



**BERRIEN COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**
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News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Annual “Breastfeeding on the Bluff” Event Returns to Celebrate Breastfeeding in Berrien County

(Berrien County, MI) – The Berrien County Health Department, in partnership with the Berrien County Breastfeeding Coalition, will host the annual “Breastfeeding on the Bluff” event this Saturday, August 7th starting at 10:00 a.m. in Lake Bluff Park across the St. Joseph Public Library in St. Joseph, Michigan.

The “Breastfeeding on the Bluff” event occurs as part of National Breastfeeding Month, a nationwide breastfeeding awareness celebration during the month of August. Families and breastfeeding advocates are welcome to attend anytime during the event from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Breastfeeding support education and resources, gifts for moms, and refreshments for the whole family will be provided.

The Berrien County Breastfeeding Coalition has a mission to provide support for the community by identifying and growing opportunities for on-going breastfeeding support and promotion, normalizing breastfeeding in the community, and ensure that families have the resources needed to have a successful breastfeeding relationship. The Coalition has membership and support from a variety of community organizations, such as Spectrum Health Lakeland, InterCare Community Health Network, and Michigan State University Extension, as well as representation from breastfeeding mothers and advocates.

“We are thrilled to bring this event back this year, after canceling in 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic gathering size restrictions,” said Mistel de Varona, breastfeeding peer counselor coordinator, Berrien County Health Department. “This event is an opportunity to celebrate and support all breastfeeding families in Berrien County and encourage the community support of breastfeeding as a natural part of day-to-day life.” In Michigan, 80% of moms initiate breastfeeding after birth; however, at 6 months of age, only approximately 26% of babies are still exclusively breastfed. The American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the World Health Organization recommend at least six months of exclusive breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding has been proven to have countless health benefits for mothers and babies, as well as long-term positive public health impacts throughout the community. Michigan mothers who nurse their children in public are protected from discrimination and prosecution under bipartisan legislation signed into law in 2014. The “Breastfeeding Anti-Discrimination Act” gives women the right to nurse a child in any place that is open to the general public, including stores, restaurants and municipal buses.

More information can be found at www.facebook.com/berriencountybreastfeedingcoalition or by calling 269-926-7121.