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La Leche League of Delaware County/Main Line Applauds National Breastfeeding Campaign

(Delaware County/Main Line) June 5- La Leche League of Delaware County/Main Line applauds the Department of Health and Human Service's Office on Women's Health and the Ad Council on the launch of its national breastfeeding awareness campaign.

"Babies Were Born to be Breastfed," is the signature statement attached to this educational campaign which will deliver public service announcements to newspapers, magazines, billboards, radio and television. The message is that babies exclusively breastfed for six months are healthier because they are less likely to develop a variety of diseases including diarrhea, ear infections, respiratory infections, and obesity.

Exclusive breastfeeding for six months, i.e. breastfeeding without supplemental liquids such as water, juice, or formula or solid foods, is encouraged by the American Academy of Pediatricians, the World Health Organization, and La Leche League of Delaware County/Main Line.

Breastfeeding offers the greatest protection from illness when babies are receiving human milk alone; this protection declines in proportion to the amount of supplements, such as formula, cow's milk, or solid foods, they receive. Babies also receive more benefits the longer they are breastfed. Scientific studies call this effect a "dose response."

Some conditions that show a dose response to breastfeeding are: childhood leukemia and lymphoma, ear infections, respiratory infections, diarrhea, meeting developmental milestones, obesity, and breast cancer among mothers who breastfeed their babies. In addition, the use of artificial nipples for early supplementation can cause nipple confusion and lead to breastfeeding problems.

The United States has one of the lowest rates of breastfeeding in the world. While 70 percent of mothers begin breastfeeding in the hospital, only 33 percent are still breastfeeding at six months.

With the proper information and support, most mothers are able to breastfeed exclusively for six months as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health

Organization. La Leche League of Delaware County/Main Line offers a support group for pregnant and lactating women. The Group offers a continuing series of monthly meetings and covers the advantages of breastfeeding, preparing for the baby, the art of breastfeeding and overcoming difficulties, and starting solids and weaning. Mothers in the Delaware County/Main Line area can choose from 5 monthly meetings, during a variety of day and evening times, and addressing the breastfeeding needs of both infants and toddlers. A La Leche League meeting is the perfect place to get breastfeeding questions answered by experienced breastfeeding mothers. All pregnant and lactating women and their babies are welcomed.

For more information on this nonprofit's meetings or breastfeeding information contact the Breastfeeding Helpline, (610) 666-0359.

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