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Gov. Snyder declares August Breastfeeding Awareness Month *Breastfeeding Walk is August 8 at the State Capitol*

LANSING, Mich. – To help promote early breastfeeding success and positive breastfeeding outcomes, August has been declared Breastfeeding Awareness Month in Michigan by Gov. Rick Snyder.

In support of this effort, the Michigan Breastfeeding Network has announced a statewide initiative to provide continuity of care for mothers and babies. Supporters of this effort include hospitals, WIC agencies, community stakeholders, coalitions, physicians and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

Goals of this collaboration include higher breastfeeding initiation and duration rates, healthier babies and closer families. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2016 Breastfeeding Report Card, 80.8 percent of Michigan mothers have ever breastfed. **However, that number drops to 51.6 percent at six months of age and 31.8 percent at 12 months.**

“Breastfeeding is the foundation of lifelong good health for babies and mothers,” said Dr. Eden Wells, MDHHS chief medical executive. “In addition, it is a low-cost way to feed infants and contributes to poverty reduction.”

As part of the proclamation, Governor Snyder stated that Michigan is committed to reducing infant mortality and increasing the health of mothers and babies. Sustained breastfeeding support, education and consistent, accurate information will help to meet these goals.

Activities are planned throughout the state to draw attention to the importance of breastfeeding for the health and well-being of mothers and children. The Michigan WIC Program and MDHHS invite the public to join in the Breastfeeding Walk on Aug. 8, starting at 11:30 a.m. on the front lawn of the State Capitol. Families and young children are welcome.

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