



MEDIA ADVISORY

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917-6413

Stronger-than-average babies are coming to Knox County *New public health campaign aimed at improving birth outcomes*

Who: Knox County Health Department (KCHD)

What: Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett and KCHD Director Dr. Martha Buchanan will kick off a public health campaign.

When: Tuesday, May 17, 1:30 p.m.

Where: New Harvest Park, 4775 New Harvest Lane

Background:

Designed to engage the community in a conversation about the importance of changing the conditions that can lead to healthier babies, KCHD's Strong Baby project is based on a highly successful campaign conducted by the City of Milwaukee Health Department and created by Serve Marketing. The Strong Baby project uses lighthearted and attention-grabbing images of stronger-than-average babies to educate the community about the importance of early and adequate prenatal care, breastfeeding, good nutrition, avoiding tobacco, and many other healthy behaviors that can help improve birth outcomes and reduce infant mortality.

While not all pregnancy complications can be prevented, women can increase their chances of having a healthy baby by managing health conditions and detecting problems early. Infant mortality, defined as the death of an infant before his or her first birthday, is higher for those born to mothers who receive inadequate prenatal care, and in 2013 only 70% of women in Knox County received early, adequate prenatal care. Babies born just a few weeks early have higher rates of hospitalization and illness versus full-term infants. In fact, complications of prematurity was the leading cause of infant death in 2014.

The Strong Baby project is an outcome of our Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) program, which is funded by 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.

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