



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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Health Department's WIC Program Observes World Breastfeeding Week *Winners of Annual Breastfeeding Friendly Place Awards Announced*

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) along with its Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) is commemorating World Breastfeeding Week, August 1-7, by announcing the winners of the 22nd Annual Breastfeeding Friendly Place Awards. These awards recognize workplaces, public places and other sites away from home that make an extra effort to accommodate breastfeeding mothers.

This year's workplace winners are Mid-Atlantic Mothers' Milk Bank and Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School, and this year's public place winner is the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

"I commend these groups for recognizing the importance of accommodating breastfeeding mothers upon their return to work and by providing them with a comfortable and safe space to breastfeed," said Health Department Director, Dr. Karen Hacker. "It's crucial to provide this support for mothers so that they not only initiate breastfeeding, but continue to do so for the first year, as breastfeeding has great benefits for both moms and babies."

2018 Winners

- The **Mid-Atlantic Mothers' Milk Bank (MAMMB)** recognizes the importance of breastmilk to optimize the health and well-being of all babies and provides a supportive environment to enable breastfeeding employees to feed their babies or express milk during work hours. MAMMB also offers a comfortable and safe environment for employees of neighboring businesses to come and express their milk if their workplace lacks a pumping space.
- The **Young Scholars of Western PA Charter School** believes in the importance of a good start in life. They encourage all staff upon return to work after delivery to breastfeed, and administration accommodates their work schedule so staff can pump as needed. The school provides a welcoming atmosphere for staff to pump and are very supportive of each other. If nursing parents attend events at the school, the lactation room is also available for them to use.
- The **Carnegie Museum of Natural History** understands that breastfeeding mothers do not want to be removed from the action to nurse, so it has created a warm space near exhibits so mothers feel welcome to breastfeed in a more public area of the museum. In addition, the Carnegie Museum of Natural History has recently updated its walls with wallpaper that was designed by a local Pittsburgh artist, which shows various animals breastfeeding their babies.

Breastfeeding initiation rates have been slowly rising in the United States for several years; however, the duration of breastfeeding rates among older infants 6-12 months is low. With supportive employers and communities, we hope to see more infants exclusively breastfed for the first six months and continued breastfeeding with solids for at least the first year of life. The longer a baby is breastfed, the greater the health benefits.

The Health Department's WIC Program and the Allegheny County Breastfeeding Coalition will be presenting the awards in conjunction with the 10th Annual Village for Kids event at the Renziehausen Park Band Shell in McKeesport on Monday, August 13, from 12-4 p.m. The event is free to attend.

PA WIC is funded by the USDA. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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