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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ingham County urges residents to “Get Real About Breastfeeding”

LANSING, Mich. – Breastfeeding is legal, healthy and normal. That is the message the Ingham County Health Department is sharing across the county and beyond in its latest campaign to celebrate, support and encourage breastfeeding.

The campaign, which features local families, will appear on billboards, movie theater screens, and in a traveling gallery throughout the summer. Ingham County falls short of national breastfeeding goals, especially among African-Americans. The campaign aims to encourage more women to breastfeed and to stick with it while normalizing breastfeeding among the general public.

“Most new mothers know that breastfeeding is healthy and try to breastfeed, but locally we do not meet important benchmarks for duration and exclusivity,” said Ingham County Health Officer Linda S. Vail. “This campaign recognizes that there can be challenges when breastfeeding, but it encourages women to seek support. We have many resources in our community.”

The 2020 Healthy People goal is for 81.9 percent of infants to breastfeed, at least initially. Currently, only 73.4 percent of Michigan infants are ever breastfeed, and for African-American infants, it is just 54.9 percent.

“We made it a priority to include diverse mothers and families in the campaign,” said Regina Traylor, director of the health department’s Maternal and Child Health Division. “We featured members of our own community. That really resonated with people, and the response has been phenomenal.”

The campaign was initiated through the health department’s Strong Start, Healthy Start program and is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). It was developed in partnership with Willow Tree Family Center, the Capital Area Breastfeeding Coalition and Redhead Design Studio. For more information, visit getrealaboutbreastfeeding.org.

The “Get Real About Breastfeeding” campaign will next be on tour today, Friday, April 28, 2016 at 2:30 p.m. at the Capitol Building in Lansing for the “Nationwide Nurse-In.”

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