

# Work and Breastfeeding: Understanding Women's Decisions to Return to Work and Breastfeed

## Research Themes

We are examining (1) the impact of work experiences during pregnancy and after return to work as predictors of breastfeeding continuation and (2) how breastfeeding-related work experiences predicts employee motivation and attitudes. Breastfeeding is an important health outcome that predicts host of child and maternal health outcomes.

## Recent Accomplishments

We have a paper published in the Journal of Organizational Behavior (2016) examining the work characteristics that influence mothers' decisions to initiate and continue breastfeeding after they return to work. In addition, we have obtained funding for and are in the initial stages of a large, multi-site study to further examine the interplay between breastfeeding and work experiences and attitudes.

## Issues

Breastfeeding is an important outcome for maternal health, child health, and employee productivity. However, our understanding of how the workplace and work experiences influence breastfeeding behaviors and how these breastfeeding experiences influence employee attitudes is still limited. We are working to address this dearth by examining the intersection of breastfeeding and the return to work.



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