



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **OP-ED: Marking National Breastfeeding Month and World Breastfeeding Week**

The first week of August is World Breastfeeding Week and Gov. Jim Justice has issued a proclamation declaring August National Breastfeeding Month. This is a time to drive home the importance of breastfeeding for both the newborn and the mother's health.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months, and then to continue breastfeeding but also adding healthy foods to your child's diet for up to the age of 2 years or beyond, in accordance with the World Health Organization.

Why is breastfeeding so important? The CDC has several facts about breastfeeding and how it impacts both mom and baby's health.

Breastfeeding can help protect babies against certain illnesses and diseases. The CDC says babies that are breastfed have a lower risk of asthma, obesity, diabetes, ear infections and stomach bugs. Why is this? Breast milk shares mom's antibodies with the baby, helping them to develop their immune system, which is the key to illness and disease prevention.

As for mom, the CDC says breastfeeding can help lower her risk of breast and ovarian cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure.

This World Breastfeeding Week, the World Health Organization is taking a particular look at working moms, and showing the importance of paid maternity leave and its impact on breastfeeding.

Parents can visit [www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding) to learn more about its health benefits and see more of the WHO's World Breastfeeding Week campaign at [www.who.int/campaigns/world-breastfeeding-week/2023](http://www.who.int/campaigns/world-breastfeeding-week/2023).

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The Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department serves Wood, Wirt, Calhoun, Pleasants, Ritchie and Roane Counties. It is located at 211 Sixth St. in Parkersburg. The offices are open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 304-485-7374 or visit the website, [movhd.com](http://movhd.com) for more information. Follow them at Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department MOVHD on Facebook and @MOVHealthDept on Instagram and Twitter.