

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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Director

Kathy Dahlkemper
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NEW PROGRAM TO HELP PREGNANT WOMAN QUIT SMOKING

ERIE, Pa. – The Erie County Department of Health (ECDH), along with four community partners, is trained and certified to offer a program to help pregnant women quit smoking and stay quit.

“According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), we must encourage pregnant smoking women to consider a quit attempt,” said Melissa Lyon, director of ECDH. “The BABY & ME – Tobacco Free Program™ is research-based and proven to help pregnant women quit smoking and maintain smoking cessation throughout the postpartum period and beyond.”

During the 2012-2014 period, 20.8 percent of Erie County mothers reported smoking at any time during pregnancy. The Pennsylvania rate in 2014 was 14.2 percent, and the U.S. rate was 8.4 percent in 2014. Tobacco use during pregnancy is a known cause of birth defects, premature births, underweight babies, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Quitting smoking greatly reduces the health risks to the mother and baby.

Laurie Adams, BABY & ME – Tobacco Free Program executive director and program creator, provided the technical support and training to seven area agencies and certified 54 professionals to enroll women into the program. Partnering with ECDH are GECAC Head Start, Women’s Care Center of Erie, Erie Family Center and the Doula program at Erie Home for Children and Adults.

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“These agencies are a perfect fit for the program,” Adams said. “They provide services to a large number of prenatal women and they support their patients’ quit attempts. Pregnant women who enroll in the program receive counseling support and resources to help them quit smoking. Upon successfully quitting and staying quit, enrolled participants are eligible for FREE diapers for up to 12 months following the birth of their baby. This program employs cessation methods and guidelines set forth by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and its effectiveness has been documented through research. The greatest gift a woman can give her baby is a tobacco-free pregnancy and a tobacco-free home. We are thrilled to be working with the Erie County Department of Health and their community partners to help pregnant women in their community.”

“I am proud that the Erie County Department of Health can provide the Baby & Me – Tobacco Free Program to our clients,” said Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper. “The Baby & Me – Tobacco Free program fits well into the Department of Health’s mission to preserve, promote and protect the health, safety and well-being of the people and the environment of Erie County.”

The BABY & ME – Tobacco Free Program, conducted at the Erie County Department of Health and our community partners, is generously funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, as well as by the Erie Women’s Fund, the United Way of Erie County and the Hamot Health Foundation, through the Women Driving Philanthropy Golf Tournament. The goal is to enroll at least 170 pregnant smoking women into the program over the next two and a half years. The BABY & Me – Tobacco Free Program is in 15 states nationwide and has enrolled over 7,000 women. For more information on the program or how to enroll, contact the agencies listed below or go to www.babyandmetobaccofree.com.

Contact information for the BABY & Me – Tobacco Free Program service sites:

- ECDH: Tonie Cline, (814) 451-6732, 606 W. Second St., Erie
- GECAC Head Start: Karen Jones, (814) 459-4581, 18 W. Ninth St., Erie
- Women’s Care Center of Erie County – three locations:
 - 915 State St., #100, Erie (814) 455-2247
 - 4408 Peach St., #302, Erie (814) 868-4050
 - 13 N. Main St., Union City (814) 438-9444
- Erie Family Center: Tracy Zupan, (814) 520-8214, 2233 Ebco Drive, Suite 320, Erie
- Erie Homes for Children & Adults Project First Step: Lisa Kobusinski, (814) 315-1769, 4950 W. 23rd St., Erie

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