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News Release

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Greene County Combined Health District WIC Program Celebrates Breastfeeding Awareness Month with Walk

The Greene County Combined Health District WIC Program will hold a Breastfeeding Awareness Month walk at The Fairfield Commons Mall on Tuesday, August 11th at 1:00 PM.

Breastfeeding Awareness Month is held yearly in Ohio to highlight the benefits to society when mothers breastfeed. Nearly all medical and professional organizations worldwide emphasize the importance of breastfeeding and the role of support for new mothers. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, recently published a comprehensive analysis of studies on the impact of breastfeeding in developed countries in 2007. Among their conclusions was that breastfeeding has a profound impact on both infant and maternal health, including reducing the risk of acute otitis media, non-specific gastroenteritis, severe lower respiratory tract infections, atopic dermatitis, asthma, obesity, type 1 and 2 diabetes, childhood leukemia, and sudden infant death syndrome in the child, as well as breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and type 2 diabetes in the mother.

In an emergency, breastfeeding can save lives. The 2009 World Breastfeeding Week (August 1-7) theme, "Breastfeeding: A Vital Emergency Response – Are You Ready?" is a reminder of the importance of promoting, protecting, and supporting breastfeeding in any family or community emergency, and the importance of adequate preparation. Though when an emergency situation will occur may not always be known, what is known is that taking steps to protect and support breastfeeding through preventive actions can save lives.

In an emergency, such as those brought on by a natural disaster, infants are the most vulnerable. Infections and disease are rampant in the aftermath of an emergency, clean water is not always available right away, and electricity and the ability to acquire fuel may be unavailable or compromised. Infants and young children are five times more likely to die in an emergency, primarily due to the risk of diarrhea in these kinds of emergencies, where formula cannot be properly sterilized.

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Breastmilk is always available and clean, and breastfeeding itself provides warmth for the infant and helps calm and soothe him through lowering stress cortisol levels. The antibodies in human milk also lower the risk of diarrhea and infections that can occur.

The breastfeeding walk is free and open to the public, but an RSVP is requested. Breastfeeding mothers and pregnant women, along with their families and friends are welcome to attend. In addition to walking the perimeter of the mall, the event will include refreshments, door prizes, and information about breastfeeding. Door prizes have been donated by the following businesses: Abuelo's, Bd's Mongolian Grill, Books & Co., Buffalo Wild Wings, Don Pablo's, Max & Erma's, The Pub, Red Lobster, Red Robin, Sonic, TGI Friday's, and Walgreen's. The event is sponsored by Motherhood Maternity at the Fairfield Mall.

For more information and to RSVP for the walk, please call the WIC Breastfeeding Staff at (937) 374-5600 or toll-free at 866-858-3588.

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