

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Smokefree Mommy and Me!

Coldwater, MI. Being a mom is hard work... moms are cooks, housekeepers, caregivers, teachers, playmates and the list goes on. Juggling parenting responsibilities with all the other responsibilities that come with being an adult can be stressful. Add to that stress... cigarette smoking. If you're a smoker, you understand. You know that quitting is the right thing to do. You know that quitting will save you money. You know that quitting is better for your children. But...when to quit? How to quit? Can you quit? These are the tough questions. The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency can help! On **Tuesday, August 16th, at both noon and at 5 p.m.**, the health department is sponsoring an introductory session for its new cessation program called "*Smokefree – Mommy & Me!*" The one-hour program features information that can help you learn to be tobacco-free and will be held at the Three Rivers Office, 1110 Hill Street, Three Rivers, Michigan. Call 269-273-2161, ext. 0103# to reserve your space.

If you are pregnant, post-partum, breastfeeding or a mom of small children, you are invited to spend one hour to learn how to get ready to kick the habit. Kelley Mapes, Health Educator for the tri-county health department states "Quitting isn't easy, but millions of people have quit and you can too!" "Smokefree Mommy & Me!" seeks to inspire, motivate and support moms who desire to be tobacco-free. Kelley adds "Through this one session, moms will receive information that can help them make a decision to be tobacco-free. Then, when they are ready to quit, they will be more successful." .

According to Rebecca Burns, Health Officer for the tri-county health department "Tobacco use continues to be the most preventable cause of death in the nation.

Tobacco use in St. Joseph County has been linked to the county's high infant mortality rate. Of course, it is also connected to the occurrence of asthma and other respiratory problems in children." St. Joseph County ranked 66th out of 83 counties for its infant mortality rate (2010-2014). In addition, 28% of births born in 2014 were to mothers who smoked during their pregnancy. Rebecca states "We can do better – and by offering new and innovative programs like this one, we will." Funding for this program is provided by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, through its 2016 Health Innovations Grants.

To learn more about how the health department programs can help you and your family stay healthy and well, visit our website at www.bhsj.org or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bhsjwic.

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