

NEWS RELEASE
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Health Department, coalition celebrate World Breastfeeding Week

(Lawrence, KS) – Now more than ever and in any economic climate, breastfeeding saves money and is good for the environment.

The Greater Douglas County Breastfeeding Action Team (a coalition of the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Lawrence Memorial Hospital and La Leche League) will use a green theme as it celebrates World Breastfeeding Week, Aug. 1-7.

At Tuesday's Lawrence City Commission meeting, commissioners signed a proclamation declaring the week to be "Breastfeeding Awareness Week." A special party, emphasizing breastfeeding's health and environmental benefits, will be held for participants in the Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition program (WIC) Thursday at the Health Department.

Displays also will be posted at the Lawrence Public Library and Lawrence Memorial Hospital. WIC and Pregnancy and Parenting Services participants also will receive handouts with breastfeeding facts during the weeklong celebration.

Did you know that?

- Breastfeeding a baby up to 3 weeks of age saves...
an average of \$83 or a bouncer seat or season pass to the zoo.
- Breastfeeding a baby up to 6 months of age saves...
an average of \$1,000 or the cost of a flat-screen television.
- The time it takes to break down plastic bottles and nipples...
200 to 450 years – or the time it takes for an oak tree to grow up to 80 feet tall.

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.

“Lots of people are aware of the health benefits of breastfeeding for both mother and baby,” said Cary Allen, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor and Breastfeeding Action Team member, “but there are also environmental and financial benefits to breastfeeding that can affect the community and the world at large.”

Along with the Greater Douglas County Breastfeeding Action Team, the Health Department encourages and supports women’s efforts to breastfeed their children. To learn more, visit www.ldchealth.org/breastfeeding.htm.

-30-

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