

D.I.A.P.E.R. Project expanding to offer more programs

Written by Janna Ross

Wednesday, 02 August 2017 07:12 -

A local diaper ministry is partnering with the Clark County Health Department to offer more programs for the community's youngest citizens.

The D.I.A.P.E.R. Project at Community Presbyterian Church in Charlestown has partnered with Pam Stone and the Clark County Health Department to offer two more programs to help citizens with necessary items for their babies.

"The D.I.A.P.E.R. Project is expanding and we are very excited about this opportunity," stated Donna McCreary, Program Coordinator of the project.

Beginning next month, Stone will bring the "Baby and Me, Tobacco Free" and "Cribs for Kids" programs to the local ministry in Charlestown.

"Baby and Me, Tobacco Free"

This program is a smoking cessation program for pregnant women. Once the expectant mother enrolls in the program, she must work to become smoke free.

"She must attend four prenatal quit smoking classes spread out through the pregnancy," Stone explained. "The idea is for the woman to quit smoking sometime during the pregnancy, the sooner, the better."

Stone continued to describe the program, "If she succeeds in the program she gets a voucher for diapers and wipes for up to 12 months after having the baby."

The program uses a breath test to prove the enrolled mother is smoke free each month.

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“Smoking, of course, is above the national average in Indiana and among low-income, Medicaid recipients is very high. Studies show if a woman is going to succeed in quitting smoking, during her pregnancy is the best outcome because the motivation is there,” Stone added.

This is the fourth year for the “Baby and Me, Tobacco Free” program to be offered in Clark County. The program currently is active in 20 states across the nation.

Stone then continued citing several effects smoking has on babies, “Smoking is the number one cause of pre-term birth and low birth weight. Smoking in women of child bearing age can be a precursor to infertility issues and miscarriages. Studies show there are long term effects to children due to second hand smoke. Also, there are more incidents of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) happening in households with second hand smoke. Babies do not process smoke very well.”

The program was developed and copyrighted by a health educator. The program is effective throughout the country and is very successful in Clark County.

“‘Baby and Me, Tobacco Free’ is pretty simple, but effective. If you can get people enrolled, then it’s pretty successful,” Stone explained.

Stone continued by sharing a success story.

“There are many couples that have successfully completed the program. One couple was able to put a down payment on a house with the money they saved by not smoking,” Stone stated.

“Cribs for Kids”

Another program offered at Community Presbyterian Church through the Clark County Health Department is the “Cribs for Kids” program.

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The “crib” is a pack-and-play with a bassinet feature. The crib is offered to those who need a safe place for their child to sleep.

“If they need it, they can get it. There is a class about safe sleep. Then it also comes with a survival kit,” Stone added.

The survival kit offered with the crib includes a sleep blanket, crib sheet, board book and a pacifier for the baby. The program is open to any woman 20 weeks pregnant through having a one month old newborn.

The Clark County’s Cribs for Kids program is funded by the Indiana Department of Health. This is the second year for the program in Clark County. Prior to the “Cribs for Kids” program, the local program was the “First Candle Program” from the Bill and Linda Gates Foundation.

The Safe Sleep Class that must be completed by participants before receiving the new crib will be offered locally at Community Presbyterian Church when needed.

First Classes at Community Presbyterian Church

The “Cribs for Kids” and “Baby and Me, Tobacco Free” Programs will be in Charlestown for the first time on Wednesday, August 23. The programs will be offered during the regular hours of the D.I.A.P.E.R. Project at Community Presbyterian Church. Regular hours are 1 to 4 p.m.

“The Baby and Me, Tobacco Free” program testing can also be done on August 23 during the D.I.A.P.E.R. Project hours,” Stone explained.

More Information

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If you would like more help in your path to quit smoking you may also contact the Indiana Quit Line. You may call 1-800-QUIT-NOW. This resource is open to anyone wanting to quit smoking, not just pregnant women.

For more information about the local programs please call Pam Stone at 812-283-2746 or Community Presbyterian Church at 812-256-5428. Registration is required for the programs and can also be completed by calling the above numbers.

The D.I.A.P.E.R. Project is open to newborns to three year olds. The project offers diapers, wipes and up to 10 food items and/or formula per month. The project also offers bathing essentials and baby care items.

Preparing for the Holidays

According to McCreary, officials with the D.I.A.P.E.R. Project are already preparing for the upcoming holiday season. Last year the project offered “Bundle of Joy” Bags for their clients. The bags distributed around Christmas, offered diapers or pull ups, wipes, bathing essentials, pajamas and other optional items on the client’s wish list.

The D.I.A.P.E.R. Project clients will be able to register for the Bundle of Joy Bags September 27 through November 8.

“Since the beginning of the program we have given a better start to 152 children,” McCreary stated with a smile. The D.I.A.P.E.R. Project opened its doors on March 18, 2015.

Baby Fair 2018

Once officials with the D.I.A.P.E.R. Project have a successful second year of the Bundle of Joy

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Bags they will host their inaugural Baby Fair. The upcoming event is tentatively scheduled for mid-March 2018.

“The event will feature several organizations that will help our clients,” McCreary stated. “We are partnering together to better help our clients. I am excited about our partnership with Pam,” McCreary concluded.

The D.I.A.P.E.R. Project is always seeking donations. The project relies heavily on the donations from the local community. Currently the biggest needs are for formula and Stage 4 toddler food items.

The D.I.A.P.E.R. Project is located at Community Presbyterian Church at 1370 Monroe Street in Charlestown.