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August 12, 2009

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEADETE RELEASE

"HEADS UP ON INFANT MORTALITY"
Please Help Us Knit or Crochet a Hat Today!

Portland, OR: The International Center for Traditional Childbearing (ICTC) is observing the September National Infant Mortality Awareness Month, with the Heads Up on Infant Mortality Campaign. "Heads Up" is an ICTC Infant Mortality Awareness Campaign to let our neighbors know that too many babies are still dying in our nation. ICTC's national membership in CA, D.C., FL, PA, NM, OR, PA, and VA are knitting infant hats to represent the number of babies who died in their state before their first birthday. The hats will serve as a memorial to the young lives lost.

Infant Mortality Awareness Month was created by a resolution of the U.S. House of Representatives in 2006. Said Representative Michael Burgess (TX-26), sponsor of the resolution, "Infant mortality rates are appalling." The U.S.ranks 30th in the world in infant mortality rates. The goals of Infant Mortality Awareness Month are to increase national awareness of infant mortality contributing factors, and to urge community leaders to assist in efforts to meet the objective of reducing the rate of infant mortality in this country by 2010.

The U.S has one the highest infant mortality rates among the industrialized nations. And an African American baby has the highest infant mortality rate of any race at 13.5 per 1,000 live births compared with 5.7 per 1,000 live births for whites and Hispanics, according to statistics from the CDC.

In 2008, over 27, 600 infant died before age one, most of the deaths were preventable. Monroe, president and founder says, “factors that contribute to the higher rates of infant deaths include: premature births, low-birth weight, poverty, mis-education about proper food choices, poor pre-conception health, late prenatal care (beginning prenatal care late in the 2nd trimester,) less than 5 prenatal visits, high blood pressure (causing restricted blood flow to the placenta) and hypertension formally referred to as pre-eclampsia, SIDS, failure to thrive syndrome and accidents”.

ICTC is asking every able body to join us in knitting or crocheting at least ten infant hats and sending them to the ICTC State Representative by September 15th. The ICTC State Representatives are listed on WWW.ICTCMIDWIVES.ORG, or you can send them to the national at ICTC PO Box 11923, Portland, OR 97211. Received

The hats will be displayed at an Infant Mortality Awareness Rally in the week of September 26th. At the end of the public awareness project the hats will be given to infants as "Going Home" gifts when they leave the local Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). What a comforting gift to an ill baby and support to worried parents. By participating in the “Heads Up” Campaign, we can increase awareness about the causes of infant mortality and then create the solutions.

The International Center for Traditional Childbearing (ICTC) is an infant mortality prevention, breastfeeding promotion and midwife training organization. The mission is to increase the number of black midwives, doulas, and healers, to empower families, in order to reduce maternal and infant mortality. Established in 1991 and headquartered in Portland, Oregon we have chapters and members around the globe to improve birth outcomes.

Monroe says, “To reduce infant mortality the use of midwives is essential, as is the need for women to breastfeed their babies for at least one-year. Socially pregnant women need to be loved, protected, nurtured and helped, not just during pregnancy but during the full spectrum of motherhood.” Monroe concludes, “It Take a Village to Raise a Child‟ and the village forms at pregnancy”.

This project is being co-sponsored by Birthing Hands of DC, JJ Way™, and other supporters.

To learn more visit WWW.ICTCMIDWIVES.ORG or call 503.460.9324.