FAMILY PLANNING

WHY IT’S IMPORTANT
Knowing when you want to have a baby can help you prepare for a healthy pregnancy and baby when you decide it is time.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Make a Plan
Your local health department can help you with a Reproductive Life Plan, which helps you think through when you would like to start a family.

Ask about Family Planning & Birth Control Options
There are several options available to help prevent pregnancy until you are ready. Ask your doctor or health department about options and help with choosing the right kind of birth control for you.

- Long acting options can prevent pregnancies for several years and can be removed when you decide you are ready to try to get pregnant.
- Hormones have to be taken regularly. Most people think of “the pill,” but these can also be taken through implants, shots or a patch on the skin. Some, like the pill, are taken daily, while others, like implants, can last as long as a year.
- Spermicides and barriers like condoms and diaphragms can prevent pregnancy and some also help prevent sexually transmitted infections, or STIs (usually called STDs).

WHEN TO PLAN FOR THE NEXT BABY
Waiting between childbirths gives your body time to recover and replenish nutrients. After having a baby, you should wait at least 18-24 months before you get pregnant again. This gives your body time to prepare for the next pregnancy and gives the next baby everything it needs for a healthier start in life. This also gives you time to get used to the changes that come with having a baby.

GETTING HELP
- Talk to your medical provider about what is right for you and what you can do to protect your health so your body is ready to have a baby when you are.
- Ask your health department. They can provide the care you need, including making a Reproductive Life Plan and getting family planning services that are right for you.