

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

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Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PROMOTING BREASTFEEDING ACCESS FOR WORKING MOMS FOCUS OF MONTH-LONG CAMPAIGN

Port St. Joe, FL— This August, the Florida Department of Health in Gulf County is celebrating National Breastfeeding Awareness Month. Gulf County is working to promote breastfeeding as a vital health activity and encourage breastfeeding-friendly work places and communities.

“Breastfeeding offers many benefits to your baby. Breast milk contains a proper balance of nutrients to help your infant grow into a strong and healthy toddler,” said Marsha Lindeman, Administrator for the Florida Department of Health in Gulf and Franklin counties. “Our goal during the month-long campaign is to increase awareness of breastfeeding support services available for mothers.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, mothers who breastfeed their children are at a healthier weight on average than those who do not. They also have a lower risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, breast and ovarian cancer. Children who are breastfed have a lower risk for developing respiratory and gastrointestinal infections, asthma, obesity, Type 2 diabetes and SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome).

During the month of August, DOH-Gulf will be partnering with the Bay County Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, which serves Gulf County participants, on a variety of activities to increase awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding. Activities include creating a newly designed breastfeeding room at the health department for employees and patients as well as disseminating breastfeeding topics each week to the public.

Additionally, a WIC Celebration Day will take place on August 14 from 9:30 am – 3:00 pm EST at the health department location in Port St. Joe. There will be a variety of health educational booths displayed during the event, including topics focused on breastfeeding local services and the Healthiest Weight Florida campaign. The DOH-Franklin/Gulf Closing the Gap program will also provide healthy cooking demonstrations during the event utilizing WIC-approved nutritious foods. Anyone from the community is invited to attend this event to learn more about the WIC program, breastfeeding support and how to implement breastfeeding-friendly places.

To reach the goal of exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months, mothers need supportive maternity leave policies, flexible work hours, 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.

For more information on the Florida Breastfeeding Coalition's Quality Maternity Care Initiative, visit: <http://flbreastfeeding.org/hospital.htm>. For more information about local events, please contact the Florida Department of Health in Gulf County at 850-227-1276.

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Healthiest Weight Florida is a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, nonprofit organizations, businesses and entire communities to help Florida's children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living. To learn more about how to be active and make nutritious food choices visit www.healthiestweightflorida.com.

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](https://twitter.com/HealthyFla) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HealthyFla). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.floridahealth.gov.