



## Knox County Health Department

140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 1, 2022

Contact: Kelsey Wilson  
865-257-7460 cell

### **KCHD to Host Free Event to Celebrate World Breastfeeding Week**

*Knoxville, Tenn.*—The Knox County Health Department’s Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program will host its annual, **FREE** celebration for World Breastfeeding Week on August 4. Registration begins at 10 a.m. at the Amphitheater in World’s Fair Park.

In accordance with this year’s theme, ‘Step Up for Breastfeeding’, attendees will take a stroll through the park. There will also be t-shirt painting, goodie bags, and door prizes. Additionally, city and county officials will read proclamations marking World Breastfeeding Week in Knox County.

“Breastfeeding is one of the best things a mother can do to protect the health of her infant, yet there has been a decline in breastfeeding rates among infants at 12 months of age in Tennessee.” said Robin Penegar, breastfeeding coordinator for WIC. “Considering what families have experienced during the ongoing formula shortage, it’s now more important than ever that we, as a community, be more supportive of moms and their efforts to breastfeed.”

According to the CDC, 24 percent of babies born in Tennessee were breastfed at 12 months of age in 2020, down from 34 percent in 2018. Breastfed babies are less likely to develop many adverse health conditions, including diabetes and obesity. In fact, a baby’s risk of becoming an overweight child goes down with each month of breastfeeding.

A mother’s breastfeeding success rate can be greatly improved through active support from her family, friends, community, clinicians, employer, and community leaders. The Breastfeeding Welcomed Here program recognizes businesses across Tennessee that provide a welcoming environment for breastfeeding families. State laws protect a mother’s right to breastfeed in public spaces, including businesses. More information about the program, including the business pledge and a directory of recognized businesses, can be found [here](#).

The WIC program is designed to serve pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women as well as infants and children under the age of five who qualify. More information about eligibility may be found [here](#). The program aims to safeguard the health of those who are at nutritional risk by providing healthy foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and referrals to health care.

#### **About Knox County Health Department**

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. For more information, visit [www.knoxcounty.org/health](http://www.knoxcounty.org/health).

