



## Knox County Health Department

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### **KCHD's Service Spotlight: Celebrate World Breastfeeding Week**

*This week's spotlight highlights KCHD's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program*

*Knoxville, Tenn.*—The Knox County Health Department Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program will host Drive-Thru at the Zoo Aug. 5 from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. in celebration of World Breastfeeding Week. The event is free and will include 100 goodie bags available which contain merchandise tied to the event and information on how to attend the Virtual Global BIG Latch On.

The BIG Latch On is an opportunity for local moms to participate in an international event where women from around the world meet at registered locations to breastfeed their children at the same time. This year it will be offered virtually through Zoom at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on Aug. 6. For more information about the events, contact the WIC Program at 865-215-5060 or [KCHD's Facebook page](#).

“Breastfeeding is one of the best things a mother can do to protect the health of her infant, yet there has been a decline in breastfeeding rates among infants at 12 months of age in Tennessee.” said WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator, Robin Penegar. “We know education alone isn’t enough to increase breastfeeding rates. We must find ways, as a community, to be more supportive of moms and their efforts to breastfeed.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2020 Breastfeeding Report Card, 24 percent of babies born in Tennessee were breastfed at 12 months of age, down from 34 percent in 2018. Breastfed babies are less likely to develop many adverse health conditions, including diabetes and obesity. In fact, a baby’s risk of becoming an overweight child goes down with each month of breastfeeding.

In addition, a 2010 study published in the Journal of Pediatrics estimated that the nation saves \$13 billion per year in health care and other costs if 90 percent of U.S. babies were exclusively breastfed for six months. A mother’s breastfeeding success rate can be greatly improved through active support from her family, friends, community, clinicians, employer and community leaders.

The WIC program also is designed to serve pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women as well as infants and children under the age of five who qualify. More information about eligibility may be found at <https://knoxcounty.org/health/wic.php>. The program aims to safeguard the health of those who are at nutritional risk by providing healthy foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and referrals to health care.

### **About Knox County Health Department**

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. As a chief health strategist for the community and with more than 240 team members, KCHD’s broad scope of work includes convening partners to improve community health, identifying community health threats, investigating disease outbreaks, conducting extensive outreach and education, preparing for public health emergencies, providing and connecting the public with medical care, enforcing food safety and air quality laws, and more. For more information, visit [www.knoxcounty.org/health](http://www.knoxcounty.org/health).

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