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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN BAY COUNTY CELEBRATES NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING MONTH



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Panama City, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Bay is celebrating National Breastfeeding Month this August. This year's theme—Breastfeeding: Foundation of Life! The theme focuses on breastfeeding as the foundation of lifelong good health for babies and mothers.

“We are glad to see so many new organizations be recognized for their efforts to help breastfeeding moms,” said Douglas Kent, MPH, DOH-Bay Administrator. “Having supportive environments when mothers return to work is a key for their success in continuing to breastfeed and it’s a win-win for the employer and employee.”

DOH-Bay is working to promote breastfeeding as a vital health activity, and encourages breastfeeding-friendly hospitals, child care facilities, work places and communities. How to feed a new baby is one of the first important decisions a family must make, and most women who choose to breastfeed have a specific goal in mind.

Research shows:

- Breastfed infants have a reduced risk of infections, asthma, obesity and SIDS compared with formula-fed infants;
- Mothers who breastfeed have a reduced risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer and postpartum depression compared to mothers who don't breastfeed; and
- It's estimated that \$13 billion would be saved per year if 90 percent of U.S. infants were breastfed exclusively for six months.

To reach the goal of exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months mothers need supportive work policies, infant and child-care at or near the workplace, and private facilities for expressing and storing breastmilk. It takes time and practice to learn how to breastfeed, both for mother and baby, and to establish a good milk supply. To that end, Bay County is proud to be the home of eight Breastfeeding Friendly Employers and three Breastfeeding Friendly childcare providers. This distinction is earned through the Florida Breastfeeding Coalition.

Breastfeeding Friendly Employers

Gold

- Bay County Board of Commissioners
- Bay Medical Sacred Heart
- Florida Department of Health in Bay County
- Gulf Coast Regional Medical Center
- Oceaneering

Silver

- Emerald Coast OBGYN

Bronze

- BookIt.com
- Gulf Power

Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Providers

- Little Hearts Learning Center
- Kidlogic ELC
- Rose James Home Daycare (home)

In honor of National Breastfeeding Month, DOH-Bay will partner with Breastfeed Bay, the Breastfeeding Task Force for Bay and surrounding counties, to host a World Breastfeeding Week Celebration and Big Latch On. The event will be Saturday, August 4 from 9:30 am – Noon at the Springfield Community Church located at 615 Transmitter Road in Panama City. Breastfeed Bay will provide refreshments, door prizes, and connect moms with support.

**World Breastfeeding Week 2018
Celebration & BIG Latch On
Saturday, August 4
9:30 am – Noon
Springfield Community Church, Cafeteria
615 Transmitter Road, Panama City**

DOH-Bay's WIC program offer resources and staff to help breastfeeding mothers. WIC agencies may have International Board-Certified Lactation Consultants who have a high level of specialized knowledge in breastfeeding to assist clients. WIC also has Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Programs. The trained peer counselors are chosen from the same socio/economic/ethnic groups as WIC clients and have successfully breastfed their own babies. Breastfeeding peer counselors provide mother-to-mother basic breastfeeding education and support to pregnant and breastfeeding moms.

For more information about the Florida WIC program call 1-800-342-3556 or visit www.FloridaWIC.org. To learn more about National Breastfeeding Month and the benefits of breastfeeding visit www.usbreastfeeding.org, www.lli.org or www.flbreastfeeding.org.

To learn more about the World Breastfeeding Week Celebration and the Big Latch On or local WIC resources, contact the Florida Department of Health in Bay County WIC Office at 850-747-5775, visit us online at Bay.FloridaHealth.gov, or follow us on Twitter @FLHealthEmerald.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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