

**ST. JOSEPH HOSPITAL RECEIVES BABY-FRIENDLY DESIGNATION FROM  
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND UNICEF**

*Breastfeeding Initiative and Distinction Is First for Orange County*

ORANGE, Calif. – Baby-Friendly USA, a global program sponsored by the World Health Organization and the United States Children’s Fund (UNICEF), today announced that St. Joseph Hospital in Orange has received recognition as a Baby-Friendly birth facility, the first hospital to achieve such distinction in Orange County. More than two decades of research have established that breast milk is perfectly suited to nourish infants and protect them from illness. Breast-fed infants have lower rates of hospital admissions, ear infections, diarrhea, rashes, allergies, and other medical problems than bottle-fed babies, says the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Baby-Friendly USA is the U.S. Authority for the implementation of the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative, a global effort to encourage and recognize hospitals and birthing centers that offer an optimal level of care for breastfeeding mothers and their babies.

“This remarkable milestone is the result of four years of planning and action to make sure Orange County moms and their babies are off to a healthy start,” said Nurse Manager Carol Suchy St. Joseph Hospital, who led the

hospital’s Baby-Friendly Initiative, . “While this was an entire hospital-wide effort, special thanks go to our tireless OB team that spearheaded this initiative.”

There are more than 19,000 designated Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers worldwide and St. Joseph Hospital are the first in Orange County to receive the international award. The “Baby-Friendly” designation is given after a rigorous on-site survey is completed. The award is maintained by continuing to practice by quality processes.

“St. Joseph Hospital hopes to boost breastfeeding rates by increasing staff training, eliminating formula marketing to the families, and creating a comfortable environment that supports breastfeeding,” adds Suchy. “By providing early support and information to parents and creating an environment that enhances parent-child attachment, we hope to improve new mothers’ breastfeeding rates in Orange County.”

The support from the hospital also continues after mothers leave St. Joseph Hospital. The award-winning Mother Baby Assessment Center follows the journey of motherhood from start to finish including follow up one to five days after a mother gives birth. This service is one of the most comprehensive services of its kind in Orange County and is open to all new mothers in the community regardless of whether they have delivered at St. Joseph Hospital. The Mother Baby Assessment Center also includes The Stork Stop Boutique. The boutique is also open to all new parents and carries specialty baby items, lactation supplies, nursing clothing, feeding accessories, developmental toys, and offers classes for parents.

In celebration of this designation, St. Joseph Hospital will distribute the special *Mommy & Me’s Playgroup in a Bag* to all mothers in the hospital as well as mothers that

visit the Mother Baby Assessment Center. Mommy & Me, owned by Cookie Jar Entertainment, is donating over 10,000 *Playgroup in a Bag's*. These bags include Mommy & Me CDs, DVDs, hand puppets and other activity toys to help moms recreate the playgroup experience with her child at home.

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