

Live Well 05-18-14

With Mother's Day behind us, what is the greatest gift you can get or give? Maybe the greatest gift is a smoke-free you; maybe simply children who never start smoking. From making sacrifices and hard decisions for the well-being of your family to being your children's biggest cheerleader and advocate, mothers are role models who deserve a day, even a month, of celebration. Join the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust and the Payne County Breathe Easy Coalition in celebrating moms who are smoke-free role models for their children.

If you smoke or use other tobacco products, the month of May, with the celebration of Mother's Day, is a great time to make the commitment to quit for you and your family. Few gifts can last longer or prove more meaningful than making a decision that not only improves your own health, but also the health of your entire family.

More than 6,500 Oklahomans die each year from smoking. In fact, the average life expectancy for smokers is at least 10 years shorter than the life expectancy for nonsmokers. Tobacco use not only affects the user, but also those around them. For every person who dies from a smoking-related disease, about 30 more people will suffer from at least one serious illness from smoking, such as lung cancer, stroke and cardiovascular disease.

Smoking also increases the risk for adverse pregnancy-related health outcomes. Risks include infertility, premature rupture of membranes, neonatal mortality, stillbirth, premature delivery, and SIDS.

The Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline can be a valuable resource for mothers or their loved ones to get started with quitting tobacco. Since 2003, the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline has helped more than 250,000 Oklahomans quit using tobacco. It offers free coaching and free patches, gum or lozenges for those who qualify.

Lot on to Tobacco Stops With Me and follow for more support on the journey to being tobacco free. For more information about the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline, visit www.OKhelpline.com or call 1-800-QUIT (1-800-784-8669).

The Oklahoma Settlement Endowment Trust serves as a partner and bridge builder for organizations working toward shaping a healthier future for all Oklahomans. TSET provides leadership at the intersections of health by working with local coalitions and initiatives across the state, by cultivating innovative and life-changing research and by working across public and private sectors to develop, support, implement and evaluate creative strategies to take advantage of emerging opportunities to improve the public's health. To learn more go to www.tset.ok.gov.

Becky Taylor is a prevention specialist with Oklahoma State University Prevention Programs.