garden City, NY 11530	(516) 794-8195
Hempstead DOL	50 Clinton St, Ste 302, Hempstead, NY 11550	(516) 240-4749
Hicksville Career Center	301 W. Old Country Rd, Hicksville, NY 11801	(516) 934-8578
Massapequa Employment Center	977 Hicksville Rd, Massapequa, NY 11758	(516) 797-4560
The Employment Center Suffolk County DOL	725 Veterans Memorial Hwy, Hauppauge, NY 11788	(631) 853-6600
Workforce New York Career Center	160 South Ocean Ave, Patchogue, NY 11772	(631) 687-4800

Parents' Perspective

Hear the experiences of three amazing mothers, Ariel Nunez, Sona Dave, and Jacqueline Zimmerman, as they return to work while breastfeeding.

Ariel Nunez, MD

My name is Ariel Tassy Nunez. I am a physician at Northwell in the Division of Adolescent Medicine. My son's name is Ezra, and he is 21 months old. I learned a lot about breastfeeding during my pediatric training; I knew I wanted to breastfeed but also understood that it may be challenging. I was particularly motivated by the health and bonding benefits. When I breastfed for the first time, I did skin-to-skin when Ezra was a few hours old and he started breastfeeding right away.



Dr. Nunez and her beautiful baby, Ezra.



Dr. Nunez and Ezra at the beach!

Before returning to work, I met with a lactation consultant during my maternity leave who gave me some advice and I also spoke with co-workers who pumped at work. It was an extremely difficult transition for me. I was often late to work because I wanted to nurse my son in the morning before I left. It was also hard to pump twice during the workday. I started off pumping only once during my lunch hour, but then my milk supply decreased dramatically so I had to increase to twice during the workday. I felt supported by my employer and fellow employees when it came to pumping during work. Having access to lactation consultants, speaking with friends and coworkers, and starting to pump earlier was very helpful. For parents who are returning to work and want to breastfeed/pump, do what works for you and not what you think you have to or need to do.

Sona Dave, MD

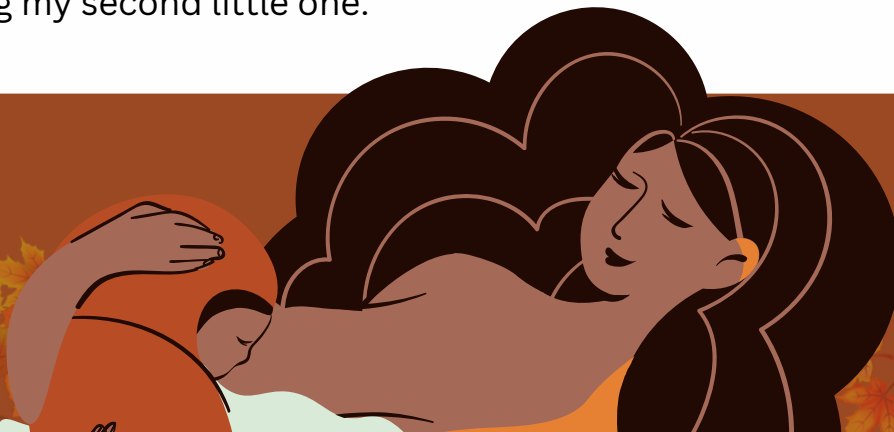
I'm Dr. Sona Dave. I am an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the Zucker School of Medicine/Northwell and serve as the Chief Medical Officer at the United States Merchant Marine Academy. I am a proud Mom of two beautiful children. My eldest, Dillon, is now 6, and my youngest, Nikhil, is 4. I was a fellow at Cohen Children's Medical Center in the Division of Adolescent Medicine during both my pregnancies and during my breast-feeding journey. They were both exclusively breast milk fed for a full year. I am grateful to share my story with you.



Dr. Dave and her baby, Dillon, after he was born.

Before giving birth, I had a mix of excitement and uncertainty about breastfeeding. I knew it was what I wanted to do for my babies, but I was also aware of the potential challenges. As I have counseled many Mothers on the textbook solutions to breastfeeding; I thought it would be easier for me to get the hang of it. I was also keenly aware of the struggle that many Moms face when breastfeeding so wanted to give myself grace if breastfeeding was not as expected. My motivations were: 1) to provide breast milk's unique blend of nutrients and antibodies to my children, 2) to experience and establish the closeness and intimacy that breastfeeding can offer, and 3) to prove to myself that I could do it (work full-time and give my babies breast milk).

