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ILLINOIS Breastfeeding Month

Governor Pat Quinn has declared August 2011 as Breastfeeding Promotion Month in Illinois. The proclamation aims to increase public awareness of breastfeeding as the normal and expected way to feed all babies in Illinois. The proclamation also supports World Breastfeeding Week August 1-7. Breastfeeding advocates in more than 170 countries worldwide will celebrate the 20th anniversary of this special week.

The benefits of breastfeeding are numerous, well known, and research based. Breastfed babies are better protected against respiratory and ear infections, asthma, allergies, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), childhood cancer, diabetes, and obesity. Mothers who breastfeed have a decreased risk of breast and ovarian cancers and diabetes.

This year the theme of breastfeeding month is "Talk to Me!" and focuses on the importance of promoting breastfeeding as the normal way to feed your baby. Surfing the web for accurate breastfeeding information or sharing knowledge and experiences is just a click away.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Immunization Survey, 70% of mothers in Illinois start out breastfeeding. In Kankakee County, 55% of mothers who gave birth over the last two years chose to start breastfeeding. For more information, contact the lactation consultants at Riverside and Provena St. Mary's or Kankakee County Health Department.

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