

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WESTCHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT PROMOTES BREASTFEEDING *Moms Who Breastfeed Are Celebrated During National Breastfeeding Month*

(White Plains, NY) – As it celebrates World Breastfeeding Week and National Breastfeeding Month, the Westchester County Department of Health salutes breastfeeding mothers.

Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD, said: “We encourage all new mothers to try breastfeeding. Breast milk provides antibodies that can protect infants from diseases before they are fully vaccinated. It can reduce their risk of Sudden Infant Death and their risk of obesity later in life. It also benefits mothers.”

Through its Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Health Department supports mothers who breastfeed by providing them with breast pumps, additional nourishing food and the help of certified lactation counselors and peer counselors. Currently, more than 120 WIC moms are exclusively breastfeeding and nearly 500 are partially breastfeeding.

To promote the important benefits of breastfeeding and to honor its exclusively breastfeeding WIC moms, the Westchester County Health Department WIC program has launched a virtual game they can play this month to compete for prizes based on their breastfeeding know-how. Participants will use clues to complete a crossword puzzle, then text or email their results to the WIC Program. Chosen via raffle later during National Breastfeeding Month, winners will receive baby-related gifts.

Angela Ngowi, the Westchester WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator, said: “This is a fun way to show appreciation to breastfeeding mothers for giving their babies the best start in life.”

The crosswords are due back Aug. 21, and winners will be notified by the end of August. Moms who are selected will be asked to take a selfie with their baby and send it in along with a few sentences about why breastfeeding their baby is important to them.

Test your breastfeeding IQ* with these clues:

- What is the healthiest way to feed your baby?
- What protective substance found in breast milk can help build your baby's immune system?
- Name one thing a mom can do to maintain her milk supply when away from her baby?

Amler also thanked local hospitals for helping new mothers as they start breastfeeding and encouraged residents and businesses to support the efforts of mothers to continue breastfeeding as their babies grow.

Benefits to babies who receive their mother's milk:

- fewer ear infections, respiratory infections and digestive infection;
- lower risk of developing diabetes or cancer;
- lower risk of developing asthma and allergies;
- less likely to be obese later in life; and
- less likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Benefits to women who breastfeed their infants:

- recover faster after birth and tend to lose pregnancy weight faster;
- less likely to develop diabetes;
- reduced risk for breast and ovarian cancer;
- less stress and reduced risk of postpartum depression;
- enhance their bond with their baby through skin-to-skin touching and eye contact that is shared during breastfeeding;
- save time: breast milk is always ready;
- save money by not buying formula.

More information on breastfeeding is available at www.westchestergov.com/health.

About Westchester County

Westchester County, located in the heart of the historic Hudson Valley, covers 500 square miles and has a population of just under a million. Originally home to Native Americans, who were members of the Lenape tribe, it is today a rich mix of many cultures and landscapes. The County is a blend of bustling cities, quaint villages and picturesque towns as well as open spaces and a network of beautiful parks. Westchester is made up of 6 cities, 19 towns and 20 villages. Westchester County is known for top-notch public schools, and a high quality of life. The County is also an intellectual capital, boasting a highly educated workforce, competitive colleges and universities, Fortune 500 companies, world changing non-profits, and cutting-edge research centers. Westchester is led by County Executive George Latimer, who took office in January 2018 as the ninth County Executive. Using inclusion and openness as a foreground, Latimer is fighting to make Westchester a destination for all people to live, work and enjoy. Learn more about Westchester County by visiting www.westchestergov.com

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