



NEWS



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Two Campaigns Focus on Breastfeeding Awareness in August *In Recognition of World Breastfeeding Week, Health Department to Host 3rd Annual Walk*

BLOOMINGTON, IL- The month of August shines a spotlight on the benefits of breastfeeding and the challenges still to be overcome on the journey to greater acceptance and support of breastfeeding women. August begins National Breast Feeding Awareness Month and the sixth anniversary of the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding. The first week of August is also recognized as World Breastfeeding Week by the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) and is part of the Global Breastfeeding Initiative for Child Survival.

To recognize these breastfeeding initiatives, the McLean County Health Department's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is hosting the 3rd Annual Breastfeeding Awareness Walk.

When: Saturday, August 5th

Where: Downtown Bloomington

Time: Walk begins at 10 a.m.

Registration: Begins at 9:30 a.m. at the McLean County Health Department, 200 West Front Street, Bloomington
(A photo station will be set-up during registration to provide walkers with a memento from the event)

Breastfeeding moms will once again have the opportunity to participate in the Big Latch On as part of the Breastfeeding Awareness Walk. Big Latch On events take place at registered locations around the world and are designed to bring women together to breastfeed and offer peer support to each other. The events also serve as a chance for family members, friends, and the community to show their support and acceptance of breastfeeding, and breastfeeding in public, as a normal part of day-to-day life.

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Walkers will pause at 10:30 along the south side of the Museum of to allow nursing mothers and babies to participate in the Big Latch On and other walkers to have some water. After everyone has had a little something to eat or drink, the walk will continue back to the health department, with an estimated arrival time of 11 a.m.

After the walk, moms are encouraged to take a few more minutes to talk with WIC staff members to see if they are eligible for Farmer's Market checks. As an added bonus, the McLean County Museum of History is offering free admission to the museum until 12 p.m., giving walkers an opportunity to check out the exhibits while they are in the area.

The McLean County Health Department joins professional health organizations and breastfeeding advocates worldwide every August to collaboratively raise awareness of the numerous benefits of breastfeeding; to strengthen individual, family, and community support for breastfeeding; to further strategies that protect optimal breastfeeding practices; and to encourage increased breastfeeding rates. Research show that babies who are exclusively breastfed for six months are less likely to develop ear infections, diarrhea and respiratory illnesses, and may be less likely to develop childhood obesity; but without proper support from their families, friends, communities, clinicians, health care leaders, and employers, women are more likely to give up on breastfeeding.

For more information about the Breastfeeding Awareness Walk, call WIC at 309-888-5457 or visit our website: health.mcleancountyil.gov. Updates about this event and conversation about breastfeeding topics can be found on the WIC Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/mcleanwic/>

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