Preparing for a Lifetime

It's Everyone's Responsibility

We all want Oklahoma's babies to be safe and healthy. Oklahoma's infant mortality rate (IMR), defined as the number of deaths to infants less than one year of age per 1,000 live births, has consistently remained above the national rate since 1992. Further, we continue to see disparities between African American and American Indian infant mortality rates compared with white rates in Oklahoma. In response, the Oklahoma State Department of Health with multiple partners has launched "Preparing for a Lifetime, It's Everyone's Responsibility," a statewide public education initiative, to help reduce infant mortality, adverse birth outcomes and racial disparities for such outcomes. This toolkit provides information on numerous issues related to infant mortality and birth outcomes. The key messages include:

- Being healthy before and between pregnancies greatly improves the chances of having a healthy baby
- Having a full-term pregnancy (about 40 weeks) and breastfeeding offers a baby the best start in life
- Getting tested and treated, if needed, for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) promotes a healthy pregnancy and birth
- Recognizing the signs and getting help for postpartum depression can improve health for both mother and baby
- Placing baby on the back to sleep and avoiding exposure to secondhand smoke decreases the chances of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
- Knowing how to prevent leading causes of injury, such as correctly installing infant car seats, will help keep baby safe and secure
- Learning what to do if a baby will not stop crying may help prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome

Together, we can make improvements in Oklahoma to help reduce the number of infant deaths and improve birth outcomes.

To learn more, please visit http://iio.health.ok.gov or call the OSDH Maternal and Child Health Service at 405/271-4480.

For printable pages of the insert sheets you will find in this kit, please visit http://iio.health.ok.gov.