Mother’s Day/Smoking during Pregnancy Press Release Template

Drafted May 3, 2022

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE**

**CONTACT NAME AND INFO**

**Pregnant smoking drops in Wisconsin, but remains above national average**

**(COUNTY NAME’s) smoking during pregnancy rate stands at (INSERT PERCENTAGE FROM REPORT)**

(**CITY, WI**) – Smoking during pregnancy dropped 31% in Wisconsin from 2015 to 2020, according to a [new report](https://www.cuph.org/uploads/2/5/8/5/25855930/smoking_during_pregnancy_may_2022_final.pdf) from UW Milwaukee’s Center for Urban Population Health. Wisconsin’s pregnant smoking rate was 12.1% in 2015 – which dropped to 8.4% in 2020. However, despite that drop, Wisconsin’s rate of smoking during pregnancy is higher than that of the U.S. (5.5%), and in (**COUNTY NAME**), (**INSERT PERCENTAGE FROM PAGE 10 OF THE REPORT**) of people smoke during pregnancy.

While advocates are heartened to see Wisconsin’s numbers are improving, they say barriers prevent pregnant people from getting the help they need – chief among them the power of nicotine addiction.

“It’s important to remember just how strong the addiction to nicotine is. Pregnant people want to do the right thing for themselves and their families, but significant barriers exist,” said (**CONTACT NAME**). “Beyond the challenge of addiction, many people are faced with toxic stress, poverty, mental health challenges, and lack of access to quality health care, including prenatal services.”

One service available to help pregnant people quit is the Wisconsin Women’s Health Foundation’s First Breath program, which has helped more than 24,000 people. First Breath offers free, nonjudgmental one-to-one counseling and text message support to pregnant and postpartum people and caregivers.

“Quitting commercial tobacco is hard for anyone, and nicotine addiction doesn’t magically disappear with pregnancy,” said First Breath’s Krissy Alaniz. “What we really want people to know is that they don’t have to do it all alone. Whether it’s through the First Breath program or other services, there are resources to help you quit.”

For more information on the First Breath program, visit [wwhf.org/firstbreath/](https://wwhf.org/firstbreath/). People can also enroll in First Breath by calling 608-888-2768 or texting the word “BABY” to 29669.

In addition to the First Breath program, the Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line also provides free help to anyone who calls 1-800-QUIT NOW (784-8669). Individuals enrolled in Medicaid are also encouraged to talk to their doctor about the free resources provided through the Medicaid Cessation Benefit.

Finally, learn about or get involved in commercial tobacco prevention efforts in (**COUNTY NAME**) by visiting ALLIANCE URL/SOCIAL MEDIA.

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