



Preparing for a lifetime, it's everyone's responsibility

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The Canadian County Health Department joins statewide effort to help reduce the infant mortality rate in Oklahoma

The Canadian County Health Department announced that it is participating in a statewide effort to help reduce the infant mortality rate in Oklahoma and improve birth outcomes in Canadian County.

In an average week in Oklahoma eight babies die before reaching their first birthday.

According to the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) and the National Center for Health Statistics, Oklahoma ranked 44th in the United States for infant deaths in 2009.

With that in mind, Canadian County Health Department, government and community partners supports the public awareness campaign, Preparing for a Lifetime, It's Everyone's Responsibility, to reduce infant mortality rates (IMR) in Oklahoma. The campaign presents ways that family members, local communities, and businesses can join in the efforts to improve infant health in Oklahoma.

The Canadian County Health Department, The Canadian County Coalition for Children and families and community partners encourage the public to support the campaign and to visit the website www.health.ok.gov.

The top three causes of infant deaths in Oklahoma include congenital defects (medical conditions present at birth), disorders related to low birth weight (less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces), and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) (sudden and unexplained death of an infant).

The website was designed so that family members and friends, employees, and community organizations can find something they can do to actively suggest services and resources for pregnant women and their families.

The key message includes:

- 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 offer 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 a baby on the back to sleep and avoiding exposure to second hand smoke decreases the chances of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

For more information about the Preparing for a Lifetime, It's Everyone's Responsibility campaign to reduce infant mortality to www.health.ok.gov, or call the OSDH Maternal and Child Health Service at 405/271-4480, or the Canadian County Health Department in El Reno 405-262-0042 or Yukon 405-354-4872.