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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Take a "Pregnant Pause" September 9th for FASD Awareness Day

Albany, NY – September 8th, 2009 – On Wednesday, September 9th at 9:09 AM, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, District II (ACOG) is asking people across New York State to pause for a moment to reflect on *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Awareness Day*. FASD is an umbrella term that describes the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank during pregnancy.

ACOG District II has launched a statewide effort to raise awareness about fetal alcohol spectrum disorders prevention. *Prenatal exposure to alcohol is one of the leading preventable causes of birth defects and other developmental disabilities*. A District II FASD task force led by Dr. David Garry of Jacobi Medical Center in the Bronx, has developed a patient friendly, FASD prevention toolkit, which has been sent to District II members and obstetric providers.

"Women who drink alcohol while pregnant could have children at risk of developmental disabilities, growth deficiencies, facial deformities, central nervous impairment, behavioral disorders, and impaired intellectual development," said Dr. Garry. "We are committed to educating New York women about these risks and asking them if they are pregnant to think first and don't drink."

As part of ACOG District II's efforts, the *Pregnant? Think, Don't Drink! Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Prevention Handbook* is currently being distributed – free of charge – to women across New York State through ob-gyns and other health care providers. The booklet – which you can read by [CLICKING HERE](#) – is intended to educate women of childbearing age about the dangers of alcohol use during pregnancy.

"This booklet gives women guidance about alcohol use during reproductive years with emphasis on safer drinking behaviors and effective contraceptive use," said Donna Montalto, MPP, Executive Director of ACOG District II. "It also provides useful advice to individuals who may be able to influence women to make wise choices regarding drinking."

By filling out a survey at the back of the handbook, women also have a chance to win free educational tools to help improve their health. For more information about FASD, visit the ACOG District II website by [CLICKING HERE](#).

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This effort is made possible through support from the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) in collaboration with the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS).

The New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council is a federally funded state agency dedicated to designing and implementing new programs that serve New Yorkers with developmental disabilities and their families in the most effective way possible.

The New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services is the designated single state agency responsible for the coordination of state-federal relations in the area of addiction services.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, District II (ACOG) represents over 4,000 board certified obstetrician-gynecologists in the state who deliver health care to New York's women.

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