



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***LATCH & LINK: LONG BEACH COMMUNITY FAIR CELEBRATES LOCAL SUPPORT  
AND WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK***

*LONG BEACH, July 10, 2014*

On **Saturday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014, from 10am-3pm**, at the **Unitarian Universalist Church of Long Beach (UUCLB)**, families from all over Long Beach and surrounding areas will gather with local maternal and child health organizations and professionals at the **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual [Latch & Link Long Beach: A Community Fair celebrating World Breastfeeding Week](#)**. The event is sponsored by UUCLB's Social Action Committee, City of Long Beach Department of Health & Human Services, Berlin Wellness Group, Birth by the Sea, Full Circle Chiropractic, Taproot Midwifery, and Zen Baby Shop. The event will be held at UUCLB's park-like campus located at **5450 E. Atherton St., Long Beach, CA 90815**.

***Latch & Link: Long Beach*** is a dream come true for Celine Malanum and Christine Gibson, two local moms and organizers of the event. "In the past, we've hosted World Breastfeeding Week open mics at Viento y Agua coffee shop," said Malanum. "They were well attended and incredibly inspiring, but last year we felt that it needed to grow. With our first year organizing Latch & Link, our goals were simple: get tons of local breastfeeding resources in one place, and connect them with other breastfeeding moms and families. We met that goal with over 100 families attending last year. We're excited to reach even more families this year!"

Gibson said, "We know that deciding to breastfeed is a personal choice, but to be successful at breastfeeding truly takes a village. This event is all about building that village. Moms can reach their breastfeeding goals when they are connected and surrounded by support." Particularly exciting to Gibson are the event's partner organizations. "We are honored to have such wonderful and diverse partner organizations gathered together. If a breastfeeding mother and baby are the heart of a breastfeeding community, then these groups and people are the backbone."



Malanum and Gibson find their inspiration in knowing that last year's event helped local moms. An attendee commented in a survey last year, "I left the event that day knowing that I am not alone... there are other mothers that have experienced and are experiencing many of the things I have. I may not have a lot of support at home but I know that there are other places that I can turn to when I need advice or words of encouragement."

The event will also feature [The Great Long Beach Latch](#), a friendly challenge to see how many moms and babies we can latch on at the same time. Last year we had 44 babies (which included a set of twins). Breastfeeding in public (also known as NIP = Nursing in public) is still a controversial act. From the CSULB graduate, Karlesha Thurman, who's [breastfeeding photograph went viral](#) and received both [positive and negative reactions](#) to more private stories of Long Beach moms being told to stop breastfeeding at local restaurants, many moms are intimidated to breastfeed outside their homes. Women are protected by [CA law](#) (California Civil Code Section 43.3) but are often found in situations with disapproving community members.

Malanum says **The Great Long Beach Latch** is a "celebration of the simple yet powerful act of feeding your baby – whenever and wherever needed." Attendees will have an opportunity to show their ongoing support for nursing in public by screen-printing the phrase "NIP LBC" and other messages onto their own garment at the DIY craft booth. Organizers and sponsors hope to inspire the community to truly support and encourage breastfeeding moms. Their vision is for Long Beach to become the most breastfeeding-friendly city in America!

Event highlights include:

- **The Great Long Beach Latch**, a friendly challenge counting latched moms and babies (11:00 am)
- **Breastfeeding Resource Fair** with 30+ exhibitors ranging from hospitals, social service agencies and programs, prenatal/birth/post-partum professionals, birthing centers, local shops & support groups
- **"Ask an LC" Booth** with rotating Internationally Board Certified Lactation Consultants offering free, quick answers to breastfeeding questions
- **Conversation Groups** for mothers facilitated by lactation professionals; separate group for dads and partners of breastfeeding women
- **Mini Workshops** led by breastfeeding & babywearing experts
- **Raffle for gift baskets** provided by partner organizations, local businesses and individuals
- **Crafts, yoga mini-class, and playground area** for kids
- **DIY screen-printing crafts for parents** – bring a shirt, onesie or other garment to screen-print for FREE
- **Gift Bags** - The first 100 attendees will be guaranteed a gift bag along with other incentives including a raffle ticket for various prizes.



As of this press release, partner organizations exhibiting in the Resource Fair include:

- Baby Awareness Studio
- BabywearingLB /So-Cal Babywearers
- Beach Cities Midwifery
- Breastfeeding Support Inc
- Breastfeeding Support for LB Area Moms
- BreastfeedLA
- Care on Call - Los Angeles
- City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services MCH/SIDS program
- City of Long Beach – WIC
- Doula Cooks
- Doulas Association of Southern California
- Fit4Mom/Stroller Strides
- KIND Healthy Snacks
- La Leche League Long Beach
- La Leche League Redondo Beach
- LeapFrog Yoga
- Little L.A. Photography
- LB Community Acupuncture
- Mama Maiz
- Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach
- Mother's Milk Bank
- Parenting Companions / The Parenting Hour
- Placenta Papa & Lechita Mama
- Pump Station & Nurtury
- Sacred Roots Holistic Healing
- Serene Births
- St. Mary's Medical Center
- The Children's Clinic
- Tiny ecoUrbanite
- Your Natural Birth.net & Treasured Birth
- Yoga Mama Cass

Breastfeeding is a low-cost, low-tech preventive intervention with far-reaching benefits for both mothers and babies. Exclusive breastfeeding in the early months of a child's life can significantly decrease the child's risk of many serious conditions including SIDS, asthma, diabetes, and childhood obesity. For mothers, breastfeeding decreases the risks of breast and ovarian cancer, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, and cardiovascular disease. Breastfeeding success is linked with the support circles of every mother and baby. **Latch & Link: Long Beach** aims to provide a place for mothers to connect with local resources, and connect with one another to create and maintain those circles of support.

**World Breastfeeding Week** is a global event celebrated August 1-7 annually since 1992. To learn more, go to [www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org](http://www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org)

**Latch & Link: Long Beach** is also recognized as a [Live, Love, Latch!](#) event, part of a National Breastfeeding Month celebration presented by La Leche League USA and hosted by LLL Groups throughout the country. National Breastfeeding Month is August 1-31. All in attendance at a Live, Love, Latch! event will be counted as participants, with the goal being to break the previous year's record for breastfeeding supporters attending.

Press Advisory for the great **Long Beach Latch** will be shared on Monday, July 21, 2014.

Story ideas, social media images and potential interview sources are available upon request.

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