



Jackson County Health Department

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Creating Healthy Communities



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August is Breastfeeding Awareness Month

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All Families Want to Fall in Love & We Can Help

Ever heard the saying, “It doesn’t matter if it’s a boy or a girl, as long as it’s healthy?” It seems that all parents want to give their baby the healthiest start in life. Stefanie Horning, Registered Dietitian and WIC Coordinator, stated that breastfeeding promotes strong immune systems and protects against illness and infection. It guards against childhood obesity and diabetes. Breastfeeding forms a unique mother-baby bond. Nature teaches us that skin-to-skin contact, keeping babies close, feeding babies when they are hungry, and having a good latch are important factors in establishing successful breastfeeding. Having a supportive partner, or champion, and consistent messaging from healthcare providers also helps.

August is Breastfeeding Awareness Month in Michigan. In order to promote early breastfeeding success and breastfeeding outcomes, the Michigan Breastfeeding Network has announced a statewide initiative that includes hospitals, WIC agencies, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, community stakeholders, coalitions, and the Jackson County Health Department to provide continuity of care for mothers and babies. According to Colleen Zurcher, International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, this collaboration could lead to higher breastfeeding initiation and duration rates, healthier babies, and closer families.

In his Breastfeeding Awareness Month Proclamation, Governor Snyder declared that Michigan is committed to reducing infant mortality and increasing the health of mothers and babies by delaying the early introduction of food sources other than breastmilk to promote successful establishment and maintenance of breastmilk production.

Activities throughout the state are planned to draw attention to the importance of breastfeeding for the health and well-being of mothers and children. To celebrate World Breastfeeding Week (August 1-7), on Friday August 5th and 6th at 10:30 am, thousands of breastfeeding women and their babies/children across the world will gather in their own communities to take part in the 2016 Global Big Latch On, a synchronized breastfeeding event in multiple locations. **Our local Big Latch On will take place on Friday, August 5th at 10:30 am (registration begins at 9:00 am) at the First Church of the Nazarene on M-50 in Jackson.** Please contact the Jackson County Breastfeeding Coalition for more information at 517-768-2169. There will also be a Breastfeeding Walk at noon on August 10 at the State Capitol in Lansing. The public is welcome to participate. Go to <http://mibreastfeeding.org/events> to find out about many more events being held throughout Michigan for Breastfeeding Awareness Month.

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