



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Green County Public Health Recognizes and Celebrates National Breastfeeding Month

**Monroe** – Monday, August 1<sup>st</sup> marks the beginning of National Breastfeeding Month. This year's theme is *Together We Do Great Things!* "The U.S. Breastfeeding Committee (USBC) vision of thriving families and communities cannot be achieved by any one person, or by just one organization. It happens with daily effort by us all, and by working together to make change. We look forward to celebrating all efforts in service to babies, families, and human milk feeding during August!" – U.S. Breastfeeding Committee.

Breastfeeding is important to both the health of the baby and the parent. Breastmilk has all the essential nutrients a baby needs to grow, it is easy for babies to digest, the cost is free and it is always ready without the need for preparation. Babies who are breastfed have reduced risks for diabetes, asthma, ear infections, and respiratory infections. Breastfeeding can decrease the risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, as well as breast and ovarian cancers for parents who breastfeed. Additionally, breastfeeding can help mothers heal faster after delivery, and increase relaxation. Breastfeeding can also help the parent and their baby bond.

On-going efforts surrounding breastfeeding in Green County have resulted in an increase in resources available to parents. Green County Public Health and SSM Health Monroe currently have a combined total of 10 Certified Lactation Counselors (CLCs) and one International Board of Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC). The Green County Breastfeeding Collaborative, comprised of healthcare providers and community organizations works to promote, support, and protect breastfeeding. This group has worked with employers to provide consultation on how to be more breastfeeding friendly for their employees and developed a [Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Toolkit](#). The collaborative also developed a breastfeeding [resource guide](#) for community members.

Green County Public Health/Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program provides guidance to parents on their breastfeeding journey. Parents searching for help or who have questions are encouraged to contact Green County Public Health/WIC by email at [info@greencountywi.org](mailto:info@greencountywi.org) or by phone at 608-328-9390 to learn more about WIC or to talk to a Certified Lactation Counselor or Breastfeeding Peer Counselor. Contacting your child's pediatrician can be a helpful place to start as well. Additionally, SSM Health Monroe offers a Breastfeeding Class and Child Birth Education Class, patients can call 608-324-2241 or 815-233-0999 to register.

"In public health, it is critical that we engage our whole community to advocate for and support breastfeeding not just in the month of August, but all year. Protecting the health and well-being of the families in our community cannot be achieved alone – it requires all of us to work together collaboratively to make this happen." said Jaime Batz, Registered Nurse and Certified Lactation Counselor who is the Green County Breastfeeding Coordinator and leads the Green County Breastfeeding Collaborative.

Green County community members can participate in National Breastfeeding Month, and celebrate breastfeeding every month, by taking the following actions:

- Share your positive experiences with breastfeeding! If you breastfed and overcame any challenges, share that experience with others who may benefit from hearing your story
- When sharing tips on breastfeeding with others, use information from [reliable sources](#)
- Participate in events and activities in the community that promote and support breastfeeding
- Encourage your employer to create and maintain dedicated breastfeeding-friendly spaces
- Employers, allow time for employees to pump milk, which is an essential nutritional need to feed their child
- Advocate government and public places to establish breastfeeding-friendly spaces that normalize breastfeeding in public

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