

## **Diabetes Day at the Capitol This Week**

Kentucky's diabetes experts, educators and advocates are taking their concerns to the Capitol to share information and encourage better prevention and awareness of one of the state's biggest health concerns.

"Diabetes Day at the Capitol" will start at 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 21, in Room 111 of the Capitol Annex. The event will allow health officials to meet with lawmakers to discuss the dangers of diabetes. The event will be sponsored by the Kentucky Diabetes Network and the American Diabetes Association.

"Awareness – on the part of health care providers, lawmakers and the general public – is key in preventing diabetes," said William Hacker, M.D., Health and Family Services' acting undersecretary for health and public health commissioner. "Each day, more Americans are being diagnosed with this terrible disease and it's taking a toll on American quality of life and health care costs."

According to the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH), diabetes mellitus is one of the most common and serious chronic diseases in the United States. About 20.8 million Americans have diabetes, many of whom do not know they have the disease. Each year, approximately 1.3 million Americans 20 years old or older are diagnosed with diabetes.

DPH estimates that 376,000 adult Kentuckians have diagnosed or undiagnosed diabetes.

## **Safe Infants Act Saves Kentucky's Babies**

Download an audio clip of Child Safety Branch Manager Lisa Durbin discussing the Safe Infants Law at

<http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/540FD913-A09F-4718-9A72-5345281FAE9E/0/SafeInfantsANRFeb08.mp3>.

A state law that allows parents to safely surrender their newborns gives hope to men and women concerned about becoming parents.

The Safe Infants Act became effective in April 2002 and allows parents or someone acting on their behalf to anonymously place infants they cannot care for at selected "safe places." The law has resulted in 20 babies being placed in the care of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS).

"We all read the headlines when an infant has been unsafely abandoned, so it's essential people are educated about the Safe Infants Act," said Lisa Durbin, manager of the CHFS Child Safety Branch. "For women who may have lost hope because of a pregnancy, this is an option."

Under the law, parents may leave a baby up to 72 hours old at any hospital, with emergency medical services (EMS) personnel or with any firefighter or police officer. Parents remain anonymous and cannot be pursued or prosecuted unless an abandoned infant shows signs of abuse or neglect.

Supporters of the law intended it to eliminate incidents of newborns being left in unsafe locations outdoors or in trash cans, restrooms or other public places, or outside a home. Unsafe baby abandonment is considered child abuse and neglect.

Two babies have died in Kentucky after being unsafely abandoned by their mothers in the past three years, Durbin said.

"If those parents had left the babies at a 'safe place,' those tragedies could have been avoided," she said.

Babies left with staff at a "safe place" are examined and, if needed, treated at a hospital. CHFS then places them with certified foster

parents who are interested in adopting. Birth parents have 30 days to reconsider leaving their baby. CHFS then asks the courts to terminate parental rights, freeing the baby for adoption. CHFS' protection and permanency staff works with those parents who decide to reunite with their child.

Infants coming into the state's care are placed with foster families who are interested in eventually adopting to minimize placements for children.

At the identified safe places to leave a baby, parents receive an information packet that includes coded bracelets for parent and baby and voluntary medical disclosure forms that can be left with the baby or returned by mail. The information helps caregivers determine treatment for the baby and is kept confidential.

Durbin said the parents' medical history is important in determining the future needs of the child.

The packet also includes a brochure instructing mothers about how to keep themselves healthy after delivery.

Since 2002, 12 of the 20 children who have been surrendered have been adopted.

### **Deferred Comp has New Employee Seminar**

Kentucky Deferred Compensation (KDC) is an optional, state-sponsored benefit available to all state employees. KDC is the easy, tax-sheltered way to supplement your retirement needs. Employees hired within the last 12 months can join KDC for a brief enrollment presentation and take the action necessary to:

- Learn about the different risks and rewards associated with investing
- Discover the best way to invest your money to help meet your retirement goals

- Enroll in our 401(k), Roth 401(k) or 457, Traditional and Roth IRA supplemental retirement saving plans immediately

The session will be from 12:10 to 12:50 p.m. Feb. 28, at 101 Sea Hero Rd., Ste 110, Frankfort. Lunch will be provided. Limited seating, pre-registration is required. To register, call Carol Cummins or Kerry Azbill at (502) 573-7925 or (800) 542-2667. Please call for an enrollment kit if you are unable to attend.

### **Living Well: Cold Weather Alternatives for CHFS Employees**

The colder temperatures can keep us from participating in a consistent physical activity routine. Here are a few tips for maintaining your fitness goals when the outside conditions are unbearable:

- Park farther away from the entrance and walk briskly from your vehicle to your work station.
- Take the steps whenever possible.
- Use breaks to walk in an open area or walk around the perimeter of each floor.
- Walk to a co-worker's desk to discuss an issue instead of sending an e-mail or using the phone.
- Use a bathroom on another floor.

Make the most of your physical activity. Can you pass the "talk test?" Walk at a steady pace and carry on a conversation without being short of breath. If you can do this, you pass. If not, keep trying. You'll get there in no time! If you have a timer, set a goal for the distance you want to walk within a certain timeframe. Walk at a brisk pace to ensure that you are elevating your heart rate enough to benefit your cardiovascular system.

CHFS employees located in the CHR building in Frankfort can head to the basement when the

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weather does not allow you to venture outside. If you walk four full laps (one lap is down and back) that is equivalent to one mile. If you need a little more motivation, please visit the wellness intranet site at <http://chfsnet.ky.gov/wellness/> to find out when lunch classes are offered in the third floor distance learning center of the health sciences building. Here is the remaining schedule for February:

- 2/19 Tuesday-aerobics and resistance bands
- 2/22 Friday- yoga

Classes are from noon to 1 p.m. Please contact Kris Hayslett at ext. 3797 if you have any questions regarding these classes.

## Employee Enrichment

*By Anya Armes Weber*

If you feel your relationship with your supervisor is strained and you'd like to improve it, schedule a meeting with him or her and try these techniques from Erika Andersen, author of "Growing Great Employees."

**Be positive.** Ask your boss in a non-threatening way if there is anything you can do to enhance your working relationship. Ask what is specifically expected of employees.

**Actively listen to the answers.** This is information that will help you professionally, so resist the urge to defend yourself.

**Get a little personal.** Ask your supervisor about her management style and what characteristics she values most in employees.

Showing interest in improving your professional relationship will make a good impression with your supervisor. And if you know more about

your boss's expectations, you will have a better opportunity to meet them.