



Portage County Combined General Health District

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Media Release
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August is Breastfeeding Awareness Month Communities Work Together to Create Sustainable Support Systems for Breastfeeding Families

Columbiana County, Ohio – In recognition of National Breastfeeding Month, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jim Tressel signed a proclamation declaring August as Ohio Breastfeeding Awareness Month.

Breastfeeding is widely recognized as an effective way to promote positive health outcomes for both mothers and babies. Research indicates that breastfeeding reduces the risk of respiratory illness, ear infections, allergies, and certain cancers for both mothers and infants. A mother's early breastfeeding experiences can greatly influence whether and how long she continues, making community and healthcare support critical to overcoming barriers.

This year, Ohio has adopted the World Breastfeeding Week (August 1-7) theme "Prioritize Breastfeeding: Creating Sustainable Support Systems." This theme emphasizes the importance of meeting families where they are and improving breastfeeding support across all sectors of the community.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, with continued breastfeeding alongside complementary foods for up to two years or longer. Communities and related programs play a vital role in helping parents meet these recommendations by providing timely education, resources, and consistent encouragement during the perinatal period.

On August 8, 2025, the Columbiana County Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program hosted a community event in celebration of Breastfeeding Awareness Month, made possible through the generous sponsorship of AmeriHealth Caritas of Ohio, CareSource, and Humana.

Local partners including Head Start, Help Me Grow, Akron Children's Hospital, COAD for Kids, and the Columbiana County Health Department joined to share valuable resources, educational materials, and baby care items with families.

Participants also met with Certified Lactation Consultants, including Carly Buzzard from The Appalachian Breastfeeding Hotline, Dr. Littleton from Family Medical Care, and Liz Leon from the Heritage Valley Hospital System. The event featured snacks, gift bags, and complimentary family photo sessions, creating an atmosphere that was both informative and celebratory.

The Ohio Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program provides breastfeeding support to families across the state through prenatal education and appointments with lactation professionals.

For more information about breastfeeding, visit <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/Breastfeeding>, call Columbiana County WIC at 330-424-7293, or contact the Ohio Statewide Breastfeeding Hotline at 1-888-588-3423.

Columbiana County WIC staff members at the Breastfeeding Awareness Month celebration.



Proud mom of two enjoys the festivities during Breastfeeding Awareness Month.



About the Columbiana County WIC Program and the Portage County Health District

The Columbiana County Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program is administered by the Portage County Combined General Health District, ensuring that local WIC participants have access to the same high-quality services, resources, and breastfeeding support available in both Portage and Columbiana counties.

The Portage County Health District is committed to promoting health, preventing disease, and protecting the well-being of those who live, work, and learn in Portage County through education, prevention programs, and strong community partnerships. Learn more at www.portagehealth.net.

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