



Robert P. Astorino, Westchester County Executive

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## PRESS RELEASE

Cheryl Archbald, MD, MPH, Acting Commissioner, Department of Health  
Ned McCormack, Communications Director  
Contact: Caren Halbfinger (914) 813-5013 / after hours: 813-5000

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### **GO BEFORE YOU SHOW PROGRAM INTRODUCED**

#### **Team approach encourages Westchester women to seek early prenatal care for a healthier baby**

The Westchester County Department of Health and the Lower Hudson Valley Perinatal Network introduced a new countywide campaign today to encourage pregnant women to seek prenatal care in the first three months of their pregnancy and to link them to a prenatal care provider as early as possible in their pregnancy. The kickoff was held at the Theodore D. Young Community Center in White Plains.

The goal is to improve the health of babies born in Westchester. More than a quarter of all babies born in the county in 2008 were born to women who had late or no prenatal care and more than 1,000 babies born that year, (8.9% of all live births) weighed less than 5 ½ pounds, according to the most recent figures available from the county health department. Low birth weight babies often face greater challenges, such as developmental delays, health concerns and a higher risk of infant mortality.

“Just days before Mother’s Day, I’m proud to support this effort to encourage early prenatal care for all Westchester moms-to-be,” said County Executive Robert P. Astorino. “As a father of three young children, I can tell you there is no greater gift than a healthy child.”

“Early prenatal care is vital to the health of both the pregnant mother and her baby,” said Dr. Cheryl Archbald, acting commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Health. “Through our new Go Before You Show initiative, by making one phone call to 211, a pregnant woman can have her first prenatal appointment scheduled and be on her way to a healthy pregnancy.”

This new collaborative effort was developed in partnership with the Children’s Health and Research Foundation’s Lower Hudson Valley Perinatal Network and the United Way 211 Hudson Valley and is funded by the New York State Department of Health.

“The Lower Hudson Valley Perinatal Network recognizes that many women in underserved communities are not getting the information they need to have a healthy full term pregnancy and a healthy baby,” said Cheryl Hunter-Grant, executive director of the Lower Hudson Valley Perinatal Network and VP, Perinatal Programs of the Children’s Health

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and Research Foundation. “Help us spread the message to all mothers-to-be and their families about the need to get prenatal care within the first three months of pregnancy.”

Go Before You Show will be promoted through an integrated marketing campaign with text messages, radio, bus and movie theater advertising, YouTube videos, a website and ambassadors who will reach out to residents to share information about Go Before You Show and the importance of early prenatal care.

“It is our duty to reach out to the underprivileged and most vulnerable members of our community, so we are happy to support this campaign,” said Rev. Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson, pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Mount Vernon and member of the United Black Clergy of Westchester. “Members of United Black Clergy of Westchester will declare one Sunday this year Go Before You Show Sunday, in which we will ask our member churches to distribute printed materials and have a member of their health ministry speak out about how important it is for young mothers to get prenatal care in their first trimester.”

Naomi Adler, CEO and president of United Way Westchester and Putnam, said her organization, which coordinates the 211 service, was pleased to help connect women to prenatal care and follow up to make sure they kept their first appointment. “2-1-1 is one of the most effective ways to get information to people who need it and we are excited to put it to use for such an important program for parents,” she said.

For more information, visit [www.GoBeforeYouShow914.com](http://www.GoBeforeYouShow914.com) and [www.westchestergov.com/health](http://www.westchestergov.com/health).

Reporters can contact Teresa Holmes of TLH Communications at 282-5317 or [tlhcomm@gmail.com](mailto:tlhcomm@gmail.com).