



Rappahannock Area Health District News Release

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Rappahannock Area Health District Celebrates National WIC Breastfeeding Week Aug. 1-7

FREDERICKSBURG, Va.- Many families understand the importance of breastfeeding. In Virginia, approximately 90% of women initiate breastfeeding after delivery, but many stop sooner than they had originally planned. Challenges such as returning to work, concerns about milk supply or lack of support derail the plan to exclusively breastfeed. During [National WIC Breastfeeding Week](#), the Rappahannock Area Health District highlights the ways the Virginia Women Infants and Children (WIC) program ensures families have the support they need to meet their breastfeeding goals.

[Virginia WIC](#) loans breast pumps, provides one-on-one counseling with breastfeeding peer counselors, creates access to lactation experts and more generous food packages just for breastfeeding moms.

“Every family’s breastfeeding journey is unique, and no one should have to navigate it alone,” says Jessica Boutchyard, Nurse Manager for the Rappahannock Area Health District. “Our WIC team is here to provide encouragement, evidence-based guidance, and support so families can reach the breastfeeding goals that are right for them.”

The Rappahannock Area WIC program plans to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week by honoring WIC mothers with a fun community baby shower on August 14th. It is an opportunity to recognize the incredible journey of pregnancy and early parenthood while connecting families with resources, support and each other.

The Rappahannock Area Health District has resources to help pregnant and breastfeeding women who want more information and breastfeeding support. The local WIC program has peer counselors and a lactation consultant available to assist breastfeeding women in reaching their duration goals. These lactation consultants also have personal experience breastfeeding their own children. They meet one-on-one with participating moms to answer questions and offer critical support and referrals when needed. If you are interested in receiving support, start by enrolling in the [Virginia WIC program](#).

WIC also provides breastfeeding moms with a larger food package to support milk production including canned fish and additional quantities of milk, cheese, eggs and fruits and vegetables.

As a breastfeeding parent, the law supports you. Virginia has public [breastfeeding laws](#) to protect you in public spaces and on the job. Learn about your rights as a lactating employee at [Talking to Your Boss about Your Pump](#).

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) recommends that infants be breastfed exclusively for the first six months of life, with a gradual introduction of solid foods. It is also recommended that infants continue to be breastfed for the first two years of life and thereafter as long as mutually desired.

For more information, visit the [VDH Breastfeeding Resource Page](#) or contact the Rappahannock Area Health District at [Rappahannock Area Health District](#). You can also find contact information for your local health department within the Rappahannock Area Health District at [Local Health Departments - Rappahannock](#)

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