

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Businesses show support of breastfeeding families

(Lawrence, KS) – Several Lawrence businesses are showing their support of breastfeeding families in a very visible way.

The changes come just in time for World Breastfeeding Week, Aug. 1 through 7. The Olympic-themed commemoration, “Mother Support: Going for the Gold,” is being celebrated locally by the Greater Douglas County Breastfeeding Action Team, a coalition of the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Lawrence Memorial Hospital and La Leche League. Its mission is to identify and influence policy to support breastfeeding families in the community.

The Lawrence Public Library, Blue Dandelion, Second Chance Children’s Clothing and Sunflower Outdoor & Bike are just four of several Lawrence businesses showing their support for nursing families by displaying “Breastfeeding welcome here” signs.

“We are trying to create awareness,” said Cary Allen, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor and Breastfeeding Action Team member. “Our hope is that when mothers frequent local businesses, if they feel welcomed to breastfeed and are encouraged to breastfeed, they will breastfeed longer.”

The World Health Organization recommends exclusive breastfeeding for a child’s first six months of life. Nursing offers natural health benefits to both mother and child and provides ideal nutrition at no cost. It also promotes sensory and cognitive development and gives babies antibodies that protect them from illness. Recent studies also have shown that the incidences of breast and ovarian cancer and postpartum stress are reduced among mothers who breastfeed.

The Health Department's WIC (Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition program) and Pregnancy and Parenting Services encourage and support women's efforts to breastfeed their children.

Businesses that display "Breastfeeding welcome here" signs help to give nursing families a strong sense of confidence, support and approval when feeding their children in public, Allen said.

And businesses benefit, too. Breastfeeding mothers who feel that they and their babies have been made welcome while they check out a book, have a meal or shop will return and will share their experience with family and friends.

Businesses interested in obtaining copies of the signs can contact Gayle Sherman, WIC Coordinator at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department at 843-0721.

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Note to Editor/Reporter: To interview local mothers that are currently breastfeeding, a shower for WIC clients will be held from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 7, at the Community Health Facility's first floor meeting room, 200 Maine St. in Lawrence. If you plan to cover the event, please contact Lisa Horn, Communications Coordinator, at 843-3060 or e-mail lhorn@ldchealth.org.