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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PREGNANT WOMEN BENEFIT FROM LOCAL CESSATION PROGRAM

NORWICH, NY – The Chenango County Health Department, located in Norwich NY has been conducting the BABY & ME™ – Tobacco Free Program since May 1, 2014. The BABY & ME – Tobacco Free Program is a smoking cessation program aimed at reducing the use of tobacco products among women, both during and after pregnancy. By providing counseling support and resources, facilitators trained to conduct the program encourage pregnant women to quit smoking and assist them in quitting and staying quit following delivery.

Enrolled participants who are successful at quitting and staying quit are eligible for free diapers for up to 6 MONTHS following the birth of their baby. Darlene Gramstad, Director of Patient Services from The Chenango County Health Department states “According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), we must encourage pregnant smoking women to consider a quit attempt. The BABY & ME – Tobacco Free Program is research-based and is proven to help pregnant women quit smoking and maintain smoking cessation throughout the postpartum period and beyond.”

Christina Arnold a certified program facilitator working with the women at the Chenango County Health Department states, “It has been a real benefit to our program to offer the free diaper vouchers to the mothers as well as a supportive partner that lives with her, as long as both agree to quit together. This not only gives the family twice the diaper vouchers, but offers much needed support to the mom at home to stay smoke free.” In January 2016 the Chenango County program decided to enroll supportive partners in addition to the pregnant mother, after conducting Baby & Me – Tobacco Free Program for just over one year.

Jade and Rick from Sherburne NY enrolled in the program in June 2016 when Jade was pregnant because she knew quitting smoking was important for her and her unborn baby. “I learned about the program from a community outreach worker with Mothers and Babies

Perinatal Network”, Jade stated. Rick enrolled in the program with Jade because he had recently quit smoking himself. When the couple was asked about how the program has helped them, they stated that “We have saved on paying for diapers and on not buying cigarettes. We still have not paid for any diapers and Leia is 5 months old.” Jade also stated that “The most positive part about quitting is the healthy environment created for their family and healthy lifestyle choice for us.”

Jade and Rick stated that “Completing the program together and being there for one another has helped with our success.” They graduate from the program this month. They each received diaper vouchers for 6 months and remained smoke free.

Laurie Adams, *BABY & ME – Tobacco Free Program* Executive Director, program creator, and certified cessation specialist trained Chenango County Nursing Division staff, along with her program staff provides ongoing support to the program in Chenango County. Ms. Adams states, “We are thrilled to see the number of women Chenango County Health Department has assisted in quitting and staying quit. They have done a great job in reaching women in their community.” They encourage their clients to consider a quit attempt and provide practical and effective steps to help them be successful.”

Research shows that babies born to non-smoking women are born at a healthy weight, are less likely to be premature, and are more likely to come home from the hospital stay with their mothers. Maintaining smoking cessation after the baby is born extends the positive health outcomes for women and their families by reducing the damaging effects of secondhand smoke, which is known to cause an increase in ear infections, respiratory issues, allergies, and learning disabilities. Quitting smoking greatly reduces the health risks to the mother and baby.

The *BABY & ME – Tobacco Free Program* is in 15 states nationwide and has enrolled over 7,000 women. For more information on the program go to www.babyandmetobaccofree.org or to learn how to enroll contact the Chenango County Health Department at 607-337-1660 or go to their website at www.co.chenango.ny.us/public-health/nursing to fill out a self-referral form or read about the program on the Maternal Health tab.

Persons with questions or requiring additional information may contact the Chenango County Health Department at **(607) 337-1660**.

Promoting and protecting health, safety, and the quality of life in Chenango County