



Telephone Counseling Tips

Preparing for Telephone Calls

- Getting ready to make phone calls is an important step. Take time to get ready!
- Before making calls, make sure you are in an area that is free from distraction.
- Pick a time when you are not busy with other responsibilities.
- Get your workspace ready. Lay out materials and supplies so you are prepared.
- Pull out the contact log for the parent you are going to call and review their information and what you talked about with them previously.
- Make a note of their baby's name so you can use it in your conversation.

Making the Call

- When beginning your call, introduce yourself at the beginning since people are often hesitant to talk with a stranger on the phone.
- Let the parent know what your role is in lactation and how you can help.
- Tell the parent you breast/chestfed your own baby and are ready to help them with any questions they may have.
- Ask if this is a good time to talk. If they say it is not a good time, ask when you can call them back.
- Get to know the parent. Listen to their answers to your open-ended questions about their feelings about breast/chestfeeding.

More Telephone Tips

- Don't be afraid of silence. Some silence is okay because it gives parents time to think about their answers.
- Sprinkle a few "mmm" and "uh-huh" responses so they know you are still there and listening.
- Don't interrupt. Show respect by allowing them to finish their thoughts before jumping in with your ideas.
- Reassure them that you are interested in talking about breast/chestfeeding and will get back to them as quickly as you can. Ask what a good time would be to call them back.
- Use their name, their baby's name, and preferred pronouns.
- Identify something they are doing right and offer affirmation. You may be the only one in their life who may say they are a good parent and are doing a good job.