



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE BIG LATCH ON 2018

EL PASO, TX- On Saturday, August 4, 2018, the Binational Breastfeeding Coalition (BBC) will host the 7th Annual Big Latch On at Bassett Place, 6101 Gateway Blvd. West. The event is in tandem with worldwide synchronized efforts to bring awareness to the importance and benefits of breastfeeding and to break the world record for most women breastfeeding at the same time.

This event is free and open to the public. There will be health information, door prizes and the opportunity to chat with local breastfeeding women and advocates.

The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action organizes World Breastfeeding Week every year to encourage mothers and their infants across the world to gather in their communities and take part in the Global Big Latch On (www.biglatchon.org). This worldwide synchronized breastfeeding event is celebrated in 31 countries and marks the signing of the WHO/UNICEF document Innocenti Declaration, which lists the benefits of breastfeeding and states that breastfeeding is every infant's right.

The first Big Latch On took place in Aotearoa, New Zealand in 2005 and has now taken off globally. This is the seventh year the Binational Breastfeeding Coalition hosts the event here in El Paso. Since 2012, we've had 541 breastfeeding mothers and we will continue the momentum in 2018!

Breastfeeding contributes to the growth and development of babies and those who are not breastfed are at an increased risk of infant morbidity, mortality, adult obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, pre-menopausal breast cancer and ovarian cancer. The World Health Organization recommends breastfeeding exclusively for 2 years as long as it is mutually desired by mother and baby.

About Binational Breastfeeding Coalition

The Binational Breastfeeding Coalition (BBC) is a local 501(c)3 non-profit serving El Paso and Ciudad Juárez composed of local lactation specialists, nurses, dietitians, public health specialists, doctors, dentists and other professionals. The BBC works diligently to create breastfeeding awareness, provide breastfeeding education, and establish mother friendly work sites in order to provide mothers with support networks that permit her to breastfeed. For more information please go to www.borderbreastfeeding.org and on Facebook @Border-Breastfeeding-BBC.

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the **Big Latch On**

La Gran Lactada



On Saturday, August 4, 2018, from 9:00AM-12:00PM at Basset Place (6101 Gateway Blvd. West, El Paso Texas), the Binational Breastfeeding Coalition (BBC) will host the 7th Annual Big Latch On to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week. This year's World Breastfeeding Week theme is: *Breastfeeding – Foundation of Life*. Breastfeeding is a universal solution that levels the playing field, giving everyone a fair start in life. It improves the health, wellbeing and survival of women and children around the world.

The first Big Latch On was celebrated in 2005 in New Zealand with a handful of families promoting the importance of breastfeeding. It has grown since then. In 2017, 23 countries participated in the event with a total 18,036 breastfeeding mothers and total global attendance of 50,383. In our El Paso-Ciudad Juarez event, we reached over 400 families. For photos and details from our 2017 event, please visit www.borderbreastfeeding.org under News Blog.

Although more mothers and families than ever understand the importance of breastmilk in their babies' health, development, and security, our border region lags behind. Here, the rate of breastfeeding 6-month-old babies is a mere 16%, while the Surgeon General's goal is 50%. To support vulnerable young families, our entire community needs to come together in a massive show of support. We can provide a safety net and send a clear message to the business, academic, faith and human service communities that we support a mother's right to breastfeed.

The August 4th event will sync with hundreds of others worldwide to create a global celebration of World Breastfeeding Week. We hope to break last year's record! We encourage our local population to positively support breastfeeding in a public place while embracing it as a normal part of day-to-day life.

Goals of the event are to:

- Support for communities to identify and grow opportunities to provide on-going breastfeeding support in local communities
- Raise awareness of breastfeeding support and knowledge available locally and globally
- Help communities positively support breastfeeding in public places
- Model breastfeeding as normal part of day-to-day life at a local level
- Increase support for women who breastfeed by supporting mothers and their infants, partners, family, and communities
- Ensure communities have the resources to advocate for coordinated, appropriate, and accessible breastfeeding support services

The Global Big Latch On is compliant with the WHO international code for marketing Breast-Milk substitutes. This means that we do not accept donations including funds or gifts from manufacturers or distributors of breast-milk substitutes, related equipment such as feeding bottles and teats/artificial nipples, or commercial foods marketed for children under six months.

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Why have a Big Latch On?

This family event helps create a breastfeeding culture and is an excellent opportunity to share the experience with other women that are breastfeeding.

Who coordinates the Big Latch On?

The Global Big Latch On is coordinated by Small Beginnings Group, LLC. Locally, the Big Latch On is coordinated by the Binational Breastfeeding Coalition and supported by many partners including: WIC, El Paso Dept of Public Health, TX Dept of State Health Services, Alliance of Border Collaboratives, El Paso First Health Plans, Inc., and local hospitals, clinics and doctors.

What is World Breastfeeding Week?

World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) was launched in 1992 by the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) to focus and facilitate actions to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. The WABA-coordinated WBW now involves over 175 countries and is endorsed by UNICEF, WHO, and PAHO. Visit <http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org> for the background, history and current information about WBW.

What is this year's World Breastfeeding Week theme?

This year's theme is *Breastfeeding – Foundation of Life*. In a world filled with inequality, crises and poverty, breastfeeding is the foundation of lifelong good health for babies and mothers.

Why does Big Latch On take place lots of small locations/venues?

A few people have suggested one central location for the Big Latch On. However, there are many benefits of having local, smaller locations. Some of these include:

- Breastfeeding women can stay local to their home.
- More breastfeeding women can take part across the world.
- Keeping it local means that breastfeeding women can meet other local people and communities will grow.
- Having a variety of locations means lots of businesses and community places can shout about how much they are willing to support breastfeeding; this will help women know that when they are out and about there are many places that will welcome them with open arms if they need space to nurse their baby.

What is the record for simultaneous breastfeeding?

YEAR	PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES	INDIVIDUAL LOCATIONS	BREASTFEEDING WOMEN (Global)	BREASTFEEDING WOMEN (El Paso, TX)
2010	2	147	2,045	
2011	5	412	5,687	
2012	22	626	8,862	80
2013	28	845	14,536	82
2014	31	826	14,173	94
2015	28	654	15,336	110
2016	28	758	17,852	86
2017	23	725	18,036	89