

**COUNTY OF SONOMA
AGENDA ITEM
SUMMARY REPORT**

Clerk of the Board Use Only
Meeting Date _____ Held Until _____
Agenda Item No: _____ Agenda Item No: _____

Department: Health Services

() 4/5 Vote Required

Contact:
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Board Date:
8/4/09

Deadline for Board Action:
8/4/09

AGENDA SHORT TITLE: World Breastfeeding Week

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION:

Resolution recognizing August 1-7, 2009 as World Breastfeeding Week.

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT

EXPENDITURES

Estimated Cost \$

Amount Budgeted

Other Avail Approp
(Explain below)

Additional Requested: \$

Explanation (if required):

ADD'L FUNDS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL

0 Contingencies
(Fund Name:)

Unanticipated Revenue
(Source:)

Other Transfer(s)
(Source:)

0 Add'l Funds Requested: \$ 0

Prior Board Action(s): 8/5/08 - Recognized World Breastfeeding Week 2008.

Alternatives – Results of Non-Approval: Lost opportunity to advance public awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Health Services requests that the Board of Supervisors generate public awareness of and support for breastfeeding by approving a Gold Resolution to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week during the period August 1 – 7, 2009.

Over 120 countries celebrate World Breastfeeding Week as an opportunity to educate the public on the health benefits of breastfeeding. In addition to reducing the risk of obesity, asthma, cancer and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, breastfeeding has a special role in protecting infants from infection in the event of a natural disaster emergency such as a hurricane or an earthquake. The theme for World Breastfeeding Week 2009 is “*Breastfeeding: A Vital Emergency Response. Are You Ready?*”

Infants are especially vulnerable in natural disasters that result in contaminated drinking water. Child mortality can soar due to diarrhea, respiratory illness, and malnutrition. The American Academy of Pediatrics recognizes breast milk to be the cleanest and safest food for infants. In a public health emergency breast milk can be a lifesaving source of safe nutrition and hydration.

The Department’s Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Program and the Sonoma County Breastfeeding Coalition support promotion of breastfeeding as an important public health emergency preparedness strategy. Under emergency conditions the risks associated with formula feeding are dramatically increased due to limited access to clean water and refrigeration. Breastfeeding is the best infant feeding method because it is readily available, protects infants against infectious diseases, and provides essential nutrients and fluids.

Breastfeeding only for all babies under six months of age is supported by both the World Health Organization and the American Academy of Pediatrics, with supplemental breastfeeding recommended until the age of one year. Although 95.7% of women in Sonoma County initiate breastfeeding in the hospital, 64% of mothers have stopped breastfeeding before their baby is six months old. The Sonoma County Breastfeeding Coalition and the Native Breastfeeding Council are working together to increase the county’s percentage of mothers who breastfeed their infants until the age of six months. Breastfeeding through the first year of life provides even greater infant protection and should be encouraged for all mothers and babies.

Sonoma County events and activities in recognition of World Breastfeeding Week include:

- The Sonoma County Breastfeeding Coalition will have a booth at the *Neighbors in Health* event on Saturday, August 2nd at Kaiser Permanente, 3925 Old Redwood Highway, Santa Rosa.
- The Department of Health Services will have a display located across from the Board of Supervisors’ chambers located at 575 Administration Drive, Room 102A, Santa Rosa.
- Local public libraries will display breastfeeding information provided by the Sonoma County Breastfeeding Coalition.

Attachments: Gold Resolution recognizing August 1-7, 2009, as World Breastfeeding Week.

On File With Clerk: None.

CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY

Board Action (If other than "Requested")

Vote: