



COMMUNITY BRIDGES
PUENTES DE LA COMUNIDAD

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Community Bridges Receives State Recognition for Workplace Conditions

Santa Cruz County, Calif. –Community Bridges has been selected to receive the California Breastfeeding Coalition’s Mother-Baby Friendly Workplace Award. As a nonprofit agency with over 200 employees in 20 locations throughout Santa Cruz County, Community Bridges strives to provide a family-friendly and supportive working environment for its employees, including working mothers returning from maternity leave.

Scientific research indicates that breastfeeding and the use of human milk for infant feeding results in positive outcomes not only for the mother, infant and their family, but for the workplace, community and environment as well. An infant who is breastfed has a lower risk of infectious diseases, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), overweight/obesity, Type 1 and 2 diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, asthma, and certain types of cancer. A mother who breastfeeds has reduced risks of breast and ovarian cancer, Type 2 diabetes, and osteoporosis. Epidemiologic research shows that human milk and the breastfeeding of infants provide advantages with regard to general health, growth, and development, while significantly decreasing risk for a large number of acute and chronic diseases.

Community Bridges’ 10 programs include the federally-funded Women, Infants, Children (WIC) program. WIC provides low-income families with special checks to buy healthy foods, personalized nutrition education, and breastfeeding support. In recognition of the well documented health advantages of breastfeeding for infants and mothers, Community Bridges aligns with WIC’s mission and strongly supports and encourages breastfeeding by accommodating lactating employees in the workplace with adequate time and facilities for breastfeeding and/or expressing milk for their infants.

“Not only does Community Bridges have a written Lactation Accommodation Policy, but we actively promote the policy and make new employees aware that it exists,” said Dana Wagner, Assistant Program Director for WIC. “We provide a supportive environment and actively assist moms when they come back from maternity leave –including offering flexible schedules, private lactation rooms, giving additional paid break time as needed for pumping, and WIC-certified educational information about breastfeeding. It’s lovely that the whole Community Bridges agency supports WIC’s mission of helping

women breastfeed. It really improves morale and lets the employees know how much they are valued,” Wagner said.

Representatives from Community Bridges will travel to the State Capitol in Sacramento on Tuesday, May 10 to accept the award; past recipients include California Highway Patrol, Kaiser Permanente, Wells Fargo and UC Davis, among others. The Mother-Baby Friendly Workplace Awards ceremony will be held in collaboration with the California Breastfeeding Coalition and the Sacramento Breastfeeding Coalition.

ABOUT COMMUNITY BRIDGES Community Bridges operates ten programs and twenty sites throughout Santa Cruz County focused on children, families and seniors. Each year, they uplift the lives of more than 27,000 residents in need. The Community Bridges Family of Programs includes: Meals on Wheels for Santa Cruz County; Elderday Adult Day Health Care; Lift Line; Child Development Division; Child & Adult Care Food Program; Women, Infants & Children (WIC); La Manzana Community Resources; Live Oak Family Resource Center; Nueva Vista Family Resource Center; and Mountain Community Resources.

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.

To learn more, please visit www.communitybridges.org.