



## MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Your public health team, connecting with our communities to achieve healthier outcomes

Submitted by: Leslie Kinnee, Public Information Officer  
615 N. State St., Stanton, MI 48888-9702  
989-831-3669, [kinnee@mmdhd.org](mailto:kinnee@mmdhd.org)

[www.mmdhd.org](http://www.mmdhd.org)



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### **Breastfeeding: a true super power**

Ithaca, Stanton, and St. Johns- It makes children and their mothers healthier and stronger. It boosts babies' immune systems, protecting them from illness and infection. It guards them against childhood obesity and diabetes. It gives them a solid foundation for life-long health and wellness. It reduces women's chance of breast and ovarian cancer and protects against post-partum depression. Pediatricians, healthcare experts, and millions of mothers all swear by it: breastfeeding is a true super power!

Women have the amazing ability to give their baby the best start in life by breastfeeding, and in a perfect world, all mothers and babies would reap the benefits of breastfeeding. In Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties the breastfeeding initiation rate is 82%, up from 65% just four years ago, due in large part to Mid-Michigan District Health Department's (MMDHD) Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program.

The program, which is offered to mothers enrolled in Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) offers:

- Support and encouragement to moms about to deliver, to those who have just delivered, and to those going back to work.
- Prenatal breastfeeding classes
- Education to pregnant women and mothers as their baby grows

According to Andrea Tabor, MMDHD Community Health and Education Division Director, "Helping mothers overcome breastfeeding challenges increases the number of babies who are fed this 'super milk' and increases the likelihood that they will stick with it long-term."

Those interested in the program should contact one of MMDHD's Breastfeeding Peer Counselors at 989-227-3137 in Clinton County, 989-875-1043 in Gratiot County, or 989-831-3625 in Montcalm County.

Just as MMDHD is doing what it can to support mothers and babies who breastfeed, individuals and communities are encouraged to do the same – in the hospital, in the home, in the workplace, and in public.

*Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program is a Federal y–funded program that serves low-and moderate income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants and children (under age 5) who have nutrition-related health problems.*

*Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.*

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