



Text4baby Executive Summary



Each year in the US, over 500,000 babies are born prematurely and an estimated 28,000 children die before their first birthday, signifying a national public health crisis. Text4baby is a free mobile information service designed to promote healthy birth outcomes among underserved populations. An educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (HMHB), Text4baby will help women in having safe and healthy pregnancies by providing them with information they need to give their babies the best possible start in life.

Women who sign up for the service by texting BABY to 511411 (or BEBE for Spanish) will receive free SMS text messages each week, timed to their due date or baby's date of birth. These messages focus on a variety of topics critical to maternal and child health: birth defects prevention, immunization, nutrition, seasonal flu, mental health, oral health, and safe sleep among others. Text4baby messages also connect women to early prenatal care as well as a variety of existing resources available to them.

With over 1 trillion SMS text messages sent in the U.S. last year and texting use disproportionately higher among women of childbearing age and minority populations, text messaging represents an enormous and as yet untapped channel for delivering this vital health information to those who need it most. The goal of Text4baby is to address a critical national health priority through the use of mobile health technology and demonstrate a new model for reaching and engaging underserved populations and promoting healthy behavior.

The Text4baby service will be launched in Virginia in November 2009 and nationally in January 2010.

Text4baby Partners. Text4Baby is made possible through a broad, public-private partnership that includes government and tribal agencies, corporations, academic institutions, professional associations, and non-profit organizations. Coordinating Partners include HMHB, Johnson & Johnson, Voxiva, the CTIA Wireless Foundation, WPP, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Johnson & Johnson is the founding sponsor. The mobile health platform is provided by Voxiva and free messaging services are generously provided by participating U.S. Mobile Operators and Verisign. Implementation and evaluation support is provided by BabyCenter and The George Washington University.

Outreach Partners. HMHB and the Coordinating Partners are working with a broad range of partners to spread the word about Text4baby and encourage the women they reach to sign up for the service. Outreach partners include state & local health departments, community health centers, WIC programs, health plans, retail partners, community organizations, major medical associations and nonprofit organizations dedicated to the health of mothers, babies and families.

For more information about Text4baby, please contact HMHB at (703) 837-4792 or jmeehan@hmhb.org

About HMHB. HMHB is a recognized leader and resource in maternal and child health, reaching an estimated 10 million health care professionals, parents, and policymakers through its membership of over 100 local, state and national organizations. HMHB was founded in 1981, prompted by the U.S. Surgeon General's conference on infant mortality. Six lead organizations established the informal coalition to improve the quality and reach of public and professional education related to prenatal and infant care: The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the March of Dimes, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Nurses Association (ANA), the National Congress of Parents and Teachers and the U.S. Public Health Service.