



# MEDIA RELEASE

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **KCHD in search of Knox County's newest Strong Babies** *Will host local casting call for new 'stars' of public health campaign*

*Knoxville, Tenn.* — In search of new, local babies to star in the Strong Babies public health campaign, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) will host an open casting call **Saturday, Oct. 1 from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.** at its main location, 140 Dameron Ave.



“The babies in this campaign captured our hearts, and we were thrilled to be able to use the fun images from Milwaukee,” said KCHD Program Manager Katie Larsen. “But it’s time we take this effort to the next level and, for the first time, feature Knox County’s amazing babies. After all, there are no better ambassadors than our own.”

To be eligible, babies must be between 7 and 18 months old at the time of the casting call; no talent experience is necessary. Parents do not need to pre-register and may come any time between 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on Oct. 1. Free parking is available. In addition to taking home a \$200 U.S. savings bond, the winning babies will appear on billboards and in social media posts, web banners, and print materials in the coming year. Winners will be chosen by a panel of judges and announced in November. Parents may call 865-215-5170 or email [strongbaby@knoxcounty.org](mailto:strongbaby@knoxcounty.org) for more information.

“Just as important as it is for us to find the next generation of strong babies, we’re also looking for parents who will be advocates for the kind of healthy behaviors that lead to stronger babies,” added Larsen.

Earlier this year, KCHD launched the Strong Babies project to improve birth outcomes and reduce infant mortality rates. Based on a highly-successful campaign created by Serve Marketing and conducted by the City of Milwaukee Health Department, the effort uses lighthearted and attention-grabbing images of stronger-than-average babies to rally the community around the importance of changing the conditions that lead to healthier infants and families. The educational campaign focuses on the importance of early and adequate prenatal care, breastfeeding, good nutrition, avoiding tobacco, and many other healthy activities.

Improving the well-being of mothers, infants and children is an important community health goal for KCHD, as reflected in the organization's [Community Health Assessment](#). The Strong Baby project is an outcome of KCHD's Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) program, which is funded by a grant from the Tennessee Department of Health. FIMR is an action-oriented community process that continually assesses, monitors and works to improve service systems and community resources for women, infants and families.

**About Knox County Health Department:**

The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is a governmental agency dedicated to making every person a healthy person. As the first health department in Tennessee to achieve national accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, KCHD's mission is to encourage, promote and assure the development of an active, healthy community through innovative public health practices. The organization conducts disease surveillance, prevention and control; emergency preparedness; nutrition and physical activity promotion; tobacco use prevention; health equity promotion; immunizations; and much more. For more information, visit [www.knoxcounty.org/health](http://www.knoxcounty.org/health).

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