

August 15, 2012

LCBO STORES RAISE FUNDS FOR HEALTHY PREGNANCIES

Starting August 19, the public can help support the Best Start Resource Centre (Best Start) to address alcohol use and pregnancy by making a donation at any of the more than 620 LCBO stores throughout Ontario. Donation boxes for Best Start will be displayed at LCBO checkout counters until September 15.

The Best Start Resource Centre, a key program at Health Nexus, improves the health of pregnant women, infants and young children in Ontario. Best Start provides learning opportunities for service providers, and develops needed research, resources and province-wide awareness campaigns. Over the last ten years, there has been a focus on province-wide 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, in addition to supporting the development of a range of resources for pregnant women about alcohol and pregnancy. Funds raised through donations will be used to promote healthy pregnancies and healthy babies, with a focus on alcohol use in pregnancy. For more information, visit www.beststart.org or www.alcoholfreepregnancy.ca.

"We appreciate the support we receive from LCBO, its employees and especially its customers," says Wendy McAllister, Manager of the Best Start Resource Centre. "LCBO's province-wide store network and supportive staff enable us to raise significant funds to address the important issue of alcohol use during pregnancy in Ontario."

"LCBO is pleased to partner with the Best Start Resource Centre and provide support to a variety of worthy causes," says LCBO President & CEO Bob Peter. "Generous LCBO customers and staff improve the lives of countless Ontarians and help communities throughout the province."

Best Start is one of 28 provincial, as well as numerous local charities, that will benefit from LCBO's province-wide donation box program in 2012. In 2011, LCBO raised a total of more than \$6.2 million for charities through special programs and initiatives, of which \$5.7 million was raised through in-store fundraising. In addition, LCBO's annual dividend transfer to the Ontario government, which totaled \$1.63 billion in fiscal 2011-12, excluding taxes, supports a wide range of important government programs, services and priorities, including health care and education.

Best Start thanks the public for its support when shopping at their local LCBO store from August 19 - September 15, 2012.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Wendy McAllister

Manager, Best Start Resource Centre at Health Nexus

Tel: 1-800-397-9567 x2279; E-mail: w.mcallister@healthnexus.ca

Stephanie Petroff

LCBO Senior Communications Consultant

Tel: 416 864-6792; E-mail: stephanie.petroff@lcbo.com