



NEWS RELEASE
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Program to help pregnant mothers quit smoking

Lawrence, Kansas – Smoking during pregnancy can cause several complications for the health of both the mother and child. However, a new evidence-based program will help Douglas County expectant mothers quit smoking and offer healthier futures for them and their children.

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department will launch the SCRIPT program on March 1 to mothers who seek services in the clinic via the Kansas WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program.

[SCRIPT](#), Smoking Cessation and Reduction in Pregnant Treatment, is a national program that has shown to be effective in helping thousands of pregnant women quit smoking. It is designed to be a component of a patient education program for prenatal care providers.

SCRIPT’s program educates participants about why they should quit or reduce smoking to improve implications for her health and her baby’s as well. It uses comprehensive counseling as well as a guide to quit smoking and encourages use of a “quit line” for support.

“Quitting smoking during pregnancy is one of the best things you can do for you and your baby,” said Public Health Nurse Nicole Parker. “To be able to help moms who want to quit smoking is very important and will be very rewarding as well.”

Parker said smoking during pregnancy can lead to low birth weight, impaired fetal growth, increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), complications during pregnancy — such as placental abruption — altered fetal development and decreased lung function in the baby.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control also advises pregnant women not to use any tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, because nicotine is toxic to developing fetuses and impairs fetal brain and lung development.

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department received grant funds via the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to offer SCRIPT to WIC clients.

The Health Department's Clinical staff will seek to raise awareness about SCRIPT in the clinic via printed materials. For clients who are interested, WIC nurses and Health Department staff will help coordinate enrollment in the program.

In addition to the health benefits of stopping smoking during pregnancy, clinical staff said the SCRIPT program offers financial benefits. A pack of cigarettes in Kansas costs roughly \$6, meaning smoking two packs per week costs \$625 annually.

"That's roughly enough to buy 2,700 diapers or an entire year's supply for a new baby," Parker said.

For more information about the SCRIPT program in Douglas County, contact the WIC staff at 785-856-5350.

About the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department

The nationally accredited Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department has served the Lawrence and Douglas County community for more than 120 years. Its mission is to advance policies, practices and programs that promote health for all, prevent disease and protect the environment.

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