

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit
MEDIA RELEASE
For immediate release: Sept 20, 2007

Challenge Raises Awareness about Breastfeeding First

Mothers and babies are invited to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week in Canada and participate in the Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge on Saturday, September 29, 2007. The event will be held in the KidZone Room, by the north entrance, in the Brockville and Area YMCA at 345 Park Street, Brockville, beginning at 10:00 am. This fun and informative event raises awareness about the benefits of breastfeeding. This year, the Leeds, Grenville, and Lanark District Health Unit will be offering a free car seat clinic to mothers participating in the Challenge. Pre-registration for the car seat clinic is required by September 20. A registered dietitian will be discussing "Making Your Own Baby Food." The Leader from the La Leache League Canada - Brockville Group will also be on hand to answer breastfeeding questions and share resources. There will be refreshments for all participant and door prizes, as well.

At 11:00 am on September 29, mothers and babies at sites across Canada and the United States will compete to set the record for the most babies breastfeeding at one time. The winners of the competition will be the region with the most babies participating as a percentage of the birth rate. To level the playing field between large and small, each site will be entered into one of four groups determined by birth rate. This event takes place as part of the celebration of World Breastfeeding Week in Canada. It is sponsored by the Quintessence Foundation, a non-profit group providing education to parents and professionals about breastfeeding. This is the seventh year of the Challenge and the fourth year that Brockville has a participating site. Last year, there were 4724 babies breastfeeding at 158 sites across North America.

World Breastfeeding Week in Canada is celebrated October 1-7, and the theme this year is "Breastfeeding First: Beginning breastfeeding within the first hour of birth." The colostrum that a mother produces right after childbirth is nutritionally rich and contains antibodies that protect a vulnerable newborn's system. Early breastfeeding also increases the rates of mothers exclusively nursing their babies in the first six months of life. It is estimated that thousands of babies can be saved each year if they are breastfed in the first hour of life.

To pre-register for the Breastfeeding Challenge and Car Seat Clinic, or for more information, please contact Julie Larose, 925-0067. You can also visit the website www.babyfriendly.ca <<http://www.babyfriendly.ca>> to find out more about the Challenge and to watch the results come in on September 29!

-30-

Contact: Dianne Oickle, Public Health Nutritionist, (613) 345-5685 or 1-800-660-5853