

For More Information:
Name of Local Health Unit Administrator
Title
Name of Local Health Unit
Phone Number

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Health Unit Works to Reduce Number Of Pregnant Women Who Smoke in Arkansas

State Quitline Offers Expanded Services for Expecting Mothers

CITY, Ark. (**Month Day**, 2010) – The **name** County Health Unit is partnering with the Arkansas Department of Health Stamp Out Smoking campaign to reduce the number of pregnant women who use tobacco in Arkansas. According to the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System 2004-2005 data, 22 percent of pregnant women in Arkansas and 78 percent of Arkansas mothers on Medicaid smoked during their last three months of pregnancy.

The Arkansas Tobacco Quitline offers a specialized program to help pregnant women quit tobacco for themselves and for their child. Pregnant women receive 10 free one-on-one phone sessions with a personal Quit Coach®, which is a more intensive program than for callers who are not pregnant. The Quitline also offers free nicotine replacement therapy medications and works with callers to select their own quit date. It can be reached by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

“Using tobacco while pregnant is a huge problem in Arkansas, and it’s a very dangerous thing for the unborn child,” Local Health Unit Administrator **Name, Title**, said. “We are proud to work with the Arkansas Department of Health to raise awareness of the harmful effects of tobacco use while pregnant and the free assistance available through the Quitline.”

By not smoking, either during pregnancy or around the child after delivery, mothers will decrease the chance of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, as well as coughs, colds, ear infections and the risk of their children having allergies or other lung problems.

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The name County Health Unit is participating in an awareness campaign to educate the community about the dangers of smoking while pregnant. It will be distributing brochures, fact cards and posters over the next several weeks. Many county health units may develop incentives programs or contests to encourage local pregnant women who smoke to call the Quitline.

Stamp Out Smoking is the media and public relations campaign of the Arkansas Department of Health Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program. SOS conducts youth tobacco prevention efforts in Arkansas schools and communities, as well as provides cessation services such as the Quitline. For more information, visit stampoutsmoking.com, or for help quitting, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669).

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