Governor Whitmer declares August as Breastfeeding Month

Aug. 1-7 – World Breastfeeding Week
Aug. 8-14 – Indigenous Milk Medicine Week
Aug. 15-21 – Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander Breastfeeding Week
Aug. 25-31 – Black Breastfeeding Week
Sept. 1-7 – Workplace Lactation Week
Sept. 2-8 – Latina/x Breastfeeding Week (Semana de La Lactancia Latina)

LANSING, Mich. – Michigan is committed to encouraging a strong foundation for life by supporting breastfeeding as not only a lifestyle choice, but an essential public health priority. As part of this effort, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer declared August 2025 as Breastfeeding Month.

“Breastfeeding can be beneficial to both babies and parents and protect babies against allergies, sickness and many diseases,” said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, chief medical executive. “We recognize that not all parents are able to breastfeed, and in those cases, we offer resources to ensure that the nutritional needs of infants are met, and that parents feel supported. Michigan is committed to helping breastfeeding parents reach their goals through community-based support including doulas, lactation consultants and peer counselors.”

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding up to age 2 years and beyond. Breastmilk provides countless benefits to the infant, including a decrease in the risk of respiratory and ear infections, gastrointestinal tract infections, necrotizing enterocolitis, sudden infant death syndrome, asthma, atopic dermatitis, eczema, celiac disease, inflammatory bowel disease, obesity, Type 2 Diabetes and leukemia. It also reduces the incidence of breast and ovarian cancers, postpartum depression and cardiovascular disease for the breastfeeding parent; conditions that disproportionately impact Black, Brown and Indigenous people.

According to the World Health Organization, optimal breastfeeding is so critical that it could save the lives of more than 820,000 children under the age of five each year.

Although 90% of Michigan families start breastfeeding, the difference between white non-Hispanic initiation (91.3%) and Black, non-Hispanic initiation (81.6%) highlights the barriers that impact families of color. Lack of support both in and out of the health care system, lack of access to high quality, affordable childcare and insufficient paid work leave negatively impacts the number of people that start and continue feeding breast milk to their infants.

Michigan is taking action to remove barriers and increase support through several initiatives:

- Educating health care providers on the benefits of breastfeeding and the history of lactation for Black parents.
- Increasing access to breastfeeding support including online resources for families and doula-led breastfeeding training at the bedside.

- Partnering with and funding local/regional breastfeeding providers.
- Increasing childcare access by increasing compensation of childcare providers and the number of providers.
- Requiring implicit bias training for clinicians.
- Offering breastfeeding training opportunities to clinicians and community-based organizations.

Michigan's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program is celebrating National Breastfeeding Month with the theme, "WIC Supports Superheroes." WIC assists breastfeeding families in the following ways:

- Free, unlimited access to lactation consultants and breastfeeding peer counselors including telehealth, phone call or in-person appointment.
- All WIC staff receive lactation training so families can be assured that everyone they interact with can support their infant feeding goals.
- Breastfeeding clients get more WIC foods, including canned fish, and can stay on the program longer.
- At 6 months, breastfed babies receive infant meats and more fruits and vegetables.
- WIC offers a breastfeeding warmline available seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at 833-MIWICBF (833-649-4223).

For more information on events and happenings in Michigan for National Breastfeeding Month, visit the Michigan Breastfeeding Network.

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