

## Touching Hearts Touching Minds Handout #12 Pregnant Belly (Prenatal Weight Gain) Counseling Tool

### What is the key message?

- Postpartum weight is affected by what and how much you eat while pregnant.
- Putting on weight during pregnancy is a good thing. Putting on *too much* weight during pregnancy makes returning to your normal weight more challenging.
- It is possible and realistic to expect to return to your pre-pregnancy weight.

### Who should receive this message?

- Pregnant women.
- Women planning to become pregnant.

### How can this message be used?

#### Open:

- How do you feel about the way your body has been changing? What are the biggest surprises?
- How do you think you'll feel about your body after your baby is born?

#### *Idea for a group:*

(Ask participants to close their eyes, if they feel comfortable, while you read them this guided imagery activity. Read it slowly so they can visualize your words.)

Your newborn baby is three months old. The baby is starting to sleep through the night. You're settling into a comfortable routine. And you are getting ready to go to a doctor's visit.

You put on your jeans, zipping them up effortlessly. You tuck in your shirt and slip a belt through the belt hoops. As you enter your doctor's office, you catch the glance of others in the waiting room as you walk into your doctor's office. The nurse weighs you. A smile comes across your face as you read the numbers on the scale.

You meet a friend for coffee after your doctor visit. She asks you to do a "body twirl" as you arrive because she simply can't believe you look so great. She asks for your secret to a great body after pregnancy. You smile and say....



(Ask participants to open their eyes if they closed them during the guided imagery activity.)

**Dig:**

- How would you feel if someone told you that you looked fabulous just months after having your baby?
- How would you feel if you weighed in at your pre-pregnancy weight—just a few months after birth?
- What might prevent you from experiencing those feelings of success?
- Which is a greater barrier to your weight loss success: belief that you can't ever achieve your normal weight again *or* lack of ability to do so?
- What could change your belief about the reality of achieving your pre-pregnancy weight?

**Connect:**

- How would your life be different if you were able to lose your pregnancy weight?
- What would you be able to do at your normal weight that you couldn't do if you didn't lose your "baby weight?"
- How would your child's life be different if you were able to lose your pregnancy weight?

**Act:**

- Pregnancy is a time of waiting, hoping and dreaming. But what can you do today—and in the months ahead—to make your dream of going back to your normal weight come true?
- What foods will help you gain the right amount of weight?
- What activities will help you gain just the right amount of weight?

