

The B.A.T.Moms Initiative

August 10th 2014

To Whom it May Concern:

The Breastfeeding Awareness For Traveling Moms (B.A.T.Moms) initiative seeks to support traveling mothers who are breastfeeding, by raising awareness for their needs at major hotel brands.

The benefits of breastfeeding are unrivaled; leading the AAP to recommend that infants be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months from birth, followed by a diet of solid foods and breast milk until the end of the first year. The WHO takes this a step further and recommends that breastfeeding be continued up to ages 2 years and beyond. This has spurred a successful global campaign to encourage more women to breastfeed their infants, with phenomenal results. Today, up to 50% of women in the United States breastfed their baby at 6 months, as compared with 35% in 2000.

While there is increasing support for mothers who wish to breastfeed, there is little support for breastfeeding mothers who travel without their infant. There are few sanitary places where a traveling mother can express her milk, and, even when she is able to find a place to pump, there presents a new challenge of being able to store the expressed milk safely.

Most traveling mothers will inadvertently stay at a hotel, and use their hotel room as both a place to pump, and store their expressed milk. Many hotels however, are ill equipped to deal with the needs of a breastfeeding mother. For example, most in-room fridges are not temperature controlled, and the mother will not be able to store her expressed milk safely. In addition, even if the hotel did have an appropriate place to store breast milk, the mother may not be aware of such an amenity unless the hotel staff informs them of it.

The B.A.T.Moms movement seeks to close this gap, and calls on hotels to pledge to provide a small inventory of fridges with freezer units that can be installed on request to allow mothers to freeze their milk for safe storage. As part of this campaign, hotels are also asked to conduct training sessions for their staff to better understand the importance of breastfeeding, safety and handling of breast milk, as well as to be sensitive to the needs of their breastfeeding guests.

By adopting these policies, hotels will be joining the cause to provide a supportive environment for breastfeeding mothers, and encourage them to breastfeed their infants for longer.

For more information about the B.A.T.Moms initiative, or to pledge support, please contact batmothers@gmail.com or visit the BATMoms.com

Sincerely,

Laura Fu

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