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FOR IMMEDIATE 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 memberships 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 states before their first birthdays. 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), a sponsor of the resolution, "Infant mortality rates are appalling," in response to the infant mortality rate in the U.S., which is 30th in the world. The goals of Infant Mortality Awareness Month are to increase national awareness of contributing factors to infant mortality, and to urge community leaders to assist in efforts to meet reduce the rate of infant mortality in this country by 2010.

The U.S. has one of 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 infants died before age one and 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, poor-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 headquarters at ICTC PO Box 11923, Portland, OR 97211.

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 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, and to empower families in order to reduce maternal and infant mortality. Established in 1991 and headquartered in Portland, Oregon, they 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 Takes 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™, the National Association of Certified Professional Midwives and Citizens for Midwifery.

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



September is Infant Mortality Awareness Month

Please join us in knitting or crocheting infant hats for the babies lost in 2008
All hats received by September 15, 2009 will be displayed in our
Infant Mortality Awareness Rally the week of September 26th.



How You Can Help

- Knit or crochet one or more baby hat(s)
- Host a "Knit-Teach In" on maternal and infant health care
- Join ICTC, MAMA and Big Push—
Campaigns to make quality health care
available to all women



Download baby hat patterns to knit or crochet
at www.ictcmidwives.org

www.ictcmidwives.org Email: ictc@ictcmidwives.org Phone: 503-460-9324

ICTC Participating States :

California- 2,918
DC-97
Florida- 1,717
New Mexico-178
Oregon-275
Pennsylvania-1,060
Virginia-781

Numbers represent infant
mortality total for 2008