

Healthy Babies Coalition

A Message from the Chairperson of the Healthy Babies Coalition



As we begin the new year, we are faced with new challenges and new opportunities in our efforts to improve the health and well-being of Anne Arundel County's pregnant women and children.

In the July 2009 edition of the newsletter, I welcomed Edward Van Oeveren, M.D. as the County's new Health Officer. Dr. Van Oeveren was recently called to active duty as a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army. I am pleased to announce that Douglas L. Hart has been named Acting Health Officer. Mr. Hart came to the Department of Health in 1979 and has previously served as the Department's Deputy Health Officer, Director of Administration and the Human Resources Director. He also served as Acting Health Officer from December 2008 to April 2009. Please join me in welcoming Acting Health Officer Hart.

Last spring, the H1N1 flu emerged as a major health concern, especially among pregnant women and young children. Please read the article on page 4 for information about how you can help teach pregnant women about how to protect themselves and their families from the seasonal and H1N1 flu viruses.

The Healthy Babies information campaign continues to provide education and outreach to County residents. Although the Coalition was founded to reduce African American health disparities, we are seeing a need to provide education and outreach to the County's growing Hispanic community. Selected Healthy Babies educational materials are now available in Spanish. For more information about the Healthy Babies information campaign, see page 2.

The Department of Health has received a grant to offer web-based training for parents and caregivers. This training will teach parents and caregivers how to create a safe sleep environment and how to calm a crying baby. Please look for more details about this educational opportunity in the July 2010 edition of this Newsletter.

Please continue to support the Healthy Babies Coalition and encourage your colleagues to join the Coalition. For more information about the Coalition, contact Perinatal Nurse Lisa Helms Guba, R.N.C., M.S.N. at hdhelm00@aacounty.org or 410-222-7223.

Sincerely,

Charlestine R. Fairley, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Anne Arundel County Healthy Babies Coalition

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Healthy Babies Information Campaign Update	2
New WIC Food Packages Promote Healthier Moms and Kids	3
Third-hand Smoke: The Invisible Hazard	4
Help Teach Pregnant Women About H1N1 and Seasonal Flu	4
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention	5
Upcoming Events and Services for County Residents	6

Would you like to submit an article for the July issue of the Healthy Babies Coalition Newsletter?

Is there a maternal or infant health topic that interests you?

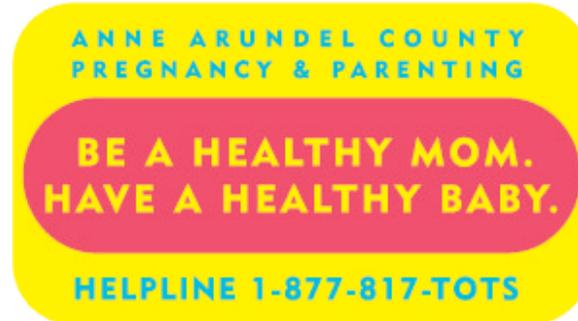
If so, contact Lisa Helms Guba at 410-222-7223 or hdhelm00@aacounty.org with your ideas.

Healthy Babies Information Campaign Update

The Healthy Babies information campaign provides specific risk reduction messages to pregnant women, parents and caregivers in Anne Arundel County.

Campaign materials currently include:

- radio and print advertisements
- resource directory brochures
- information cards on fetal movements, preterm labor, calming a crying baby, car seats, home safety, safe sleep, secondhand smoke and being a father
- safe sleep information fliers
- African American health disparity awareness fliers and posters
- press releases



Healthy Babies campaign materials encourage County residents to call the Anne Arundel County Tot's Line (1-877-817-TOTS) or visit the Department of Health's Web site for FREE Healthy Babies kits. The Tot's Line provides additional information, advice and referrals to County resources. Information is also available on the Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies Web page at www.aahealthybabies.org.

Fiscal Year 2010 Campaign Facts

During the first six months FY 2010 (July 2009 - December 2009), more than 6,300 English language resource directory brochures and 11,000 information cards were distributed to County residents and health care and social service providers. Over 4,400 Spanish language Healthy Babies materials were distributed. 30 Healthy Pregnancy and Baby Care combination kits and 5 Baby Care kits were distributed to County residents. The campaign's main Web page, www.aahealthybabies.org, had over 3,400 visits.

New Educational Materials Now Available!

