



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Vermont Among Nation's Best for Breastfeeding Rates



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BURLINGTON – For the second year in row, Vermont is one of only four states to exceed the Healthy People 2020 breastfeeding goals established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

A 2014 Breastfeeding Report Card published by CDC in August showed Vermont women breastfeed their babies at birth, three months and six months at a rate well above the national average. Vermont exceeded the national goals in five categories including rates of exclusive breastfeeding at three and six months.

“Vermont hospitals and our breastfeeding support community have done a phenomenal job,” said Breena Holmes, MD, director of maternal and child health for the Health Department. “Breastfeeding is the most protective and nutritious way to way to feed your baby. It contributes to brain development and acts as a protection against obesity and chronic disease later in life.”

High breastfeeding initiation rates take a dramatic decline as mothers return to work, and more than 70 percent of new mothers with young children return to the work force. Despite federal legislation under the Affordable Care Act requiring employers to provide reasonable time and space for lactating employees, many employers have not yet provided the required support. Many women, Dr. Holmes said, feel powerless to approach their supervisors about their needs.

Support for Breastfeeding Moms at Work

The Health Department will present an interactive day-long workshop, “The Business Case for Breastfeeding” on Sept. 17 in Montpelier. The training will explore creative solutions for supporting moms working hourly jobs in non-office settings, and strategies for conducting effective outreach with businesses in the community. The workshop will showcase new resources available from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which can be used to help educate and inform employers and mothers.

There is still room for participants who want to attend the Business Case for Breastfeeding training. To sign up, contact Tricia Cassi at 802-652-4177 or email Tricia.Cassi@state.vt.us.

For more information on the benefits of breastfeeding and local resources for nursing mothers visit healthvermont.gov

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