

**NEWS RELEASE**  
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**Health Department, coalition celebrate World Breastfeeding Week**

**(Lawrence, KS)** – For breastfeeding to be successful, hospitals and other birthing centers should promote and support breastfeeding, before, during and after delivery.

Along with the Greater Douglas County Breastfeeding Action Team, the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department will celebrate World Breastfeeding Week (WBW), Aug. 1-7. This year's theme is "Breastfeeding, Just 10 Steps – The Baby-Friendly Way."

This year, WBW celebrates the 20th anniversary of the Innocenti Declaration, developed in 1990 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF. A part of the declaration is the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative that encourages specific hospital birthing center practices, such as the "Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding," (attached).

The WHO 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.

On Aug. 5, the Health Department will host a shower for WIC clients currently breastfeeding or interested in learning more. Information will also be on display at the hospital and Lawrence Public Library.

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](http://www.ldchealth.org/breastfeeding.htm).