



*DOUGLAS COUNTY*  
**HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Women Infants and Children (WIC)

**August 1-7, 2010: World Breastfeeding Week**  
***Steps to Breastfeeding Success***

World Breastfeeding Week is observed every year during the first week of August. The theme of this year's observance – "Breastfeeding: Just 10 Steps!" – draws attention to the simple steps community, family, medical staff, legislators, and workplaces can take to help mother's reach their breastfeeding goals.

In recognition of this important public health observance, the Douglas County Women Infants and Children Program (WIC) joins with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the World Health Organization in recognizing the benefits of breastfeeding.

In 2009 nationally, only 73.9% of women began breastfeeding, and 43.4% continued for 6 months after the birth of their baby. In Oregon, 91.4% of mothers began breastfeeding, and 63% continued for 6 months. "One of the most important things we can do for the health of our children is to give breastfeeding women the support they need," said Kathleen Baylor, of the Douglas County WIC Program.

"When a mother chooses to breastfeed, she is making a decision that can have far-reaching effects on her baby's health," said Baylor. Breastfeeding offers a number of short-term health benefits for breastfed babies, including increased resistance to infections, earlier development of the infant's immune system, decreased risk of ear infections, and decreased risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). Long term benefits include reduced incidence of childhood obesity, reduced risk of juvenile diabetes, childhood cancers, allergic disease/asthma, and increased neurological development that may result in higher IQs.

To learn more about the benefits of breastfeeding, visit [www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding) or call the Douglas County Women Infants Children Program at 440-3516 or 1-800-234-0985.

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