

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Department and Healthy Start Join to Extend Helping Hours

PITTSBURGH – Starting today, the Allegheny County Health Department’s Maternal and Child Health Program and Healthy Start, Inc. will collaborate to extend the Department’s free breastfeeding advice helpline hours for new mothers. The extended hours were made possible through a grant from the Heinz Endowments. This collaboration is one of the Health Department’s many efforts to improve health outcomes for moms and babies in Allegheny County.

“We are excited to be able to extend this service,” said Health Department Director, Dr. Karen Hacker. “Breastfeeding has numerous health benefits and we want to do whatever we can to support and encourage it.”

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends “exclusive breastfeeding” (meaning no solid food, formula, or water) for at least six months to offer a newborn the most protection from illnesses such as the common cold, ear infections, and stomach viruses,

“This is a huge advantage for all mothers but especially working mothers who experience problems or questions after 4 p.m.,” said Dannai Harriel, Administrator of the Maternal and Child Health Program. “Hopefully, this will give new moms the extra support they need to continue breastfeeding and enhance the Healthy Start mission of decreasing infant mortality, one baby at a time.”

The breastfeeding helpline will be staffed by Certified Lactation Consultants whose expertise is offering advice to solve breastfeeding issues for mothers and infants. Its call schedule is as follows:

- The Health Department’s 8-hour helpline during the work week begins at 8 a.m. and is staffed by lactation consultants at (412) 687-2243.
- On weekdays, breastfeeding clients can call Healthy Start lactation experts at (412) 247-1000 from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. This service is continued on weekends and holidays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Any off-hour calls will be answered the next business day.

For more information, contact Health Department Administrator Dannai Harriel at (412) 247-7950 or dharriel@achd.net.

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