



by/par health **nexus** santé

August 11, 2015

## **LCBO stores raise funds to support healthy pregnancies and babies in Ontario**

Starting August 16, the public can help support the Best Start Resource Centre (Best Start) by making a donation at any of the more than 650 LCBO stores throughout Ontario. Donation boxes for the Best Start Resource Centre will be displayed at LCBO checkout counters until September 12.

The Best Start Resource Centre, a key program of Health Nexus, supports Ontario service providers in their work to improve prenatal and child health. Best Start trains 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](http://www.beststart.org) or [www.alcoholfreepregnancy.ca](http://www.alcoholfreepregnancy.ca).

"We want to thank LCBO's generous customers and supportive staff who help us raise significant funds and increase public awareness of the risks of drinking alcohol during pregnancy through their network of stores across the province," says Barbara Willet, Executive Director of the Best Start Resource Centre.

"LCBO is pleased to partner with the Best Start Resource Centre and support a variety of worthy causes through the *Giving Back In Our Community* fundraising program," says LCBO President & CEO Bob Peter. "The generosity of LCBO customers and staff enable these charitable organizations to make a significant impact in helping individuals and communities across Ontario."

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 2015. In 2014, LCBO raised a total of more than \$9.5 million for charities through special programs and initiatives, of which \$8.8 million was raised through in-store fundraising. In addition, LCBO's annual dividend transfer to the Ontario government, which totaled \$1.805 billion in fiscal 2014-15, excluding taxes, supports a wide range of important government programs, services and priorities, including health care, education, infrastructure and other important public services.

Best Start Resource Centre thanks the public for its support when shopping at their local LCBO store from August 16 - September 12, 2015.

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