

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PROMOTING BREASTFEEDING ACCESS FOR WORKING MOMS FOCUS OF MONTH-LONG CAMPAIGN**

**SANTA ROSA COUNTY, FL** — This August, the Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County is celebrating National Breastfeeding Awareness Month. With a reception to honor our breastfeeding mothers, free breastfeeding classes, and onsite peer counselor support, Santa Rosa County is working to promote breastfeeding as a vital health activity and encourage breastfeeding-friendly hospitals, child care facilities, work places, and communities.

“One of the greatest challenges a breastfeeding mother faces during her breastfeeding journey is returning to work,” said Jennifer Wowk-Ward IBCLC, breastfeeding coordinator for DOH-Santa Rosa Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). “There are many obstacles to overcome and it is at this time they need to have added support. It is imperative that this support not only come from family and friends but the community at large. Employers, co-workers, child care providers, and health care providers can offer the extra support necessary to help them succeed. We all play a role in the success of these mothers and I encourage everyone in the community to make an effort to offer support and encouragement to all breastfeeding mothers.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, mothers who breastfeed their children are at a healthier weight on average than those who do not. They also have a lower risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, breast and ovarian cancer. Children who are breastfed have a lower risk for developing respiratory and gastrointestinal infections, asthma, obesity, Type 2 diabetes and SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome).

The reception will be held on August 27, 2015 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at DOH- Santa Rosa WIC office. Mothers who attend will receive a gift bag, refreshments, and an entry to a drawing for a breastfeeding sling.

Free breastfeeding classes are offered the third Thursday of each month from 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. Onsite lactation support and services are offered Monday- Friday. We welcome all breastfeeding families and friends to participate.

To reach the goal of exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months, mothers need supportive maternity leave policies, flexible work hours, infant and child-care at or near the workplace, and private facilities for expressing and storing breastmilk. It takes time and practice to learn how to breastfeed, both for mother and baby, and to establish a good milk supply.

For more information on the Florida Breastfeeding Coalition's Quality Maternity Care Initiative, visit: <http://flbreastfeeding.org/hospital.htm>.

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Healthiest Weight Florida is a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, nonprofit organizations, businesses and entire communities to help Florida's children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living. To learn more about how to be active and make nutritious food choices visit [www.healthiestweightflorida.com](http://www.healthiestweightflorida.com).

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](https://twitter.com/HealthyFla) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.floridahealth.gov](http://www.floridahealth.gov).