

February 25, 2010

## **HEALTH NEXUS RAISES FUNDS FOR HEALTHY PREGNANCIES THROUGH LCBO'S IN-STORE DONATION PROGRAM**

Starting March 1, the public can help Health Nexus, Ontario's leading bilingual health promotion organization, to raise awareness about alcohol and pregnancy by making a donation at 611 stores throughout Ontario. Donation boxes for Health Nexus' key program, the Best Start Resource Centre, will be displayed at LCBO checkout counters until March 31.

The Best Start Resource Centre supports service providers across Ontario to improve the health of pregnant women, infants and young children. Best Start Resource Centre provides training, consultation and networking opportunities for service providers, and develops needed resources and awareness campaigns. Over the last five years, there has been a focus on provincial strategies to raise awareness about the risks of drinking alcohol during pregnancy and to improve the skills of health care providers around alcohol use in pregnancy. LCBO has supported these strategies by including information in its stores, and in its *FOOD&DRINK* magazine. Funds raised through donations will be used to promote healthy pregnancies and healthy babies, with a focus on alcohol use in pregnancy.

"Best Start Resource Centre appreciates the ongoing commitment from LCBO in sharing important information about the risks of alcohol use in pregnancy," says Best Start Manager Wendy Burgoyne. "LCBO's province-wide store network helps raise public awareness about alcohol and pregnancy, and we appreciate the support from LCBO staff and especially its customers."

"We are pleased to partner with Health Nexus and support its Best Start Resource Centre through our in-store donation program," says LCBO President and CEO Bob Peter. "LCBO's customers and staff always give generously to help their fellow Ontarians and we appreciate their contributions to these worthy causes."

Best Start Resource Centre is one of 26 provincial, as well as numerous local charities, that will benefit from the LCBO's province-wide donation box program in 2010. In 2009, LCBO raised a total of \$4.2 million for charities through special programs and initiatives, of which \$3.8 million was raised through in-store fundraising. In addition, LCBO's annual dividend transfer to the Ontario government, which totaled \$1.4 billion in fiscal 2008-09, excluding taxes, supports a wide range of important government programs, services and priorities, including health care and education.

The Best Start Resource Centre thanks the public for its support when shopping at their local LCBO store during March.

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