Bilingual Safe Sleep Display Board

The safe sleep display board features interchangeable tiles that can be used in English, Spanish or both. The display board will be used as a teaching tool to provide safe sleep education to pregnant women, parents and other caregivers at community events.

Spanish Language Resource Directory Brochures and Information Cards

Free Spanish-language Healthy Babies resource directory brochures and information cards on fetal movements, preterm labor, calming a crying baby, car seats, home safety, safe sleep and secondhand smoke are now available for use by County residents. See below for ordering information.

Father's Card

This free information card teaches fathers about the important role they play in having a healthy baby and includes tips on how fathers can be active in their child's life. See below for ordering information.

New Healthy Babies Web Site Coming Soon!

The Healthy Babies Web site is being redesigned. The new site will contain separate sections for County residents and professionals. The section for County residents will include training modules for safe sleep and how to calm a crying baby. This section will also include links to County programs and resources for pregnant women and parents and downloadable educational materials. The section for professionals will include provider outreach materials and Keeping Babies Safe training information.

To order Healthy Babies Campaign Materials, download the Healthy Babies Materials Order Form at http://aahealth.org/App_pdfs/healthybabiesorderform.pdf.

New WIC Food Packages Promote Healthier Moms and Kids

Article adapted from Maryland WIC



The mission of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants and children up to age 5 who are at risk for poor nutrition. WIC provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and referrals to health care and other community resources. Since its inception in 1974, the program has expanded to serve 8.7 million participants nationwide, including a quarter of all pregnant women, more than half of all infants and a quarter of all children ages 1 through 4

Many changes have occurred since the WIC program began. These changes include advances in nutrition knowledge, expansion of our food supply, changes in dietary patterns with a more culturally diverse population and the emergence of obesity as a major public health problem. To better meet its mission of promoting good health and reducing the risk of chronic disease, the WIC food package has been changed.

On October 1, 2009, the Maryland WIC Program joined other states in enhancing the food choices offered to its 150,000 participants. These enhancements to the new WIC food packages parallel the advice of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and reinforce the messages to eat more vegetables, fruits and whole grains and less calories, fat, saturated fat and cholesterol. Following the Dietary Guidelines can help lower the risk for chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes and certain cancers. At a time when obesity has reached epidemic proportions and threatens the health and well-being of Americans, the new WIC food package will also help address this public health problem.

New foods were added which will add more vitamins and fiber. The newly added foods include 100% whole wheat bread, brown rice, whole grain tortillas and fresh, frozen and canned vegetables and fruit.

Some food previously allowed were changed in type or amount to reduce the saturated fat and cholesterol contents. For example, only 1% or fat-free milk will now be allowed for women and children age 2 and older.

The WIC food package places greater emphasis on breastfeeding, especially exclusively breastfeeding during the first 6 months of life. Exclusively breastfeeding mothers and infants receive a food package that has the highest market value and the greatest variety of all the WIC food packages. Since early introduction of formula can affect breastfeeding success, WIC will normally not allow formula to be given to a breastfeeding baby for the first month. This will allow the mother's milk supply to become well established. Starting at 6 months of age, all infants will receive baby food vegetables and fruit. Exclusively breastfed infants will also receive baby food meats.

"We are excited about the changes to the WIC foods," says Frances Phillips, Deputy Secretary for Public Health for the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. "Access to nutritious foods is essential for good health. The enhanced WIC food packages will enable Maryland's most vulnerable mothers and children to establish good habits early on, leading to better health over a lifetime."



For more information about the Anne Arundel County WIC program, call 410-222-6797 or visit www.aahealth.org/hip_wic.asp. Spanish speaking individuals can call 410-222-0139 or visit www.aahealth.org/hispanic/information_wic.asp.

Third-Hand Smoke: The Invisible Hazard

Smokers who understand the dangers of secondhand cigarette smoke may try to protect their families by not smoking when children are at home or in the car. Yet they can still expose others to hazardous “third-hand smoke.”

Third-hand smoke is the smelly residue of gases and particles that sticks to smokers, their clothes and other surfaces like curtains, furniture and even drywall. Third-hand smoke contains many of the same cancer-causing chemicals found in cigarette smoke including hydrogen cyanide, used in chemical weapons; butane, used in lighter fluid; toluene, found in paint thinners; arsenic; lead; and carbon monoxide.

Simply closing a door to smoke does not protect nonsmokers. Since third-hand smoke sticks to surfaces, it can be absorbed by inhalation, touch or ingestion. Babies and young children are especially at risk.

