

**Mission:**

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



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 1, 2015

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

**(St. Lucie, County)** - This August, the Florida Department of Health in St Lucie County is celebrating National Breastfeeding Awareness Month. With the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Program's breastfeeding peer counselors "Meet and Greet" at our local offices and many local breastfeeding friendly events, St Lucie County is working to promote breastfeeding as a vital health activity and encourage breastfeeding-friendly hospitals and communities.

**"Breastfeeding is the gold standard for infant feeding and recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics from birth to one year or longer as mutually desired by mom and baby,"** said Mally Chrulski, WIC Nutrition Program Director.

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 World Breastfeeding Week, the peer counselors will be sharing WIC and breastfeeding information at our local offices, and at events held by our network of partners. The WIC Peer Counselor "Meet and Greet" will be held at the St Lucie West WIC office on Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> from 1:00-4:00pm and Thursday, August 6<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-5:00pm. The "Meet and Greet" will be held at our Ft Pierce WIC office on Wednesday, August 5<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-4:00pm and Friday, August 7<sup>th</sup> from 12:30 – 2:30pm. You can call 772-785-6124 or 772-462-3900 for location information.

Several of our peer counselors will be representing WIC at the "Big Latch On" Event on Saturday, August 1 from 10:00-12noon and the La Leche League meeting, "Live, Love, Latch" on Saturday, August 9<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 – 11:00am at St Lucie Medical Center.

Other partner events in St Lucie County include, the "Mother Appreciation Party" at Lawnwood Regional Medical Center on Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> from 2:30- 4:00pm with a RSVP at 772-468-4491. St Lucie Medical Center's Baby Wearing Fashion Show will be held on Thursday, August 6<sup>th</sup> at 12noon and you can call 772-335-4000 for information.

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These events present great opportunities for families to obtain information on breastfeeding and to meet other breastfeeding families and a network of support. The WIC program breastfeeding peer counselors work with mothers enrolled in WIC to offer support in the office and via phone after work hours which is when concerns arise. A monthly joint WIC and La Leche League Mothers Support Group is held at our St Lucie West WIC office the third Thursday from 10:00am to 12noon. All mothers are welcome to attend the support group whether enrolled in WIC or not. It is a great learning opportunity and sharing time for women during this important time of their family life.

It takes time and practice to learn how to breastfeed and peer support is very helpful. "One key to establishing a good milk supply is to breastfeed more often and avoid use of formula," said Wendy Myers, Sr. Nutritionist Supervisor at the WIC Program office. "The more baby nurses at the breast, the greater the milk produced by mom."

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.

For more information on the Florida Breastfeeding Coalition's Quality Maternity Care Initiative, visit: <http://flbreastfeeding.org/hospital.htm>.

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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](http://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](http://www.floridahealth.gov).