Every year, the month of August is celebrated as National Breastfeeding Month. During this time, many health professionals, advocates, breastfeeding mothers, and communities across the nation focus on how breastmilk is the preferred source of early nutrition for infants. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for about 6 months; then with the introduction of appropriate foods at that time, continued to breastfeed for 1 year or longer. National, state and local breastfeeding coalitions also recognize breastfeeding as the norm for infants and young children.

There has been much evidence found over the years in support of the benefits that breastfeeding provides to the mother, baby and community. For one, breastfeeding builds a strong and emotional connection between a mother and baby that can last a lifetime. Breastfeeding is a proven primary prevention strategy, that protects both infants and mothers from many chronic and acute diseases and builds a foundation for life-long health and wellness. It also provides a safe and reliable food source, especially during natural disasters and emergency situations.

**IT ALL STARTS AT THE BEGINNING...**

*Keeping Abreast* is the debut newsletter of the Tri-Counties Breastfeeding Alliance. We hope that the information provided here will assist the healthcare community and our families with the essential tools to help mothers succeed at breastfeeding. Breastmilk is an infant’s “first food.” Breastmilk is also a safe, reliable and no-cost, natural food and is how mother nature intended a baby to be fed. Breastfeeding also builds a strong emotional connection between the mother and child, a bond which lasts a lifetime.
A Breastfeeding Peer Counselor (PC) helps mothers during the prenatal and early postpartum months by answering mother’s questions, teaching breastfeeding classes and helping new mothers reach their breastfeeding goals. All PCs can relate well to the new moms because all have breastfed their own children.

Kulwant Khela and Marilu Uriostegui are the BPCs at Sutter County WIC. Kulwant is a mom of two boys—both of which she breastfed for 2 years. She has worked at WIC as a Nutrition Assistant since 1994. Since Punjabi is Kulwant’s native language, she provides breastfeeding support to our Punjabi speaking moms. Marilu is our PC who provides help to our Spanish and English speaking mothers and is a mom of two breastfed children. Both Kulwant and Marilu are Certified Lactation Counselors (CLCs).

Rosario Reyes and Ya Yang, and Alyssa Ruiz are the three PCs for Ampla Health WIC. Rosario is a proud mother of three breastfed children, who are now 17, 13 & 2; which breastfed each for two years. Her third baby struggled with breastfeeding due to health complications, but Rosario said “the guidance from an IBCLC made a difference for me.” Rosario hopes to be an IBCLC soon.

Ya has three children, and has a total of 5 1/2 years of breastfeeding between them. Alyssa also has breastfed all three of her children. All three of the Ampla Health WIC PCs are Certified Lactation Counselors.

The ACA (Affordable Care Act) requires health insurance plans to cover preventive services such as comprehensive lactation support and counseling by a trained provider during pregnancy and/or in the postpartum period, as well as cover the costs for providing breastfeeding equipment—such as breast pumps.

For more information visit http://www.hrsa.gov/womensguidelines/
Each of our participating counties assist with breastfeeding support through their Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Programs (MCAH) Public Health Nursing or Home Visitation.

In Yuba County, a toll-free phone line is available for breastfeeding calls to Public Health Nurses (PHNs) who can discuss breastfeeding concerns. Three of Yuba County’s PHNs are CLCs. Yuba County also has a Home Health Nurse program which provides case management for new mothers who reside in Yuba County.

In Sutter County, a PHN visits all the Medi-Cal and uninsured new moms at Fremont Hospital. Visits with moms who have private health insurance are available by referral only when a baby is in the NICU, transferred for specialized care or mom has serious health or social problems. Sutter County’s PHN, who is also a CLE, coaches on breastfeeding technique and refers to WIC and Lactation Consultants.

Pregnancy & Breastfeeding Helplines

Colusa County  1-800-655-3110
Yuba County  800-794-4067 or (530) 749-6366
Sutter County  (530) 822-5924

Our alliance partners are maternity and public health nurses, breastfeeding peer counselors, lactation consultants, advocates from our local First 5 programs, medical and health professionals and breastfeeding moms. We are a subsidiary of the California Breastfeeding Coalition which supports the “Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative”, the Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding (2011) and the Healthy People 2020 Objectives, one of which is to increase the proportion of live births that occur in facilities that provide recommended care for lactating mothers and their babies.

Save the date!
January 28-30, 2015
“Call to Action: A Gold Rush of Breastfeeding Support”
California Breastfeeding Summit
Anaheim, CA

On-line resources:

AAP
www2.aap.org/breastfeeding/

La Leche League
www.lli.org

Breastfeeding, Inc
www.breastfeedinginc.ca

Center for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding

Childbirth and Breastfeeding classes are available in the Yuba-Sutter area through the following health agencies:

Fremont Hospital  530-751-4165
Harmony Health  530-743-6888
Sutter North Medical  530-749-3585

Please call for dates & times.

Harmony Health is the only state licensed free-standing birth center accepting Medi-Cal in Northern California. They provide prenatal care and professional staff who will guide you through the important months leading up to the birth of your baby. Staff include nurses, midwives, dietitians and an IBCLC. They can be reached at: 530-743-6888.

Sprout Yuba Sutter is a local on-line resource for new moms. Tiffany Wilson, like most expectant mothers, was on a quest to learn as much as she could about pregnancy and birth. Written by a mom, for moms, Tiffany compiled local resources and Sprout Yuba-Sutter was born. Check out her page: www.sproutyubasutter.com

Meet our Public Health Nurses

The Tri-Counties Breastfeeding Alliance meets quarterly, usually on the 5th Thursdays of the month. Our upcoming meetings are October 30th, 2014 & January 29th, 2015. If you would like to be a part of the campaign to support breastfeeding in our community, contact Tina Lavy at tlavy@co.sutter.ca.us or call 530-822-5951

Local and Online Support Partners

Be a Part of our Team

Our alliance partners are maternity and public health nurses, breastfeeding peer counselors, lactation consultants, advocates from our local First 5 programs, medical and health professionals and breastfeeding moms. We are a subsidiary of the California Breastfeeding Coalition which supports the “Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative”, the Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding (2011) and the Healthy People 2020 Objectives, one of which is to increase the proportion of live births that occur in facilities that provide recommended care for lactating mothers and their babies.
The use of the gold color bow for breastfeeding symbolizes that breastmilk is the gold standard for infant feeding, against which other alternatives should be compared.

**Why is a bow used to symbolize breastfeeding?**

Each part of the bow carries a special message:
- one loop represents the mother;
- the other loop represents the baby.

The ribbon is symmetrical, telling us the mother and baby are both vital to successful breastfeeding.

The knot represents others who support mom and baby: dad, grandmothers, health care professionals, employers and the community.

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**Special Recognition from the Tri-Counties Breastfeeding Alliance**

Toni Peri, Registered Nurse and CLC nurse for over 23 years, was awarded the Tri-Counties Breastfeeding Alliance 2014 “Gold Award”. Toni created Fremont Hospital’s Home Health visitation program 18 years ago. As a home health nurse, Toni is referred to new mothers from the mother’s doctor and visits mom and baby after they are discharged from the hospital. Toni assesses baby’s growth, development and feeding as well as mother-baby attachment and bonding.

Toni also teaches childbirth and breastfeeding classes at Fremont Hospital. The Tri-Counties Breastfeeding Alliance was delighted to present Toni this special award for her years of dedication to mothers and infants in the Yuba-Sutter area.

The 2013 recipient of the “Gold Award” was Angela Kreider, of “Women’s Circle” - nurse-midwifery services in Yuba Sutter since 2007.

**Congratulations to Toni and Angela for this well-deserved recognition!**