

# BREASTFEEDING

IRELAND HAS THE LOWEST BREASTFEEDING RATE IN EUROPE, DESPITE INITIATION RATES IMPROVING OVER THE LAST DECADE.



of mothers start breastfeeding



at 3 months



Less than 6% exclusively breastfed at 6 months vs European average of 25%

## HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE BREASTFEEDING?



SKIN TO SKIN AFTER DELIVERY



ACCESS TO LACTATION CONSULTANTS



PUBLIC FACILITIES FOR BREASTFEEDING



ONGOING EDUCATION FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS



SUPPORT- FROM FAMILY, HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS, SOCIETY

## BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING

### BENEFITS FOR BABY

- Lower risk of
  - SIDS
  - allergy
  - infections
- Protective against obesity
- Improved cognitive performance

### BENEFITS FOR MOTHER

- Lower risk of
- breast cancer
  - ovarian cancer
  - type 2 diabetes

## WHO RECOMMENDATIONS

Breastfeeding up to **6** months

Breastfeeding with supplementary foods until **2** years or beyond

“ Babies who are breastfed receive an individualised source of nutrition according to their changing needs based on gestational age, lactation period, and time of day ”



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