



Knox County Health Department

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KCHD's Service Spotlight: Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

This week's spotlight highlights KCHD's Baby and Me Tobacco Free Program

Knoxville, Tenn. — The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) BABY & ME – Tobacco Free Program™ is an evidence based, smoking cessation program created to help the pregnant and postpartum population, and is funded by the Tennessee Department of Health. Through counseling and support, the KCHD team helps women quit smoking and remain tobacco free, resulting in improved birth outcomes and long-term positive overall life changes for women, children and their families.

Program participants engage in counseling and support sessions four times during their pre-natal period, and monthly for up to one year after they deliver. Once program participants successfully complete three to four prenatal visits, they are eligible to receive \$25 vouchers that can be used for diapers and/or wipes.

"It's vital that parents utilize this program to ensure the health and safety of their children," said Debra Lane, public health educator for the BABY & ME – Tobacco Free Program™ at KCHD. "Quitting smoking at any stage of your pregnancy has health benefits for you and your baby. Even after just one day of not smoking, your baby will get more oxygen."

Tobacco use is the most preventable risk factor for disease, disability and premature death in the United States. Smoking during pregnancy increases the risk of premature birth and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), according to KCHD's 2019 [Community Health Assessment](#).

"In a 2011 study, health experts found that 45 percent of pregnancies were unplanned in the U.S.," Lane added. "We have found that with this rate of unplanned pregnancies, many women do not intentionally plan on smoking during the duration of their pregnancy. This is where this program can be essential in providing structure to help them quit smoking after discovering they're pregnant."

Those interested in enrolling in Knox County, should contact Debra Lane at 865-215-5394. Women may register until they are 36 weeks pregnant. For more information, visit www.babyandmetobaccofree.org or KCHD's Baby and Me Tobacco Free [webpage](#).

About Knox County Health Department

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. As a chief health strategist for the community and with more than 240 team members, KCHD's broad scope of work includes convening partners to improve community health, identifying community health threats, investigating disease outbreaks, conducting extensive outreach and education, preparing for public health emergencies, providing and connecting the public with medical care, enforcing food safety and air quality laws, and more. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

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