The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that a baby receive breast milk exclusively for the first six months of life.

So how can a man bond with his child while encouraging a healthy nursing relationship between him, the mother and the new baby? The opportunities are plentiful!

Dads can be cheerleaders:
1. Be part of the preparation – classes, prenatal visits, books
2. Be part of the decision by being supportive of Mom’s decision to breastfeed and POSITIVE about outcome
3. Encourage mom, acknowledge her efforts and LET HER KNOW, tell her she is great!
4. Extra support when nursing mom is going through pain, or stress of sleep deprivation
5. Newborn period can be an emotional rollercoaster
6. Making those phone calls and remembering the appointments especially when some things are not going so well.
7. Encourage nursing mom even when other family have given up. This is easier if the Dad was involved in the initial decision to breastfeed and was able to learn much about the process of breastfeeding.

Dads can be gatekeepers:
1. Ensure adequate breastfeeding environment as mom builds her skills and gathers more courage in this process especially as the family gets a lot of visitors in the early days post-delivery.
2. He makes sure she has food and drink nearby (and TV remote/laptop/tablet computer), simple chores, groceries, cleaning up, DIAPER changes!
3. Older siblings need Dad to help even in roles previously played by Mom – playing, bedtime routines, doctor’s visits.
4. Speaking up especially with interfering relatives/”family friends”
5. Night crying/diaper change, night-time feeds if mom expressed

Dads make a welcome extra pair of hands:
1. Diaper changes especially the early stools: tarry, tenacious – boot camp for Dad and diapers.
2. Tummy time – babies love it with dad
3. Baths
4. Giving mom a break like birping after feeds and taking it on from there till next feed is due!

**Breastfeeding Support from Partners and Grandmothers: Perceptions of Swedish Women**

**Abstract: Background:** Support from the mother's network of relatives, friends, and professional caregivers during childbirth is likely to be important for breastfeeding success. Few studies have been conducted to examine mothers' perceptions of breastfeeding support. The objective of this study was to describe breastfeeding support and feelings of confidence of primiparas and multiparas in relation to duration of breastfeeding.

**Methods:** Mothers who delivered vaginally were eligible for inclusion. After receiving a questionnaire when their children were 9 to 12 months of age, 194 primiparas and 294 multiparas responded to questions on breastfeeding history and on perceived and overall breastfeeding support and feelings of confidence.

**Results:** Feelings of overall breastfeeding support were correlated with duration of exclusive breastfeeding in both primiparas ($p < 0.001$) and multiparas ($p < 0.001$). Multiparas who knew how long they were breastfed as a child showed a longer duration of exclusive ($p = 0.006$) and total ($p = 0.007$) breastfeeding than multiparas who did not know. The time during which the partner was present after labor was correlated with the duration of exclusive ($p < 0.001$) and total breastfeeding ($p = 0.003$) in primiparas. Feelings of confidence when the baby was 6 to 12 months old, as retrospectively rated on a visual analog scale, was correlated with feelings of confidence in the partner during childbirth in both primiparas ($p < 0.001$) and multiparas ($p < 0.001$) and the experience of overall breastfeeding support (primiparas, $p = 0.002$; multiparas, $p < 0.001$). Both groups were more content with breastfeeding information they received from midwives in the maternity wards, compared with that from antenatal midwives and postnatal nurses ($p < 0.001$).

**Conclusions:** A helpful support strategy for mothers with respect to breastfeeding outcome is for health professionals to discuss the grandmother's perception of breastfeeding with the mother. It is important for perinatal caregivers to provide an environment that enables the family to stay together after delivery. A helpful support strategy for health professionals might be to mobilize grandmothers with positive breastfeeding perception to provide support for their daughters’ breastfeeding. (BIRTH 50:4 December 2003)