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Summit County Public Health and Full Term First Birthday Agencies Team Up to Launch Masks for Moms Campaign.

Akron, Ohio – June 23, 2020: Summit County Public Health (SCPH), in partnership with the Commission on Minority Health, Medicaid Managed Care Plans and the Full Term First Birthday (FTFB) Greater Akron collaborative, announced an initiative to collect and distribute handmade cloth face masks to pregnant and postpartum women in Summit County. The Masks for Moms initiative originated in Chicago, IL with a community-based nonprofit organization, Black Girls Break Bread in partnership with the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) Center of Excellence in Maternal Child Health, and various other agencies in the community. The overall aim of the Masks for Moms campaign is to protect pregnant and postpartum women and their babies during the COVID-19 pandemic by ensuring all mothers have access to a reusable cloth face mask.

"COVID scares me so much, but no one around me has the money or ability to buy or make masks so we mostly just don't wear them. That scares me for my baby so much. I can't tell you how much this means to me to have a mask that I can wear so I feel safer for me and my baby," said a local mother receiving a mask through the Nurse Family Partnership.

Even though masks do not provide absolute protection from COVID-19, all individuals are encouraged by the CDC to wear masks when they leave their homes. Those attending prenatal care visits in person and moms about to give birth will also benefit from the reduced stress that is likely to come from wearing a mask in their interactions with the prenatal healthcare providers. "Right now, I don't have enough money to clean my clothes much. When people tell me to use clothes as a mask, I don't have extras to spare. I am so thankful for this mask. I can wash it in the sink and reuse it so I feel safe going out," said another local mother.

Masks for Moms has collaborated with a local company, Project Sew United, to purchase CDC-approved cloth face masks, but are also seeking volunteers to donate additional cloth face masks. The reusable cloth face masks will be distributed by FTFB community partners at various locations throughout Summit County. Please visit our webpage at www.scph.org/masks for additional information about making, wearing, or cleaning reusable cloth masks or for a listing of our pick-up and donation locations. If you have any additional questions, please call Summit County Public Health at (330) 926-5700.