

Studies exploring breastfeeding mothers' reasons for early cessation of breastfeeding suggest several factors contribute to this decision, such as problems with lactation, concerns with newborn or maternal health, and lower maternal education ([Odom, Li, Scanlon, et al, 2013](#)). Modifiable factors associated with a decreased risk of early cessation of breastfeeding include professional and social support ([Meedya, Fahy, and Kable, 2010](#); [Odom, Li, Scanlon, et al, 2013](#); [Thulier and Mercer, 2009](#)). These findings have important implications for nurses in education and discussion regarding breastfeeding before, during, and after pregnancy.

The [American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Breastfeeding \(2012\)](#) has reaffirmed its position recommending exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months old, with continued breastfeeding until at least 1 year old and beyond as long as is mutually desirable by mother and infant. The Academy also supports programs that enable women to continue breastfeeding after returning to work. In its support of breastfeeding practices, the Academy further discourages the advertisement of infant formula to breastfeeding mothers and distribution of formula discharge packs without the advice of a health care provider.

The Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) is a joint effort of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund to encourage, promote, and support breastfeeding as the model for optimum infant nutrition. Ten evidence-informed practices were developed by the BFI as a guideline for caregivers worldwide to promote breastfeeding ([World Health Organization, United Nations Children's Fund, and Wellstart International, 2009](#)) ([Box 7-5](#)). Research indicates that BFI designation is associated with higher rates of breastfeeding initiation ([Abrahams and Labbok, 2009](#)); however, BFI designation did not appear to affect breastfeeding rates among women with higher educational levels in a United States sample ([Hawkins, Stern, Baum, et al, 2014](#)). In addition, [Atchan, Davis, and Foureur \(2013\)](#), in a review of the evidence exploring association between BFI status and outcomes, note that the lack of clearly worded and sensitive indicators, inaccurate reporting, and the lack of studies with sufficient sample size has limited the ability of researchers to make conclusive statements about the existence of direct causal effect between breastfeeding practices and the initiative, although there is clearly a positive