



MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
Governor

DAVID R. SCRASE, M.D.
Acting Cabinet Secretary

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Department of Health Celebrates National Breastfeeding Month

SANTA FE, NM – The New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) and the Women Infants and Children (WIC) program celebrate National Breastfeeding Month throughout August. This annual event recognizes breastfeeding as the foundation of lifelong good health for babies, mothers, and nursing parents.

The theme this year is *“Together We Do Great Things”*. Breastfeeding is not always easy, and underscores the importance for healthcare, and community providers to support lactation needs. This year, the DOH Maternal and Child Epidemiology program collaborated with community partners [Bold Futures](#), [New Mexico Doula Association](#), [Brindle Foundation](#), [New Mexico Breastfeeding Taskforce](#), and [Navajo Breastfeeding Coalition](#) to launch an educational campaign about the support systems in place for breast and chestfeeding.

“Research shows that infants, mothers, and nursing parents benefit from breast or chestfeeding throughout life,” said DOH Deputy Secretary Laura Parajon M.D. “Supporting nursing families is one of the best investments we can make for a healthier New Mexico.”

New Mexico continues to make advancements in breastfeeding rates. The [New Mexico Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System](#), overseen by DOH in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), shows an increase in breastfeeding duration.

Looking at rolling averages for birth years 2010 to 2020, breastfeeding increased beyond nine weeks for Latinas: (from 54% in 2010 to 69% in 2020); African-Americans: (55.8% in 2010 to 67.1% in 2020); and Asian or Pacific Islanders: (66.5% in 2010 to 77.3% in 2020). This is a strong indication that breastfeeding promotion and lactation support efforts are working, and that people are able to sustain lactation through the postpartum period.

In addition, the most recent [Breastfeeding Report Card](#), released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2020 shows New Mexico at or above the U.S. average in all categories.

More than half of New Mexico families participate in WIC, and these services have improved birth and postpartum health outcomes, supported positive child growth and development, and helped grow a healthier generation. WIC offers free healthy foods, nutrition education, nursing support, and community connections to help families live their best in the Land of Enchantment. To learn more about local events at WIC clinics, and local partners statewide visit www.nmwic.org.

Information on breastfeeding and COVID-19 can be found on the [World Health Organization](#) and [CDC](#) websites. For information on COVID-safe practices while breastfeeding, visit cv.nmhealth.org.

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NMDOH

Lealia Nelson, *Internal Communications Coordinator* | lealiaa.nelson@state.nm.us

The Department of Health works to promote health and wellness, improve health outcomes, and deliver services to all New Mexicans. As New Mexico's largest state agency, DOH offers public health services in all 33 counties and collaborates with 23 Native American tribes, Pueblos and nations.