

Text4baby Message Track

Each year in the U.S., more than 500,000 babies are born prematurely and an estimated 28,000 children die before their first birthday, signifying a national public health crisis.

- The infant mortality rate in the U.S. is one of the highest in the industrialized world.
- Prematurity is often cited as being a leading cause of infant mortality; birth weight and gestational age are key predictors of a child's chances for survival.
- Glaring disparities exist within certain populations; babies born to African-American mothers are most at risk with a rate of 13.5 deaths per 1,000 births.
- Alarmingly, for the first time since the 1950s, the U.S. infant mortality rate has increased.

Mobile phones have potential to play a significant role in health care by delivering information directly to those who need it most. Text messaging can deliver the right health information at the right time to pregnant women and new moms, and can be particularly helpful in reaching underserved populations.

- While not everyone has access to the Internet, 90% of Americans have a mobile phone. More than 1.5 trillion text messages were sent in the U.S. last year alone.
- Text messaging is disproportionately higher among women of childbearing age and minority populations who face higher infant mortality rates.
- In studies from around the world, mobile health services like text4baby have demonstrated the ability to help change patient behavior and improve health outcomes.

Text4baby, a free mobile information service designed to promote maternal and child health among underserved populations, was developed to provide timely health information from pregnancy through baby's first year.

- An educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (HMHB), text4baby will help women have safe and healthy pregnancies by providing pregnant and new moms with information to help them care for their health and 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, including birth defects prevention, immunization, nutrition, seasonal flu, mental health, oral health and safe sleep. Messages also connect women to prenatal care and infant care services and other resources.

Text4baby is made possible through a broad, public-private partnership, which hopes to serve as a model to address other pressing public health issues.

- It includes the White House Office on Science and Technology Policy, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Defense Military Health System, Voxiva, CTIA-The Wireless Foundation, Grey Healthcare Group (a WPP company), wireless service providers, Founding Sponsor Johnson & Johnson, Premier Sponsors WellPoint, Pfizer, and CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield and many others.