



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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**DC Breastfeeding Coalition Endorses Surgeon General's Call to Action:
Improving Support to Breastfeeding Mothers**

Washington, DC—Three out of four women in the United States provide their infants with the healthiest start in life by breastfeeding, and today Surgeon General Regina Benjamin called on the entire nation to support the removal of barriers impeding this important public health behavior. The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding urges health care providers, employers, insurers, policymakers, researchers, and the community at large to embrace concrete action steps to support mothers in reaching their personal breastfeeding goals.

The District of Columbia Breastfeeding Coalition (DCBFC) endorses the Surgeon General's Call to Action and proudly announces their progress in supporting the action steps through the following activities:

Action Step for Community Leaders

- The DCBFC developed a website and the DC Breastfeeding Resource Guide to provide breastfeeding information to District of Columbia (DC) area residents.
- The DCBFC partnered with the District's Women, Infant and Children's (WIC) program to receive funding to develop an East of the River Lactation Support Center. This center will provide lactation support services in the area with the lowest breastfeeding rates in the District.

Action Step for Health Care Community

- The DCBFC evaluated Washington, DC's birthing facilities and awarded those facilities with the most "breastfeeding-friendly" practices and policies.
- The DCBFC established the Perinatal Lactation Quality Care Collaborative; a regional collaborative of all eight DC hospitals and the freestanding birthing center that works to create a more breastfeeding supportive environment in birthing facilities.

Action Step for Employers:

- The DCBFC and Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition held training on The Business Case for Breastfeeding and have provided businesses throughout DC and Maryland with resources to help them adopt some simple measures that support the breastfeeding working mother.

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- The DBFC and Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition created a Regional Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace Award to recognize local companies that provide a supportive work environment for breastfeeding employees.

According to Dr. Sahira Long, President of the DCBFC, “The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding demonstrates a society-wide approach to removing the barriers that make it difficult for many women to succeed.” It is the hope of Dr. Long and the DCBFC that “one day we will all do our part to ensure that all mothers who choose to breastfeed will receive the support they need from their peers, employers, health care providers and the community.”

For more information on the Call to Action, visit the Surgeon General’s website www.surgeongeneral.gov or contact Dr. Sahira Long, President of the DCBFC at 202-470-2732

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The DC Breastfeeding Coalition, established in 2004, is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the health of families in the District through improved breastfeeding initiation and duration rates. It is the Coalitions’ goal to promote environments that establish human lactation as a societal norm.