The first experience was challenging. The actual process of latching was more difficult than the textbooks described or than I anticipated. It took time, patience, and guidance from a wonderful lactation consultant and other Moms who have struggled to keep me going. Despite the initial struggle, the advice from my sister-in-law, which was to try my best to keep it going for 3 months and then decide, helped me continue on the journey. Things got easier over time. I had no issues breastfeeding my second little one.



Sona Dave, MD (cont.)

Preparation and speaking to other working Moms in my division was key. I invested in a portable breast pump and practiced using it. As my maternity leave neared its end, I slowly introduced bottle feeding to help my babies adjust. I also had conversations with my supervisors and colleagues about my intention to breastfeed and the need for pumping breaks at work.

Transitioning back to work was a mix of emotions. While I was excited to get back to my medical training, I was also apprehensive about managing my breastfeeding routine and felt guilty about leaving my baby in the care of others. There were definitely hardships, especially in the beginning when finding the right place or time was a challenge. As a fellow, we had to commute on some days so I made a point to pump in my car and have the correct freezer bags to ensure I could keep the milk safe and stay on schedule. It was emotionally hard because I would miss my baby with the entirety of my being when I would sit down and try and pump without distractions. The process definitely wasn't always smooth, but with time, a consistent routine, and understanding from my workplace, things got easier.



Dr. Dave with both of her adorable sons on the day of her fellowship graduation.



I was fortunate to have understanding supervisors and colleagues who recognized the importance of breastfeeding. My workplace provided a space for pumping, and my fellow employees were respectful of my pumping schedule. The key for me as a trainee was having a mentor who had pumped in the past. She already opened up time in my schedule before I returned so it was not something I had to “ask” for. The support from my colleagues made a significant difference in reducing stress and allowing me to maintain my commitment to breastfeeding. I saw a lactation consultant after my first pregnancy. I did this outside of the lactation consultation in the hospital. It was helpful to see someone after the initial shock of labor and breastfeeding was over and to have someone answer real-time questions about what I was experiencing at home a few days into the process.

Sona Dave, MD (cont.)

It was also helpful to have my husband there so he could hear some of my concerns and how he could be supportive while I was struggling to initially figure out breastfeeding. Online professional women support groups (which included breastfeeding tips) were also helpful for connecting with other working mothers who were going through similar experiences. These platforms provided a sense of community and reassurance.

If someone asked me for advice, I would say to believe in your ability to navigate both roles successfully. Plan ahead, communicate your needs to your workplace, and establish a consistent pumping routine. Although easier said than done; don't feel guilty to ask for what you need and don't be afraid to seek help from lactation consultants or support groups when needed. Remember that it's okay to ask for accommodations that will make your breastfeeding journey smoother. Be patient with yourself and show yourself grace. Breastfeeding does not work for everyone and that is okay too. Lastly, hydrate, hydrate, hydrate! I could not believe how much less I was drinking when I returned to the office and it definitely affected my supply.

Just remember, fellow Moms and those that support a new Mom, commitment to breastfeeding while pursuing a demanding career is an incredible goal. One that is not easy at all. It is okay to have tough days and moments of doubt, but never underestimate the strength a Mom possesses. Lastly, every child is different. My first one had an extremely difficult time latching and made me nervous about the second time around. I was surprised when my second one got the hang of it on first contact. If breastfeeding works for you and your little one, great. If not, that is fine too! Cherish the time and special moments you have with your little ones. This precious time is fleeting.



Dr. Dave and her family now!

Jacqueline Zimmerman, MS, RDN, CEDS

I am Jacqueline Zimmerman, a Registered Dietitian and Certified Eating Disorder Specialist (CEDS); I work in Adolescent Medicine. I breastfed both of my children for just over one year: Joseph who is now 10 and Colette who is 6. Colette was a preemie; she was born at 32 weeks and spent just over one month in the NICU. She had lung disease of prematurity and went home on supplemental oxygen for a few months.

