**Step 8: Encourage breastfeeding on demand.**

Demand-feeding, also known as infant-led or cue-based feeding, is the practice of feeding an infant when the infant signals hunger. Infants that are fed on demand may feed eight to 12 times (or more) in a 24-hour period. Feedings occur at irregular intervals and last for varying lengths of time. When practicing demand feeding, the length and occurrence of feeding should not be limited.

Demand feeding is evidence-supported to be beneficial to both mother and infant. Frequent feeding aids mothers in establishing and sustaining lactation. Infants have their needs met so they cry less, conserve energy, and maintain more consistent blood sugar levels. Demand feeding reduces the chance of infants being fussy or jaundiced and reduces maternal issues such as engorgement and mastitis. Reduction of these infant/maternal issues can result in a reduction of staff time being used to address them.

When facilities provide an environment supportive of demand-feeding they are providing patient-centered care by empowering families to learn to competently care for their infants and respond to their needs. Infants learn to self-regulate their appetite and learn their own signs of satiety. For breastmilk fed infants, the temptation to supplement with formula is decreased since infants are more content and cry less. Staff should offer consistent support to families and know how to educate families about infant-led feeding. The facility will determine which staff members fall into the maternity care nurses category discussed below.

Maternity care nurses are expected to teach all families to recognize their infant’s early feeding cues (hunger and satiety). The messages provided to families can be reinforced through the use of hunger cues posters in maternity care areas, consistent messaging with prenatal care providers, and through prenatal education. Staff is also expected to advise all families to feed their infants as often and for as long as the infants want to do so. For the purposes of Keystone 10, facilities should have documentation (in the four months prior to submission of the application) proving that:

* **80%** of families can recognize early infant-feeding cues, and
* **80%** of families have been advised to feed their infants as often and for as long as the infants want to do so.

**The Keystone 10 Toolkit provides step eight implementation strategies, overcoming barriers, and suggestions for evaluating success on pages 124 - 133. Tab 11 in the toolkit, Resources for Each Step, provides step eight resources for implementation, a facility impact worksheet, and a sheet describing techniques that can be used to teach families about infant stomach capacity.**

For completion of this step, the facility should ensure:

* Families are educated to understand infant cues for hunger and satiety
* Families are educated about the infant’s ability to self-regulate appetite and how self-regulation optimizes milk supply
* Unlimited opportunities for the infant to practice on-demand feeding are provided 24-hours a day

**Application Form for Step 8:**

**Encourage breastfeeding on demand.**

**Birthing facility name:** Click here to enter text.

**Address:** Click here to enter text.

**City, Zip:** Click here to enter text.

**Name of the person completing this application:** Click here to enter text.

**Position:** Click here to enter text.

**Email Address:** Click here to enter text.

**Telephone Number:** Click here to enter text.

**Validation of completion of Step 8**

**8.1 What percentage of families is taught to recognize their infant’s hunger/satiety cues?**

1. Provide your facility’s percentages here (most recent 4 consecutive months):

 Click here to enter text.

1. What are the percentages based on?

 [ ]  An estimate [ ]  Chart review [ ]  Other: Click here to enter text.

1. What methods are used for teaching about hunger cues/satiety (examples: posters, belly balls, handouts on feeding cues and stomach size, etc.)?

 Click here to enter text.

**8.2 What percentage of families is encouraged to feed their infant as often and for as long**

 **as the infant wants to?**

1. Provide your facility’s percentages here (most recent 4 consecutive months):

 Click here to enter text.

1. What are the percentages based on?

 [ ]  An estimate [ ]  Chart review [ ]  Other: Click here to enter text.

**Thank you for completing this application.**

**Please refer to the application instructions page for submission guidance.**