Parents and caregivers can reduce the exposure to third-hand smoke by making their home and car smoke-free and avoiding places where others smoke. For more information on quitting smoking, Anne Arundel County residents can call the Learn To Live Line at 410-222-7979 or go to www.MyQuitKit.org for a free quit-smoking kit and information about smoking cessation classes.

Help Teach Pregnant Women About H1N1 and Seasonal Flu

As health care professionals, social service providers and community members who frequently work with pregnant women, Healthy Babies Coalition members can help teach pregnant women about how to protect themselves and their baby from the H1N1 and seasonal flu viruses.

H1N1 (also referred to as “swine flu”) is a new flu virus. Flu viruses are spread mainly through coughing or sneezing by people with the virus. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Illness from the H1N1 virus has ranged from mild to severe. While most people infected with the H1N1 virus have recovered without needing medical treatment, hospitalizations and deaths have occurred. Pregnant women are more likely to get sick and have more serious complications with H1N1 and seasonal flu.

The symptoms of H1N1 are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, chills and fatigue. Sometimes diarrhea and vomiting are also symptoms of the H1N1 virus. If pregnant women think they are developing the flu, they should call their health care provider.

Most pregnant women should be immunized against H1N1 and seasonal flu viruses. Pregnant women should talk to their health care provider about getting vaccinated.

Here are some other tips for pregnant women so they can protect themselves, their babies and their families from the H1N1 and seasonal flu viruses:

- Stay home if you get sick. Limit contact with others and call your health care provider right away. Your health care provider will decide if testing or treatment is needed.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw tissues away immediately after using them.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water or use alcohol-based gel hand cleaners, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people. If you live with or have close contact with someone who has the H1N1 flu, talk to your health care provider about medicines to help prevent the flu.
- Have a plan to care for sick family members.

For the latest information on the H1N1 and seasonal flu viruses, including vaccine availability, pregnant women should talk to their health care provider or visit the Anne Arundel County Department of Health's Web site at www.aahealth.org or call the Flu Information Line at 410--222-7343.

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention

Lead is a toxic substance that can produce negative health effects in adults and children.

What are the symptoms of lead poisoning?

Children with lead poisoning do not look or act sick unless they have very high blood lead levels. The only way to know if a child has lead poisoning is by a blood test.

What are the health effects of lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning can cause developmental delays, learning, hearing and behavioral problems. Lead can harm the brain, kidneys and other organs. Some of these effects are permanent. Children under the age of 6 are more likely to suffer from the effects of lead. The peak risk of exposure is from 9 to 24 months.

How are children exposed to lead?

Lead-contaminated dust is the major cause of childhood lead poisoning. Lead dust the size of a grain of salt can cause a high blood lead level. The main source of leaded dust is from deteriorating lead paint in older homes. Lead-based paints were banned for use in homes beginning in 1978.

Lead can also be found in water and soil. Less common sources of lead exposure include painted toys and jewelry, lead-glazed ceramic dishes, brass containers, foreign/antique tea kettles, folk medicines or cosmetics from other countries, stained glass, large batteries, bullets and fishing gear.

A child can come in contact with lead dust while crawling on the floor, touching windowsills or playing with unwashed toys. Because infants and toddlers are more likely to put their hands and objects in their mouths, they are at a high risk for lead poisoning.

How can lead poisoning be prevented?

You can help educate parents and caregivers about lead poisoning prevention. Share these tips:

- Test your home for lead. Call the Maryland Department of the Environment at 1-800-776-2706.
- Never use hot water from the tap for drinking, cooking or making baby formula.
- Teach children to wash their hands and faces regularly.
- Watch where children play and what goes in any baby's mouth. Always keep toys clean.
- Don't give children costume jewelry especially with dull metallic parts or fake pearls.
- Feed your child a healthy diet rich in iron, calcium and vitamin C. Do not use imported pottery for serving food.
- Avoid home remedies unless your health care provider says it is okay.
- Don't put cosmetics on babies and young children.

Who should be tested for lead poisoning?

