



by/par health **nexus** santé

August 13, 2014

LCBO stores raise funds for Best Start Resource Centre

Starting on August 17, the public can help support the Best Start Resource Centre by making a donation at any of the more than 635 LCBO stores throughout Ontario. Donation boxes for the Best Start Resource Centre will be displayed at LCBO checkout counters until September 13.

The Best Start Resource Centre, a key program of Health Nexus, supports Ontario service providers in their work to improve preconception and prenatal health and early child development. 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 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 on the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy 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 preventing alcohol use in pregnancy. For more information, visit www.beststart.org or www.alcoholfreepregnancy.ca.

"We appreciate the ongoing 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 better address the important issue of alcohol use during pregnancy."

"LCBO is pleased to partner with the Best Start Resource Centre and help promote alcohol-free pregnancies and to prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder," says LCBO President & CEO Bob Peter. "The generosity of LCBO customers and staff enables Best Start Resource Centre to provide support and materials to give babies the best possible start by encouraging women not to drink when pregnant or planning pregnancy."

The Best Start Resource Centre is one of 28 provincial and numerous local charities that will benefit from LCBO's province-wide donation box program in 2014. In 2013, LCBO raised a total of more than \$8.2 million for charities through special programs and initiatives, of which \$7.7 million was raised through in-store fundraising. In addition, LCBO's annual dividend transfer to the Ontario government, which totaled \$1.74 billion in fiscal 2013-14, 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 from August 17 - September 13, 2014.

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