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**COMMUNITY BRIDGES**  
PUENTES DE LA COMUNIDAD

MEDIA ADVISORY

## **9<sup>th</sup> Annual Breastfeeding Awareness Walk, hosted by Community Bridges WIC Program**

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### **WHAT:**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Breastfeeding Awareness Walk, open to the general public and representatives of the media. This event includes fun activities for the whole family, face painting, a live DJ, community resource booths, healthy snacks, free t-shirts, raffles and more.

### **WHO:**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Breastfeeding Awareness Walk is hosted by Women, Infants & Children (WIC) in Santa Cruz County, one of ten nonprofit programs of Community Bridges.

Breastfeeding Awareness Walks are celebrated throughout California during the month of August, as part of a statewide effort to highlight the need to support and celebrate breastfeeding women. This local effort will be held in Watsonville.

Breastfeeding events around the State of California are sponsored by the California WIC Program, the California WIC Association, and the California Breastfeeding Coalition.

### **WHEN:**

Friday, August 7, 2015

3pm to 6pm

A walk down Main Street to celebrate breastfeeding begins at 5pm

### **WHERE:**

Watsonville Plaza at the corner of Main Street and East Beach Street in Watsonville, California.

### **WHY:**

Community Bridges WIC believes that it is the responsibility and duty of the community, hospitals and businesses to support women in their decision to breastfeed.

Research has shown that breastfeeding, especially exclusive breastfeeding, is associated with better health outcomes. Infants who are not breastfed have increased incidence of allergies, diarrhea, and ear and urinary tract infections. They also have an increased likelihood of being overweight. Any of these illnesses in children increases costs to families and employers, and adds to the burden of an over-taxed health care system.

Accordingly, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services "Healthy People 2020" goals include objectives to increase the number of women who initiate breastfeeding to 82% and the

number of women who are breastfeeding at 6 months and 1 year to 61% and 34% respectively. The goals for exclusive breastfeeding are 46% at 3 months and 25% at 6 months.

The Community Bridges WIC Program serves more than 500 pregnant women each month. Most are mono-lingual Spanish speakers who work in the agriculture industry. These women face many obstacles to sustain breastfeeding at levels that meet national goals. WIC efforts help mothers increase breastfeeding initiation and duration through lactation support, education, and advocacy.

**Thanks in part to Community Bridges WIC Program efforts, Santa Cruz County mothers are exceeding most of “Healthy People 2020” goals already:** 87% of mothers have initiated breastfeeding, 55% are breastfeeding at 6 months; 35% are breastfeeding at 1 year; 41% are breastfeeding exclusively at 3 months, and 34% are breastfeeding exclusively at 6 months.

#### **VISUALS AND INTERVIEWS:**

Interviews are available with WIC parents and advocates, Community Bridges CEO Raymon Cancino, and WIC Program Director Cathy Cavanaugh.

Spanish-speaking spokespersons are available.

Visuals include parents and youth participating in interactive workshops, and a march down Main Street in WIC t-shirts with Breastfeeding Awareness signs.

#### **ABOUT COMMUNITY BRIDGES WIC PROGRAM:**

WIC is a federally funded nutrition program that provides healthy foods, nutrition and breastfeeding information and support, and referrals to the community to pregnant, breastfeeding postpartum women as well as infants and children up to age 5. The Santa Cruz County WIC branch one of ten social service programs operated by Community Bridges, a local nonprofit.

To learn more, please visit [www.communitybridges.org](http://www.communitybridges.org).