



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 5, 2015

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TENNESSEE CELEBRATES CHILD HEALTH WEEK

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Governor Bill Haslam has proclaimed October 5-11, 2015 **Child Health Week** in Tennessee. The Tennessee Department of Health encourages all Tennesseans to put the health and well-being of children first during Child Health Week and every day of the year.

“Each of us has a role to play to help keep Tennessee children safe, healthy and on track,” said TDH Commissioner John Dreyzehner, MD, MPH. “We can be sure kids are watching what we do and not just what we say. Do they see us being physically active, making healthier food choices, avoiding tobacco and nicotine? Do they see us doing things like wearing seat belts and helmets, or brushing teeth and getting vaccinated? Each of us can, mostly by our actions but also our encouragement, influence healthy children today to become the educated and prosperous Tennessee adults of our future.”

This year’s Child Health Week theme is **“A Healthy Tennessee Begins with a Healthy Me,”** emphasizing the role of each individual in achieving good health for our state. In recent years, Tennessee has seen marked improvements in rates of infant mortality, births to teen mothers, childhood immunization and child deaths.

“There are many resources available to help Tennessee families keep their children healthy,” said TDH Family Health and Wellness Director Michael D. Warren, MD, MPH. “One such resource is the Women, Infants and Children program. WIC is a federal program designed to provide supplemental food to low-income pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants and children until the age of five.”

Another resource is Project Diabetes which provides funding to communities to work toward decreasing the prevalence of overweight and obesity, and in turn prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes and other long-term health consequences. An example of a statewide initiative supported by Project Diabetes is school-based run clubs. The goal is for 5th- 8th grade students to have the opportunity to participate in a school-based run club, where they will benefit from walk/run coaching and other healthy training tips to build their strength and endurance in a safe and supportive environment.

The Governor’s Children’s Cabinet has sponsored another excellent resource for families with young children: kidcentral tn, available at www.kidcentraltn.com. kidcentral tn offers a convenient source of reliable information about child health, education and development. Families may enter their zip code to find nearby state services, create a profile to help track



their child's developmental milestones and even download an app for their mobile devices.

Special activities are being planned to celebrate Child Health Week 2015. TDH has information about this year's Child Health Week activities and local events, along with resources for parents, schools and communities available online at <http://tn.gov/health/topic/MCH-chw>.

The mission of the Tennessee Department of Health is to protect, promote and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee. TDH has facilities in all 95 counties and provides direct services for more than one in five Tennesseans annually as well as indirect services for everyone in the state, including emergency response to health threats, licensure of health professionals, regulation of health care facilities and inspection of food service establishments. Learn more about TDH services and programs at www.tn.gov/health.

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