

# Media Release

31 July 2018

## Promoting the benefits of breastfeeding

School students will join South Western Sydney Local Health District to promote breastfeeding during World Breastfeeding Week (1-7 August).

Students from high schools in Liverpool, Bankstown and Fairfield have made artworks to promote the benefits of breastfeeding which will be displayed at Liverpool, Fairfield and Bankstown-Lidcombe hospitals.

"The artworks are a great way to spread the message about breastfeeding to the general public as they visit the hospital," South Western Sydney Local Health District Lactation and Infant Feeding Clinical Midwifery Consultant Annette Wright said.

"The artworks will include chalk drawings, banners, paintings and drawings and allow the students to explore their own understanding of why breastfeeding is important and how it can benefit mothers, babies and the wider community."

Ms Wright said this year's World Breastfeeding Week theme of *The Foundations of Life* was the perfect way to describe the benefits of breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding is important for optimal infant nutrition, growth and healthy development.

"Babies who are breastfed have a reduced risk of lung, ear and gastro-intestinal infections, reduced risk of obesity and diabetes, a reduced risk of eczema and reduced risk of sudden, unexpected death in infancy," Ms Wright said.

"There are also benefits for mothers who are able to breastfeed, including a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancers and a stronger bond with baby."

For premature babies the benefits include shorter hospital stays, improved gut development, better developmental outcomes and sharper vision and a reduction in hospital readmissions in their first year of life.

The NSW Government is investing \$157 million over four years in a landmark Parents Package to support pregnant women, new parents and babies, including \$4.3 million for home visits.

In 2018-19, NSW Health is also providing the Australian Breastfeeding Association NSW/ACT Branch with \$159,800 in funding through the Partnerships for Health NGO Grants. This will support their work around specific initiatives to increase breastfeeding rates, such as by providing resources in languages other than English.

### Media are invited to attend the following events.

#### Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital

Students from Bankstown Senior High School will be creating street "chalk" art at the entrance to the hospital on Thursday 2 August.

**Liverpool Hospital**

Liverpool Girls High School Year 10 students will be creating and presenting a mural on natural feeding to Liverpool Hospital on Friday 3 August. Best time for photography is 11am. Year 9 students will be creating chalk art on Wednesday 1 August at 2pm in the Anzac Courtyard.

**Photographs available:****Fairfield Hospital**

Prairiewood High School students unveiled their artwork (an interpretation of Gustav Klimt's work "Mother and Child") on Tuesday 31 July at an event at the hospital.

If media would like to attend please contact the media unit on 8738 6848 or [swhd-media@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:swhd-media@health.nsw.gov.au).