I definitely had expectations to breastfeed both times; each birth presented its own challenges, but I was determined to stick with it and have it succeed. I wanted to provide my children with all the nutritional and immunological benefits. With Colette, it was especially important because preemies have a higher risk of necrotizing enterocolitis and sepsis. Joseph nursed well from the start; what I didn't expect was that my nipples were quite sore at the start! This only lasted a few days, but it was so painful that if I hadn't been determined I might have quit before we left the hospital. After getting home, my body adjusted and everything went quite smoothly. Colette's situation was completely different – I couldn't even hold her for the first several days she was in the NICU, so I started pumping right away.

Once she was home, she needed more support to breastfeed but eventually caught on. I started pumping between nursing sessions to work on building up a supply of milk, and to get used to how everything worked, how to clean all the parts, etc. My transition into work while breastfeeding was fairly smooth. I definitely felt supported by my fellow employees, but even with that support, it was quite challenging. We don't have a designated room for pumping and I share an office, so each day I would use a different co-worker's private office. It would have been nice to have a designated space, but our office just didn't have any extra room! Time-wise was challenging also - even though I was permitted time, my work responsibilities didn't always follow an exact time schedule, so it was stressful to know that someone might literally be sitting and waiting for me the whole time I was pumping.

Everyone faces challenges, but don't give up! To pretend that it's not challenging is to misrepresent the situation. If we portray that it's easy and works out perfectly for most people, then someone may wind up stopping breastfeeding or pumping earlier than wanted or intended.



Jacqueline and her lovely children!

Community Corner

South Shore University Hospital at Bay Shore Latch On Event

This August, the BFREE team hosted a table at South Shore University Hospital in Bay Shore for their National Breastfeeding Month Latch On Event! We distributed lactation resources to the community and moms enjoyed spinning our trivia wheel.



Breastfeeding Awareness Event at Tanner Park, Copiague

Our members also attended the Breastfeeding Awareness Event at Tanner Beach Park in Copiague this August! Here, many groups came together to provide resources and giveaways to breastfeeding moms. Moms also gathered together to share their personal experiences with breastfeeding.

Pronto Community Day

At Pronto Community Day this year, our team set up a table to distribute lactation resources to parents in Bay Shore. Though rainy, kids enjoyed our frisbees and stickers and we loved connecting further with many Spanish-speaking community members.



JOIN OUR FREE VIRTUAL LACTATION SUPPORT GROUPS

Join our weekly virtual breastfeeding support groups for new and expecting parents & families! Sessions led by lactation professionals (IBCLCs, CBCs, CLCs) and available in English & Spanish.

Join any session by:



ZOOM LINK
[BIT.LY/BFREELACTATIONSUPPORT](https://bit.ly/BFREELACTATIONSUPPORT)



PHONE
+1-646-568-7788
(MEETING ID: 923 0683 0122 // PASSCODE: 1)



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



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[HTTPS://WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/BFREE_TEAM/](https://www.instagram.com/BFREE_TEAM/)

Sessions in English:

Every Tuesday 7 to 8 pm
Every Thursday 12 to 1 pm

Sessions in Spanish:

Every Tuesday 6 to 7 pm



BFREE: BREASTFEEDING RESILIENCY, ENGAGEMENT, AND EMPOWERMENT

ÚNASE A NUESTROS GRUPOS VIRTUALES GRATUITOS DE APOYO A LA LACTANCIA

Participe en nuestros grupos virtuales semanales de apoyo a la lactancia materna para nuevos y futuros padres y familias. Sesiones son dirigidas por profesionales de la lactancia (IBCLCs, CBCs, CLCs) y disponibles en inglés y español.

Únase a cualquier sesión:



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Sesiones en inglés

Todos los martes de 7 - 8 pm
Todos los jueves de 12 - 1 pm

Sesiones en español

Todos los martes de 6 - 7 pm



BFREE: BREASTFEEDING RESILIENCY, ENGAGEMENT, AND EMPOWERMENT

Join any of the virtual sessions through this link:
bit.ly/BFREELactationsupport





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: 11:00am - 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

*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







Martin Luther King, Jr.



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.

Details

When: 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each Month
Time: 11:00am - 12:30pm
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.

Wyandanch Breastfeeding Support Facebook Group



<https://tinyurl.com/wyandanchbreastfeedingfb>

All pregnant or breastfeeding parents and families are welcome. For more information, please call 631-513-5987 or email fdizon@sunriver.org.





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



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