



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Vermont Rated #1 for Breastfeeding at 12 months

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BURLINGTON – Vermont women ranked best in the nation for breastfeeding rates 12 months after birth (39.7 %), according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) 2010 Breastfeeding Report Card.

Vermont was also among the top seven states in the nation for the rate of infants ever breastfed (86.2 %), and one of only 10 states to exceed all five of the Healthy People 2010 objectives established by the CDC.

“One of the reasons Vermont is routinely ranked the healthiest state in the nation is that women breastfeed their babies at a higher rate and for a longer period of time,” said Health Commissioner Wendy Davis, MD. “We still have work to do, especially to support women who breastfeed up to and beyond their baby’s first birthday. We also know that there are disparities among Vermonters, with breastfeeding less common among lower income women.”

Breastfeeding is not only the most nutritious and the most protective way to feed a baby during the first months of life, it also protects against lower respiratory tract infections, middle ear infections, and childhood obesity. Formula-fed infants are at a higher risk of infections and upper respiratory diseases and are more likely to develop chronic diseases such as diabetes and asthma.

“Mothers in Vermont can breastfeed longer, in part, because of a state law that helps guide employers to support breastfeeding women,” Dr. Davis said. “More than 200 employers in the state earned the designation of ‘Breastfeeding Friendly Employers’ by the Health Department.”

The Health Department encourages all women to breastfeed their babies within the first hour after delivery, and to continue breastfeeding through baby’s first year of life.

For more information on the benefits of breastfeeding and local resources for nursing mothers, visit <http://healthvermont.gov>.

To read the CDC 2010 Breastfeeding Report Card visit: www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/reportcard.htm.

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