



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 4, 2011

Contacts: Jill Rodriguez, Development Coordinator – Cell (520) 870-7148 jillr@elrio.org or Miguel Cruz, Marketing Director (520) 309-2148 miguelc@elrio.org

**Birth and Women’s Health Center – El Rio Community Health Center Proud to be part
of America’s First Big Latch On**

Tucson, Arizona - On Saturday August 6, 2011 at 10:30 am thousands of nursing women and their babies across the United States will gather in their own communities to take part in the Big Latch On, America’s first synchronized breastfeeding event in multiple locations. **El Rio Community Health Center is proud to be part of this magnificent event that will take place at our Birth and Women’s Health Center, 5979 E. Grant Rd # 107. Tucson, AZ 85712.**

The first record for a single location was from Berkeley, CA USA in 2002 where 1,130 mothers breastfed simultaneously. The international record for one location is 3,738 mothers held by the Philippines in 2006. Since then, there have been several coordinated international events and in October of 2010, over 9,826 nursing mothers were recorded at 325 sites in 16 countries.

The Big Latch On is originally from New Zealand. It was introduced to Portland, Oregon in 2010 by Joanne Edwards as a celebration for World Breastfeeding Week. During the same week Annie Brown, a La Leche League Leader from Connecticut organized a simultaneous breastfeeding event in her home state. For World Breastfeeding Week 2011, they are working collaboratively and with the support of La Leche League USA to bring the event across the country.

World Breastfeeding Week is August 1-7 and celebrated in 120 countries. It marks the signing of the WHO/UNICEF document Innocenti Declaration, which lists the benefits of breastfeeding, plus global and governmental goals.

Breastfeeding contributes to the normal growth and development of babies, and babies who are not breastfed are at increased risk of infant morbidity and mortality, adult obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and premenopausal breast cancer and ovarian cancer (both mom and baby.) The World Health Organization recommends breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months of a baby's life to optimize these benefits, continuing to breastfeed for 2 years and as long thereafter as is mutually desired by mother and baby.

“El Rio is thrilled to participate in such a great celebration of life, wellness and to communicate the importance and relevance of breastfeeding” said Nancy Johnson, El Rio’s Chief Operating Officer.

Now in its 41st year, El Rio Community Health Center is the largest provider in Pima County of medical, dental and health services for the uninsured and Medicaid populations with over 17 sites in the Tucson community. During the past year, El Rio has provided care for more than 75,000 patients. All of these efforts have made El Rio Community Health Center a national model for health care excellence. Through the daily living of the Mission of improving the health of our community through comprehensive, accessible, affordable quality and compassionate care, El Rio have been accredited and recognized by the National Committee of Quality Assurance and the Joint Commission.

###