

Contact Mary Taylor, RN
Maternal Child Health Coord.
Phone 660-646-5506
Fax 660-646-4485

800 Adam Drive
Chillicothe, MO 64601
Phone 660-646-5506
Fax 660-646-4485

**Livingston County
Health Center**

March of Dimes Awards Grant to Health Center

Bright Beginnings Program Aimed to Improve the Health of Mothers and Babies in Livingston County

April 7, 2009: The March of Dimes has awarded a grant to Livingston County Health Center to support the Bright Beginnings Program, that is aimed at underserved maternal and child health needs here in Livingston County.

This program will provide education and support for the prenatal and post partum family. Every woman enrolled in WIC will be offered the program through regular visits and offered to women with referrals from local health care providers. The "5 A's" Program (Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist and Arrange) will be utilized to help clients stop smoking. Bright Beginnings is based on a program from Georgetown University that helps parents make decisions for their children by providing them with the resources they need to become confident, well informed and active partners in their children's health and development. The resources provide insight and guidance as parents plan health visits and discussions with the many people who share in the care of their children.

The program includes components for home visits made to new and expectant moms, smoking cessation encouragement through the WIC Program, and educational materials for parents.

A home or office visit is made to the prenatal family in the last 3 months of pregnancy. Education about labor and deliver, SIDS and baby care will be given with an emphasis on a smoke-free environment. Appropriate referrals to other community agencies and to primary care providers will be offered upon determination of need.

A second visit is made at approximately one month after delivery. Parent education about typical habits for infants and healthy family relationships will be given, along with smoke-free environment and smoking cessation reinforcement. At each visit nurses discuss mom and baby's physical and emotional well being, and encourage good health habits.

For Immediate Release

more

This grant is one of many that the March of Dimes awards in pursuit of its mission to prevent birth defects and infant mortality. The health center is one of the most familiar health care resources to women of childbearing age in the county. The center has administered the WIC Program for over 20 years, provided other services such as pregnancy testing, temporary Medicaid, breastfeeding support, immunizations, child health conference, birth certificates, lead testing and child care health consultation that all bring local families to their doorstep. Often being the first step in confirming a pregnancy and providing services that encourage a healthy pregnancy, the health center seems a perfect outlet for March of Dimes funding.

“We will use the March of Dimes grant as seed money to meet our objective of providing mothers and babies with the Bright Beginnings Program,” said Mary Taylor, RN, Maternal Child Health Coordinator. “We are grateful to those volunteers who support the March of Dimes by participation in events like March for Babies and who donate in other ways. That participation and those donations make this grant possible,” she said.

“The most important known ingredient to having a healthy baby is for moms and dads not to smoke,” Deborah Kersting, executive director of the Greater Missouri March of Dimes, said. “This program is a strong reminder of that.”

The Livingston County Health Center is continually looking for grant opportunities to fund programs for county residents above and beyond normal public health services. The March of Dimes grant opportunity fits the need for more help in preventing tobacco use, and encouraging quitting smoking, as well as addressing mothers and babies in need of more well being interactions from healthcare providers after birth.

The March of Dimes is the leading nonprofit organization for pregnancy and baby health. With chapters nationwide and its premier event, March for Babies, the March of Dimes works to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. For the latest resources and information, visit marchofdimes.com or nacersano.org. For Missouri news, visit marchofdimes.com/missouri.

For more information about the Bright Beginnings Program, call the health center at 646-5506 and speak to Mary Taylor, RN, Program Coordinator.

#