

## **“Doing Both” – Breastfeeding & Formula Feeding**

Ideas for responding when mothers say they want to both breastfeed and formula feed:

### Background:

- \* Mothers who say they want to “do both” generally know that breastfeeding is important, but may be unaware of the potential for harm from formula supplementation on their baby’s health, their own health, and their ability develop and maintain a milk supply, and thus, be able to “do both.”
- \* Use open ended questions to find out what she means by “both”, and the reasons she wants to bottle feed too. Addressing her concerns with correct information in a caring manner will help mothers make an informed choice and feel supported.

Here is some sample language to try:

- \* “That’s great that you want to breastfeed. May I help you get started so that you can “do both” for as long as you like?”
- \* “The way to “do both” is to start with breastfeeding only. That will help your body begin to produce milk and will help your milk supply develop according to your baby’s needs. If you use bottles now, your body will think there is no baby, and you will lose your milk, and you may not be able to breastfeed at all after a short time.”
- \* “Using the bottle now may also make it difficult for your baby to breastfeed because he will become confused between the hard bottle nipple, and your own soft warm nipple. Using the bottle now may also cause you to have breast problems like engorgement .”
- \* “You can introduce the bottle later—usually at about 4-6 weeks—without having these problems. We will give you lots of help here in the hospital, and you can call the Lactation Help Line or WIC for help you after you leave.”