

**NEWS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Jan. 3, 2013

**Contact:** Karrey Britt  
Communications Coordinator  
Office: (785) 856-7362

## **Health Department acquires Healthy Families program**

**(Lawrence, KS)** – On Jan. 1, the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department acquired the Healthy Families Douglas County program, which is helping about 50 at-risk families.

The program's mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect and optimize child development. It does this by providing intensive, in-home support for new parents of children ages 3 and under who are overburdened by risk factors such as unemployment, lack of parenting skills, and family history of abuse. Among the services that Healthy Families Douglas County provides are case management, assistance with transportation and access to 24-hour support.

Healthy Families Douglas County was founded in October 2010 through a partnership between Kansas Children's Service League (KCSL) and the Health Department. KCSL is no longer able to support the program because the state reduced funding for the Early Childhood Block Grant; therefore, the Health Department is providing \$80,000 this year and additional resources to maintain the program, including the hiring of the program's supervisor Jenn Preston. She oversees five employees.

"I am grateful that the Health Department continued its dedication to providing an evidence-based visitation program in Douglas County," Preston said. "The transition was seamless for the families we serve."

Healthy Families Douglas County works with numerous agencies, including the Success By 6 Coalition of Douglas County, which works to ensure families of children under age 6 have what they need to successfully parent their children.

Rich Minder, collaborative projects coordinator for Success By 6, said, "Healthy Families Douglas County strengthens families with evidence-based parent education and wrap around services provided in collaboration with a network of agencies. Our community is fortunate to benefit from the leadership of the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department to keep Healthy Families here."