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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

August 1, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Department Supports World Breastfeeding Week

DUPAGE COUNTY—World Breastfeeding Week is August 1-7, and the DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) will celebrate the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) theme, “Empower Parents, Enable Breastfeeding.”

This year’s theme focuses on supporting the family as a unit to maximize breastfeeding success. When communities come together, including businesses, schools, friends and family members, they can empower parents to meet their breastfeeding goals. To learn more, visit www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org.

“It’s important to encourage and support breastfeeding as the natural and healthy choice that gives children and parents a strong beginning,” said Health Department Executive Director Karen Ayala.

Health experts around the world recommend exclusive breastfeeding (nothing but breast milk) for six months and continued breastfeeding after a baby begins solid food up to age 1 or 2. Human milk is full of antibodies that help protect babies from many diseases, including ear infections, respiratory infections, diarrhea, allergies, leukemia and diabetes. Breastfeeding can even help the baby’s mother by reducing her risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, diabetes and heart disease.

DuPage County families enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program are invited to seek the support, education and encouragement of our highly trained and credentialed staff members.

The DCHD WIC staff includes eight International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) Specialists, five Breastfeeding Peer Counselors (BFPC) and Certified Health Professionals trained to provide breastfeeding support. We collaborate with Amita Health and Northwestern Central DuPage Hospital to support breastfeeding mothers by visiting at the most crucial time, when our clients deliver.

To apply for WIC services, DuPage County residents may call (630) 682-7400.

-More-

-Page 2-

The Illinois Department of Human Services fiscal year 2020 Nutrition Education Plan focuses on increasing breastfeeding exclusivity rates at 12 weeks to 20 percent and duration rates at 6 months to 35 percent. The latest data available shows 19.6 percent of infants between the ages of 11 to 13 weeks enrolled in the DCHD WIC Program are exclusively breastfed, while the statewide average is 8.9 percent. At age 6-months, 32.2 percent of DCHD infants are still breastfed, compared to the statewide average of 17.1 percent.

Visit <https://www.dupagehealth.org/women-children-health-WIC-services> to learn more about the DuPage County Health Department's WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program.

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