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IT'S TIME TO CATCH ON TO THE "LATCH ON" AND CELEBRATE BREASTFEEDING ON AUG. 4

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St. Petersburg, FL–[World Breastfeeding Week](#), Aug. 1-7, is a global movement to promote and support breastfeeding for anyone and everyone interested in the growth and development of our youngest generation. To mark the celebration, the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas), in collaboration with The Tampa Bay Breastfeeding Task Force, among many others, will host a *Global Big Latch On* event on Friday, Aug. 4.



Moms who breastfeed are invited to take part in the *Global Big Latch On* with their babies at Empath Health, 3050 1st Ave. S., St. Petersburg. The doors will open at 9:30 AM and the event will begin at 10:30 AM. Moms are asked to arrive at least 30 minutes early to get settled. Friends, family and community members can also join the celebration with breakfast, door prizes, crafts and games for kids, a clothing and book swap, giveaways and more.

One of the most highly effective preventive measures a mother can take to protect the health of her baby is to breastfeed. Babies who are not breastfed are at increased risk of infant morbidity and mortality, adult obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Women who have not breastfed are at a higher risk of osteoporosis, premenopausal breast cancer and ovarian cancer. The [World Health Organization recommends](#) breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months of a baby's life and continuing to breastfeed for two years, or as long as the mother and child prefer.

The *Global Big Latch On* event's goal is to hold a celebration within walking distance of every family in the world. DOH-Pinellas, Healthy Start Coalition of Pinellas County, Inc., Empath Health and The Tampa Bay Breastfeeding Task Force are among the key community partners who made this event possible.

Mothers, fathers, professionals and community champions from all over Pinellas County are encouraged to join the celebration and show their support for breastfeeding families around the world. To register for the 2017 *Global Big Latch On* event, please visit tinyurl.com/BigLatchOn2017. After the event, The Tampa Bay Breastfeeding Task Force – *Pinellas Chapter* will hold their quarterly meeting, beginning at 11:00 AM; all are welcome to attend.

For information about the DOH-Pinellas event on Aug. 4, contact Samantha Staley at Samantha.Staley@flhealth.gov. For information about the global event, go to www.biglatchon.org.

For information about DOH-Pinellas, go to www.PinellasHealth.com or follow us on Twitter [@HealthyPinellas](https://twitter.com/HealthyPinellas).

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