

For Immediate Release

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August is Breastfeeding Awareness Month

Both the Academy of American Pediatrics and the supplemental nutritional program WIC (Women, Infants and Children) at the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency, agree that breastmilk is the best milk for all babies, even premature and seriously ill newborns. Breastfeeding is recommended for babies especially during the first six months.

Human milk and infant formula are different. Not only does human milk provide all the essential nutritional value your baby will need to be healthy, breastmilk has special benefits that formulas cannot match. According to WIC breastmilk:

- Helps your baby grow strong and healthy.
- Is the perfect food for your baby-just what your baby needs in the right amounts.
- Changes to meet your growing baby's needs.
- Is gentle to baby's stomach-it's easy to digest.
- Means less colic, constipation and diarrhea for your baby.
- Makes baby's bowel movements have less odor.
- Breastfed babies have fewer colds, fewer earaches and fewer cases of asthma, food allergies and skin problems.

The longer you breastfeed the greater the benefits will be to your baby and to you. Breastfeeding also helps to create a special bond between a mother and a baby.

Obtaining help or the straight information on breastfeeding can be difficult due to all of the different sources available to parents. Some suggestions are:

- WIC www.michigan.gov/mdch
- American Academy of Pediatrics..... www.aap.org
- International Lactation Consultant Association www.ilca.org
- La Leche League of Michigan..... [www.lalecheleague.org.Web/Michigan.html](http://www.lalecheleague.org/Web/Michigan.html)

The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency's' WIC program provides parents breastfeeding support, education and counseling. For more information, contact your local WIC office: in Coldwater (517) 279-9561 Ext.147, in Hillsdale (517) 437-7395 Ext. 117 or 120, in Sturgis (269) 659-4013 Ext. 100 and in Three Rivers (269) 273-2161 Ext. 206.

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