- Parents of children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years should be screened at every routine health care visit to determine if their child is at risk for lead poisoning. This screening is a state requirement for entry into child care. Those children who are at risk should have a blood test.
- Children in Health Choice (Medical Assistance or MCHP) and those living in certain areas are required by law to have blood lead tests done at ages 12 months and 24 months. In Anne Arundel County, these "at risk" areas include zip codes 20711, 20714, 20764, 20779, 21060, 21061, 21225, 21226 and 21402. The law also requires all children in Health Choice or in the "at risk" areas who are under the age of 6 to have a blood lead test if they have not already been tested.
- When a child who resides in an area designated as "at risk" for lead poisoning enters a public pre-kindergarten program, kindergarten or first grade, the parent or legal guardian of the child will be required to provide evidence of the child's blood test for lead poisoning.

For more information about preventing lead poisoning contact:

- Anne Arundel County Department of Health: 410-222-7003 or www.aahealth.org
- Maryland Department of the Environment: 1-800-776-2706 or www.mde.state.md.us/lead or
- Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning: 410-534-6447 or 1-800-370-LEAD or www.lead-safe.org

**BE A HEALTHY MOM.
HAVE A HEALTHY BABY.**

c/o Anne Arundel County
Department of Health
3 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401
www.aahealthybabies.org

Coalition Contact:
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Access to Care and Provider Issues

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Community Education and Outreach

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E-mail: lesley.wallace@medstar.net

Race and Community Issues

Subcommittee Contact:
New Subcommittee Chairperson
To Be Named.
Interim Contact:
Lisa Helms Guba, R.N.C., M.S.N.
Perinatal Coordinator
Anne Arundel County
Department of Health
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Fax: 410-222-7294
E-mail: hdhelm00@aacounty.org

Teenage Pregnancy Prevention

Subcommittee Contact:
Pastor Sheryl Menendez
Executive Director
Restoration Community
Development Corporation
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Fax: 410-267-6112
E-mail: smenendez@lotwfamily.com

Upcoming Events and Services for Anne Arundel County Residents

Upcoming Events

Free Adult Smoking Cessation Classes are starting in January 2010. Call the Learn To Live Line at 410-222-7979 or visit www.LearnToLiveHealthy.org.

Tobacco Free Kids Week is February 22-28, 2010. Order a free Activity Planning Kit now! The deadline for ordering a kit is February 5. For more information or to order or download a planning kit, visit SmokingStinks-aaco.org, click on {"TFK Week" or call the Learn To Live Line at 410-222-7979.



Ongoing Community Services and Programs

Anne Arundel County Tot's Line; offers advice and referrals to pregnant women, parents and caregivers; free; call 1-800-817-TOTS.

Anne Arundel Medical Center Programs for Birth and Baby; free/fee; call Ask AAMC at 443-481-4000 or visit <http://www.aahs.org/services/womens/index.php>.

Baltimore Washington Medical Center Classes for Parents and Families; fee; call 410-787-4367 or visit www.bwmc.umms.org/women_and_children.

Esperando Bebe Prenatal Education Program; free; call 410-787-4366.

Harbor Hospital Women and Infants Classes and Tours; free/fee; call 410-350-2563 or visit www.harborhospital.org, click on "Women's Services."

Special Beginnings Birth and Women's Center Outreach and Education Classes; free; call 410-626-8982 or visit www.specialbeginnings.com/outreach.html.

Stork's Nest Prenatal Education Program; free; call 410-787-4366.

Do you know of any events to be included in future issues of the newsletter?

E-mail the information to Lisa Helms Guba at hdhelm00@aacounty.org.

Anne Arundel County Department of Health Services

Adolescent and Family Services; Mental Health and Addiction Counseling Services; free; call 410-222-6785.

Healthy Start Program for high-risk women and infants; free; call 410-222-7177.

Learn To Live Healthy Living Program; free resources to help County residents quit smoking, prevent cancer, eat healthy and be active; go to www.LearnToLiveHealthy.org or call the Learn to Live Line at 410-222-7979.

Reproductive Health Services; free/sliding scale; call 410-222-7145.

Substance Abuse Prevention Presentations in all settings for all ages; free; call Prevention and Education Services at 410-222-6724.

Substance Abuse Treatment Referral Line; free; call 410-222-0117.

Strengthening Families Program: Parenting and Life Skills to Improve Family Relationships (14-session program); free; call 410-222-6724.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program; free; participants must meet income requirements; call 410-222-6797 or Spanish Line at 410-222-0139.

WIC Breastfeeding Classes and Support Groups; free; participants do not need to be WIC clients; Call 410-222-0085 or Spanish Line at 410-222-0139.

Would you like to join a Subcommittee? Contact the Subcommittee Chairperson.