

Tamaya Wellness Center Recognized National Breastfeeding Month with Opening of New Lactation Station

By Tamaya Wellness Center and NB3 Foundation

As August is National Breastfeeding Month, the [Tamaya Wellness Center](#), located and owned by the [Pueblo of Santa Ana](#) of New Mexico, is proud to welcome nursing mothers to use their newly available Lactation Station. The quiet room in the Center's 60,000 square foot facility offers a safe, secure place for breastfeeding mothers, who are tribal members, to feed and care for their babies.

"A mother's milk is a baby's first source of nutrients and breastfeeding creates a life-long nurturing connection between mother and child. Having a place at the Center where mothers can safely nurse their babies is an important part of Tamaya's commitment to providing a healthy place for tribal members," said the Center's Youth Wellness and Recreation Manager Alina Potrzebowski. "We are thankful for the partnership and resources the NB3 Foundation provides through the Water First! grant. Their support has allowed us to initiate healthy, positive changes within the community."

The Lactation Station was completed in summer 2018 starting with the vision and support of the Tamaya Wellness Center's partnership with the [Notah Begay III \(NB3\) Foundation](#) through the [Water First! Learning Community](#). Tamaya Wellness Center is a recipient of the Water First! grant that aids tribes and Native-led organizations in their efforts to reduce sugary drinks and increase the consumption of healthy beverage alternatives (such as water, breastfeeding, indigenous teas, etc.) for Native children.



"The NB3 Foundation is so proud of the Tamaya Wellness Center in opening the lactation station. We offer a huge congratulations to the Center's staff, administration and tribal leaders for supporting this effort," said NB3 Foundation Vice President of Programs Olivia Roanhorse. "The Water First! team from the Tamaya Wellness Center are a dedicated group of people passionate about making healthier choices accessible for tribal members. It's always a pleasure to work with them."

The journey to the Lactation Station did not come without challenges. In 2016, the Center's Water First! team started discussions with the facilities department about converting one of the four family bathrooms into a breastfeeding room. These bathrooms are equipped with a shower, sink, toilet, bench and baby changing station. By simply removing the toilet and adding a refrigerator, it could be transformed into a first-class lactation room.

But, further discussions was necessary, and through the tenacity of the Water First! team, negotiations continued and a compromise was reached. A corner of the teen center room would be used. It limits access to a closet that initially created some concerns but proper changes were made to accommodate a room for mothers.



Now the Lactation Station is equipped with cubicle walls, a comfortable chair, small refrigerator and shelf. A sign on the door indicates when the room is in use.

“More awareness on the breastfeeding room will come with the rollout of the Water First! campaign. Maybe someday the station will be moved to one of the family bathrooms. For now, we celebrate this step in the right direction,” Potrzebowski added.

NB3 Foundation’s Water First! Grants build on the knowledge, assets and values of Native American communities by providing financial support and resources to catalyze and inspire healthy habits and behaviors among Native American children across the country. Learn more about the Water First! Learning

Community at: <http://www.nb3foundation.org/water-first-learning-community-main/>.

Resources:

[IHS Blog: IHS Recognizes World Breastfeeding Week](#)

[IHS Breastfeeding Toolkit](#)