



Perinatal e-News

LA BEST BABIES NETWORK



Healthy Babies. Our Future.
Presented by First 5 LA



July 30, 2008

www.LABestBabies.org

Issue #29

- **Breastfeeding Awareness Month**
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August is Breastfeeding Awareness Month

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Breastfeeding provides the optimal nutrition for infants. Infants who are exclusively breastfed for at least six months are less likely to have a wide range of childhood infections, become obese, or develop diabetes or asthma. Breastmilk has also been shown to protect against other conditions such as SIDS, Crohn's Disease and childhood cancers.

For mothers, breastfeeding supports birth spacing and decreases the risk of developing type-2 diabetes, osteoporosis, as well as ovarian and breast cancers. Breastfeeding also plays an important role in maternal child attachment and the infant's emotional and cognitive development.

In our efforts to promote breastfeeding among new moms, LA Best Babies Network's Healthy Births Learning Collaboratives (HBLC) in the Antelope Valley and East area of L.A. County, incorporated breastfeeding support and promotion into their 2008 action plans.

The objective of the Antelope Valley HBLC is to increase the rate of the Antelope Valley mothers' breastfeeding duration to more than 2 months. Despite an increase in breastfeeding duration rates in L.A. County, the rate in the Antelope Valley remains low.

Increasing breastfeeding awareness and promotion is the 2008 goal of the HBLC in the East area of L.A. County. This HBLC is creating a slide presentation for their community's perinatal caregivers and advocates. The slide presentation will be produced in English and Spanish and will:

- highlight the importance of breastfeeding
- provide information on breastfeeding support
- list the available resources in East area of L.A. County

that are targeted to breastfeeding support and promotion.

In addition, the Network will host a booth at the [Community Breastfeeding Celebration](#), to highlight the work of the Network and showcase our "[Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace Policies](#)" brochure. The event is sponsored by California Hospital Medical Center and Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC Program (PHFE-WIC).

Breastfeeding Rates Increase in the U.S.

The rate of U.S. infants who had ever been breastfed increased to 77% for infants born in 2005-2006. This rate exceeded the Healthy People 2010 target of 75%, according to a report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In 1993-1994, only 60% of U.S. infants had ever been breastfed.

The study found that the rates of ever breastfeeding:

- were higher among infants born to families with higher incomes (74%) compared to infants born to low-income families (57%)
- were higher among women 30 years of age and older (75%)

From 2005-2006 the rate of ever breastfeeding increased:

- in African-American women to 65%, from 36% in 1993-1994
- for Caucasian women to 79%, from 62% in 1993-1994
- in Latinas to 80%, from 67% in 1993-1994.

In 2005-2006, the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in the U.S. was 31% at three months and 11% at six months of age. This rate is below the Healthy People 2010 target of 60% at three months and 25% at six months of age.

Learn more:

View the report "[Breastfeeding in the United States: Findings from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys, 1999-2006.](#)"

Company Fined \$4,000 for Violating Lactation Accommodation Law

A Santa Clara security company was fined \$4,000 for not providing an employee with appropriate lactation accommodations to express breastmilk. This is the first citation since California implemented the [Lactation Accommodation Law](#) in 2001.

The investigation was prompted by a complaint filed with the California Labor Commission on March 7, 2008. The commission discovered the employee was expressing breastmilk in a server room equipped with security cameras. According to the [Lactation Accommodation Law](#), all California employers are required to provide reasonable break time and make a reasonable effort to provide a space for employees desiring to express breastmilk.

Given that approximately one-third of mothers return to work within three months of giving birth, this transition can be an impediment to continuing to breastfeed. In an effort to promote the implementation of breastfeeding workplace policies, and to increase breastfeeding rates among working mothers, the San Fernando Healthy Births Learning Collaborative in partnership with the Breastfeeding Task Force of Greater Los Angeles developed the brochure "[Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace Policies](#)" and [policy template](#) (which employers can customize for their workplaces). The Network encourages women to use the brochure as a tool to discuss expressing breastmilk in the workplace with their employers.

For more information on breastfeeding or to obtain copies of the "[Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace Policies](#)" brochure, contact HBLC Coordinator Julie Gates, MPH, CLE, at JGates@LABestBabies.org.

Electronic Pump Loan Program Promotes Breastfeeding

Approximately 84% of working mothers who received an electronic pump from a loan program delayed formula use by about eight months, according to study published in the *Journal of Human Lactation* (May 2008). For the 15.9% of working mothers who did not receive a pump, the request for formula was at about four months.

The Working Women Pump Program (WWPP) was launched in 2001, by the Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC Program (PHFE-WIC), a member of LA Best Babies Network. The program loans electronic pumps to low-income breastfeeding women who meet the following criteria:

- are employed full-time (at least 32 hours a week)
- express a desire to continue exclusive breastfeeding
- agree to return the pump upon requesting formula
- grant PHFE-WIC permission to contact their employer to:
 1. verify full-time employment
 2. provide resources on creating a breastfeeding-friendly workplace environment

In addition to the electronic pump, PHFE-WIC provides the participant's employer with a packet of resources including:

- information on California's [Lactation Accommodation Law](#)
- LA Best Babies Network's brochure "[Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace Policies](#)."

Learn more:

Read "[The Association Between an Electronic Pump Loan Program and the Timing of Requests for Formula by Working Mothers in WIC](#)."

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