

August 23, 2022

THE WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENTS RECOGNIZES BLACK BREASTFEEDING WEEK



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PASCO COUNTY, Fla. – The West Central Florida County Health Departments and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) are celebrating Black Breastfeeding Week 2022 (BBW22) from August 25-31. This year's theme is Black Breastfeeding Week 2022: 10 Years, A New Foundation.

For more on why there is a need to recognize BBW22, visit: [Top Five Reasons We Need A Black Breastfeeding Week « Black Breastfeeding Week](#). There you will read about high black infant mortality rates, the lack of diversity in the lactation field, along with cultural barriers among black women.

The West Central Florida County Health Departments are observing BBW22 by participating in the following events:



Hernando:

- Thursday, August 25th from 7:00 pm -8:30 pm Hernando WIC celebrates Black Breastfeeding Week and the end of World Breastfeeding Month with Breastfeeding trivia, a Baby & Me photoshoot, and special treats and giveaways provided by the local FL West Coast Breastfeeding Task Force. All are welcome to attend, this is open to the public.
- A no-cost *Baby & Me Breastfeeding Support Group* is held on every Thursday from 7:00-8:30 pm. Open to the public and facilitated by certified lactation professionals, including an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant. This is held at 7551 Forest Oaks Blvd. Spring Hill, FL. Education is also provided in other areas such as car seat safety, pump flange fitting, basics of infant CPR, safe sleep, babywearing, cloth diapering, and swim safety.
- A free infant feeding line is available for families to call with questions regarding breastfeeding and bottle feeding. For more information call, 352-540-6924.

- Free Infant Feeding and Breastfeeding Classes every Tuesday and Wednesday. 11:00 am-12:30 pm. 7551 Forest Oaks Blvd Spring Hill FL 34606 352-540-6924.
- Free Safe Sleep Classes and a portable crib provided by appointment in Hernando WIC call to schedule at 352-540-6924.

Manatee:

- Manatee County is offering additional breastfeeding information at the main WIC clinic throughout the month of August on top of normal breastfeeding education, counseling, and support.

Pasco:

- A celebration for Black Breastfeeding Week will be held on Tuesday, August 30th from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Regency Branch Library, 9701 Little Rd, New Port Richey, FL.
- WIC also offers free breastfeeding classes at WIC Clinics throughout Pasco County. For an appointment or more information on the breastfeeding class or infant feeding call 813-364-5818.

Pinellas:

- Pinellas WIC Breastfeeding's first in person group in 2 years, 2nd floor, meeting room 109-11-1 on Friday, August 26th, celebrating black moms breastfeeding.

The Black Breastfeeding Week 2022 (BBW22) theme encourages everyone to support and uplift one another. The new foundation of lactation support is built on racial equity, cultural empowerment, and community engagement.

- **Improved Economics and Reduced Inequalities.** Breastfeeding can help break the cycle of poverty for families, which impacts hunger and malnutrition. Breastfeeding provides an equal start for everyone. With no additional burden on household income, breastfeeding is a low-cost way of feeding babies and contributes to poverty reduction. Breastfeeding can also reduce costs to the health care system and employers by decreasing costs of hospitalizations, medications, and reduced absenteeism.
- **Lowers black infant mortality rates.** The high infant mortality rate among black infants is mostly due to being born too small, too sick, or too soon. According to the CDC, increased breastfeeding among black women could decrease infant mortality rates by as much as 50%. Fewer non-Hispanic Black infants (74.1%) are

ever breastfed compared with Asian infants (90.8%), non-Hispanic White infants (85.3%) and Hispanic infants (83.0%).³

More: [Facts | Breastfeeding | CDC](#)

- **Good health and prevents malnutrition**, including under and over-nutrition. Breastfeeding has positive lifelong health effects on infants, children, and mothers such as lower incidence of respiratory infections and ear infections for infants and children and reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancer for mothers. Breastfeeding also reduces the risk of childhood overweight and obesity compared to formula feeding.
- **Food security even in times of crisis.** Breastfeeding provides food security to infants from the very beginning of life, contributes to food security for the whole family, and ensures food security for babies even in times of household or widespread disasters, such as hurricanes.
- **A positive impact on the health of the planet in several ways:**
 - ✓ Breastmilk is a sustainable and environmentally friendly resource.
 - ✓ Breastfeeding is readily available without needing other supplies.
 - ✓ Breastmilk production does not require the use of energy for manufacturing and does not create waste or air pollution.

To protect breastfeeding:

- Promote the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative.
- Provide access to skilled breastfeeding counseling. Studies have shown that breastfeeding promotion interventions increase exclusive breastfeeding rates at 4-6 weeks and 6 months.
- Encourage employers and communities to promote and protect breastfeeding, through posting signs “Breastfeeding Welcome Here” and providing private areas for breastfeeding if that is a breastfeeding family’s preference.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for infants through age two, with the addition of appropriate complementary foods when the infant is developmentally ready, around 6 months of age.

To learn more about Black Breastfeeding Week visit www.blackbreastfeedingweek.org. For more information about the Florida WIC program, call 1-800-342-3556 or visit www.FloridaWIC.org. To learn more about breastfeeding initiatives in Florida, visit www.flbreastfeeding.org, or the West Coast Breastfeeding Task Force www.flwcbreastfeeding.org. To view the [CDC Breastfeeding Report Card](#) visit,

[Breastfeeding Report Card | Breastfeeding | CDC](#) and for more on Breastfeeding Data visit [HERE](#).

For more information or questions, please contact your county health department.

DOH-Citrus	(352) 527-0068	DOH-Manatee	(941) 748-0747
DOH-Hardee	(863) 773-4161	DOH-Pasco	(727) 619-0300
DOH-Hernando	(352) 540-6800	DOH-Pinellas	(727) 824-6900
DOH-Highlands	(863) 386-6040	DOH-Polk	(863) 519-7900
DOH-Hillsborough	(813) 307-8000	DOH-Sarasota	(941) 861-2900

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