



COUNTY OF KENOSHA

John T. Jansen, Director
Department of Human Services

Cynthia Johnson, Director, Health Officer
Division of Health Services
Job Center / Human Services Building
8600 Sheridan Road, Suite 600
Kenosha, WI 53143-6515
Phone (262) 605-6700
Fax: (262) 605-6715

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News release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Cynthia Johnson, Director/Health Officer
262-605-6700, Cynthia.Johnson@kenoshacounty.org

Kenosha County marks National Infant Mortality Awareness Month with resource fair, diaper distribution

KENOSHA – Kenosha County is holding a resource fair and diaper drive as it observes September as National Infant Mortality Awareness Month.

Infant mortality is the death of a baby within the first year of life. Most babies are born healthy, but in 2015 in Wisconsin, 384 infants died before their first birthday.

In Kenosha and across the state, black infants are nearly three times more likely than white infants to die in their first year of life. The Kenosha Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families Collaborative is working to reduce the disparities and to educate and engage the community in efforts to improve birth outcomes.

“The goal of the Lifecourse Initiative is to reduce African-American infant mortality, to see babies survive and thrive,” said Cynthia Johnson, director of the Kenosha County Division of Health. “Working together, Kenosha LIHF is committed to helping women, fathers and families have healthy pregnancies and healthy babies.”

On Sept. 26, the Lifecourse project will hold its fourth annual “Healthy Babies, Happy Babies” resource fair and diaper distribution day. The emphasis this year is on infant safety and immunizations.

Families will learn about the safe use of car seats, cribs, baby gates, and protective coverings, latches, locks and Mr. Yuk stickers. Additional household displays will promote lead abatement, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, medical boxes, and gun locks.

In addition, immunization information will be available for infants and children age 2 or younger, and vaccines may be given by walk-in or appointment. Kenosha LIHF Collaborative members will have exhibit tables promoting community resources and HMO health plans.

The annual Community Diaper Drive is ongoing throughout the month of September to help alleviate diaper need for families with limited income. Diaper need is the lack of a sufficient supply of diapers to keep an infant or toddler clean, dry and healthy. Diapers collected during the drive will also supply the home visiting and WIC programs with diapers for emergency assistance during the year.

Diaper Need Awareness Week, Sept. 25-Oct. 1, is an initiative of the National Diaper Bank Network created to mobilize local communities to help meet diaper need.

One in three American families struggle to maintain a sufficient diaper supply and the poorest 20 percent spend nearly 14 percent of their income on diapers. In Kenosha, the percentage of the population living in poverty is 15.2 percent higher than the statewide figure.

Families who have pre-registered and who attend the Sept. 26 resource fair will receive a supply of diapers and wipes, and be entered into a drawing for gift baskets. Pre-registration is required by Sept. 22. For more information, please call 262-605-6742.

Diaper drive donations can be dropped off at the Division of Health's administrative offices or the PSN Family Resource Center in the Kenosha County Job Center building, 8600 Sheridan Road; Kenosha Area Family and Aging Services Inc., 7730 Sheridan Road; or Greater Mt Hebron Church, 7445 20th Ave. For more information, call the Kenosha LIHF Collaborative at 262-605-6781.

About the Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families:

Infant mortality is a complex problem that is influenced by health, social, economic and community conditions experienced by families before, during and after pregnancy. Prematurity and low birth weight are the leading causes of infant mortality.

Collaborative partners in Kenosha's LIHF initiative collectively provide a diverse array of programs and services including home visitation, case management and resource coordination, infant health and nutrition education, breastfeeding, father involvement, help with postpartum depression, smoking cessation, safety, HMO health plan coordination and more.

The LIHF initiative is funded by the Wisconsin Partnership Program, the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. Financial contributions for the diaper drive are also provided by HMO partners Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, UnitedHealthcare, Trilogy Health Insurance and Managed Health Services.

For more information or, please call the Kenosha County Division of Health at 262-605-6700 or 800-472-8008, or visit www.kenoshacounty.org.

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