

August 6, 2019

**2019 WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK AND  
NATIONAL BREAST FEEDING MONTH  
*EMPOWERING PARENTS: ENABLE BREASTFEEDING***



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**St. Lucie County, FL** — *World Breastfeeding Week* is celebrated every year during the first week in August all over the globe to encourage breastfeeding and to improve the health of babies around the world. August 1<sup>st</sup> through 31<sup>st</sup>, we continue to celebrate *National Breastfeeding Month*. The Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County embraces this year's theme: "Empower Parents: Enable Breastfeeding".

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding starting within one hour after birth until a baby is six months old. Nutritious complementary foods should then be added while continuing to breastfeed for up to two years and beyond. Statistically stated, only 1 in 4 infants is exclusively breastfed as recommended by the time they are 6 months old, and the profound benefits of breastfeeding for both baby and mom are astounding. Breastfeeding gives children the healthiest start in life and is one of the simplest, smartest and most cost-effective ways we have of ensuring that all children survive and thrive.

"A growing body of evidence points to breastfeeding as a critical factor, in improving health outcomes of mothers and babies, and it is considered most beneficial to families and communities. Breastfeeding is an investment in health, not just a lifestyle decision. According to 2018 data from Florida Charts, Bureau of Vital Statistics, breastfeeding initiation rate, St. Lucie is continuing an upward trend from 80.4 percent of mothers initiating breastfeeding in 2016, to 86 percent in 2018. Through continued education we are on our way to surpass the state rate of 86.2", said Clint Sperber, Health Officer and Administrator of the Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County.

Benefits for infants who are breastfed have reduced risks of: asthma, obesity, type 2 diabetes, ear and respiratory infections and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). The benefits for mothers that choose to breastfeed can include a lower risk of: heart disease, diabetes, ovarian cancer and breast cancer.

The mothers enrolled in the St. Lucie County WIC Program are initiating breastfeeding with their babies at a higher rate than last year. Over 82% of babies enrolled in the St. Lucie County WIC program were breastfed as of March 2019, a 2.31% increase over last year's data. In Fort Pierce, the increase was 4.21% above last year. "Our peer counselors have promoted positive breastfeeding messaging and increased time spent in the Fort Pierce WIC office encouraging and supporting breastfeeding," said Mally Chrulski, Nutrition Program Director.

The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program provides breastfeeding support as well as nutrition education, counseling, and nutritious foods for eligible pregnant women, breastfeeding and post-partum women, infants and children up to age five who meet eligibility guidelines. In 2009, WIC added new foods including fruits, vegetables, whole grain pasta, brown rice, whole wheat breads and tortillas, yogurt, baby fruits and vegetables for infants at six months of age in addition to the many other nutritious foods.

The peer counselors have planned some in-house breastfeeding activities at the WIC office locations for World Breastfeeding Week, August 1 - 7, 2019 and for Black Breastfeeding Week, August 25 to 31, 2019. A radio show on WJFP Fort Pierce will focus on breastfeeding on Wed, August 14, 2019 at 4:30pm. Guests include Dr. Kerri Daniels, Center Clinical Director at Darwin Square, Florida Community Health Centers, Inc, Wendy Myers, Senior Nutritionist Supervisor and IBCLC Lactation Consultant, St Lucie County WIC Program and introducing Perissa Numa, WIC peer counselor and new breastfeeding mom herself. Her beautiful baby, Phoenix, will be on board for the radio spot as well.

Call the WIC office for an appointment in St. Lucie West at 772-785-6124 or in Fort Pierce at 772-462-3900 or visit [www.stluciecountyhealth.com](http://www.stluciecountyhealth.com).

Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County, WIC Program

### **World Breastfeeding Week Itinerary**

#### **August 7, 2019 (Wednesday)**

##### **Lake Whitney, Port St. Lucie | WIC Office | Waiting Room**

9:00 a.m. | Food Demonstration by UF/IFAS Extension, Jenny Buntin- Black Bean Brownies and discuss nutrition while breastfeeding

9:30 a.m. | Baby-wearing demonstration with Kelly Hernandez and Perissa Numa, Peer Counselors

10:00 a.m. | Emergency Preparedness for formula/breastfeeding moms\*\*

##### **Fort Pierce, WIC Office | Waiting Room**

11:00 a.m. | Food Demonstration by UF/IFAS Extension, Jenny Buntin – Black Bean Brownies and discuss nutrition while breastfeeding

11:30 a.m. | Emergency Preparedness for formula/breastfeeding moms\*\*

1:00 p.m. | During prenatal class, Kelly Hernandez and Perissa Numa, Peer counselors, will do Baby-wearing demonstrations

## Black Breastfeeding Week Itinerary

### August 28, 2019 (Wednesday)

#### Lake Whitney, Port St. Lucie | WIC Office | Waiting Room

9:30 a.m. | Food Demonstration by UF/IFAS Extension, Jenny Buntin – Black Bean Brownies and discuss nutrition while breastfeeding

10:30 a.m. | Baby-wearing demonstration with Kelly Hernandez and Perissa Numa, Peer Counselors

11:00 a.m. | Emergency Preparedness for formula/breastfeeding moms\*\*

#### Fort Pierce, WIC Office | Waiting Room

11:00 a.m. | Food Demonstration by UF/IFAS Extension, Jenny Buntin – Black Bean Brownies and discuss nutrition while breastfeeding

12:30 p.m. | Emergency Preparedness for formula/breastfeeding moms\*\*

1:00 p.m. | During prenatal class, Kelly Hernandez and Perissa Numa, Peer counselors, will do Baby-wearing demonstrations

\*\* Displays on Emergency Preparedness and formula/breastfeeding – focus on supplies needed and the ease of breastfeeding during a natural disaster

\*\*Feature: Treasure Coast Undersea visual display with breastfeeding moms/babies on bulletin boards at both locations

**\*\*Tune in: August 14, 2019 |Breastfeeding Talk on Radio Show WJFP | Fort Pierce at 4:30pm featuring:**

Dr. Kerri Daniels, MD, FAAP, CLC, FCHC | Wendy Myers, MM, RD, LD/N, IBCLC – WIC Program | Perissa Numa, WIC Peer Counselor

#### 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. Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov).

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