

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 21, 2010

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Maternal Child Health program integrates with Healthy Families America

(Lawrence, KS) – The partnership between the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department and the Kansas Children’s Service League (KCSL) Healthy Families America program has grown even stronger with the integration of the Health Department’s Maternal Child Health program with Healthy Families. The program is now called Healthy Families Douglas County.

“The advantage of collaborating on our end is having the benefit of the public health nursing expertise,” said Jenn Preston, Healthy Families Program Coordinator. “The two programs are now working as one to serve expectant and new Douglas County parents.”

Service is provided at no charge to clients and there are no income guidelines to participate. Families participate voluntarily in the program and receive home-based instruction and referrals from trained staff. The program works with families dealing with stressors such as unemployment and single and teenage parenthood.

The Health Department’s three former MCH nurses will collaborate with two KCSL family support specialists and the program coordinator. Plans are to increase the hours of one Health Department nurse and later add a part-time family support specialist position and a part-time administrative support position.

The Health Department’s MCH program has been working on quality improvement since early 2009 and selected the Healthy Families America program as an ideal structure because it is evidence-based, accredited and nationwide. Healthy Families has been located in Douglas County and at the Health Department since January 2009.

“With one out of every eight Douglas County children living in poverty, there is a strong need for Healthy Families of Douglas County,” said Dan Partridge, Health Department Director. “Our aim is to leverage our combined resources and draw untapped federal funding to improve birth and developmental outcomes for our children.”

Healthy Families Douglas County is a program of Prevent Child Abuse America

(PCAA) of which KCSL is the Kansas state chapter. KCSL offers Healthy Families in Barton, Bourbon, Cherokee, Crawford, Dickinson, Douglas, Ellis, Finney, Johnson, Leavenworth, Lyon, Miami, Reno, Sedgwick, Shawnee and Wyandotte Counties.

For more information visit the following web sites:

- Kansas Children's Service League: www.kcsl.org
- Healthy Families America: www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org
- Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department- www.ldchealth.org/healthyfamilies.php