

IM CoIIN Infant Mortality Month Campaign Toolkit for States



NICHQ
National Institute for
Children's Health Quality

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Introduction

Throughout the month of September—Infant Mortality Awareness Month—IM CoIIN is continuing its efforts to raise awareness of the shockingly high infant mortality rate in the United States. By raising awareness about the benefits of pre- and interconception care we are working together to help empower women to prepare for healthy pregnancies that result in healthy babies. While the IM CoIIN public relations campaign is focused on pre- and interconception care, it is also interested in highlighting all of the strategy areas. The following toolkit is designed to help states leverage this national campaign and draw attention to infant mortality and the work you are doing in your state.

Press Release Template

NICHQ has prepared the following press release template to aid you in highlighting your state's involvement in IM CoIIN and Infant Mortality Awareness Month. We encourage you to:

- Customize the messaging [items in red] for your state
- Format with your state's branding
- Share this messaging with your communications department
- Consider using it in whatever ways work for you. Some ideas include:
 - Post the messaging on your website
 - Sending the press release to your local media
 - Sharing this information with other stakeholders in your community

Infant Mortality Awareness Month Sheds Light on Growing National Healthcare Crisis

STATE launches campaign empowering women to prepare for pregnancy

September 1, 2016 – **STATE**, throughout the month of September, in conjunction with [Infant Mortality Awareness Month](#), will continue its efforts to raise awareness of the shockingly high infant mortality rate in the United States and **STATE** while helping empower women to prepare for healthy pregnancies that result in healthy children.

The infant mortality rate reflects the health and well-being of a nation and according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the United States has one of the highest infant mortality rates among industrialized countries¹. For every 1,000 babies born in the U.S., about six will die before their first birthday. In 2014, this translated to 23,215 U.S. infant deaths – that's enough children to fill 1,000 kindergarten classrooms². In **STATE**, our infant mortality rate is **XX**. With an integrated approach that addresses both social and health issues, we can all do our part to reduce the infant mortality rate.

ADD QUOTE FROM STATE OFFICIAL

“Something about the state's infant mortality rate and what the state is doing about it,” says XXXX.

STATE participates in the Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network to Reduce Infant Mortality ([IM CoIIN](#)) led by NICHQ and the U.S. Maternal and Child Health Bureau. It is a multiyear national movement that engages federal, state, and local leaders, public and private agencies, professionals, and communities, to employ quality improvement, innovation and collaborative learning to reduce infant mortality and improve birth outcomes. IM CoIIN has focused on six strategies to improve outcomes for pregnant women and infants, including: smoking cessation, pre/interconception care, safe sleep, social determinants of health, preterm and early term births, and risk-appropriate perinatal care.

¹ [Health, United States, 2015](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

² [National Vital Statistics Reports](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Add paragraph with details about what state is focusing on during IM CoIIN and progress made to date.

To learn more about the IM CoIIN Infant Mortality Month Campaign, visit www.NICHQ.org/IM-Month-2016.

STATE Rep name

Title

Phone number

Email

Turn Key Newsletter Post

NICHQ has prepared the following newsletter post to help leverage awareness and promotion of the IM CoIIN Infant Mortality Awareness Month Campaign. You can adopt and use this newsletter post in the following ways:

- Customize the localize the post for your audience
- Format with your branding
- Share this messaging with your communications department
- Consider using it in whatever ways work for you. Some ideas include:
 - Sharing this information with other stakeholders in your community
 - Ask local partners to post in their electronic newsletters
 - Post the messaging on your website

POST:

Campaign Resource to Leverage Infant Mortality Awareness Month (sample title)

Throughout the month of September—Infant Mortality Awareness Month—NICHQ, **ORG NAME** and other partners are continuing efforts to raise awareness of the shockingly high infant mortality rate in the United State.

As the one of the leading organizations for the Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network to Reduce Infant Mortality (IM CoIIN), NICHQ has created [resources and tools](#) to help stakeholders across public health better address this health crisis.

While the IM CoIIN public relations campaign is focused on pre- and interconception care, it is also interested in highlighting all of the strategy areas. The following toolkit is designed to help states and local partners leverage this national campaign and draw attention to infant mortality and the work you are doing in your state.

Talking Points for Infant Mortality Awareness Month

Messages Related to Statistics and Health Factors

Source: [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)

- Maternal Health = Infant Health. One of the most impactful and most controllable predictors of a baby's health is the health of the mother.
- The U.S. has one of the highest rates of infant mortality in the industrialized world – despite that alarming statistic, most of these deaths are preventable.
- 6 of every 1,000 babies born in the U.S. will not make it to their first birthday– that's enough children to fill 1,000 classrooms
- The death rate for babies born to black mothers is 2 times greater than babies born to white mothers

Messages Related to IM CoIIN and NICHQ

- The Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network to Reduce Infant Mortality (IM CoIIN) is a multiyear national movement that bands together federal, state, and local leaders, public and private agencies, professionals, and communities to employ quality improvement, innovation and collaborative learning to reduce infant mortality and improve birth outcomes.
- IM CoIIN highlights six strategies to improve outcomes for pregnant women and infants: Smoking cessation, pre/interconception care, safe sleep, social determinants of health, preterm and early term births, and risk-appropriate perinatal care.
- We aim to educate women about steps they can take to improve their health before, during, and in between pregnancies to ensure a healthy family including quitting smoking, avoiding alcohol and tobacco, maintaining a healthy weight, and managing chronic diseases
- We empower women to make healthy choices for themselves and ultimately for their babies.
- IM CoIIN is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Messages Related to Importance of Proactive Healthcare

Source: [CDC](#)

- One of the most impactful and most controllable predictor of a baby's health is the health of his or her mother.
- Safe motherhood begins before conception with a healthy lifestyle.
- It's important to be aware of risk factors before getting pregnant because...
 - Smoking → Low birth weight and preterm birth
 - Substance use /drinking → Fetal alcohol syndrome/Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
 - Vitamin deficiency → Neural tube defects
 - Obesity → Neural tube defects, preterm delivery, diabetes
 - Toxic stress (and other SDoH) → Pre/early term birth

- By taking control of their own health and opening the conversation with their providers about their plans to become pregnant, women have a higher likelihood of having a healthy baby
- Women should feel empowered to take control of their own health by:
 - Scheduling regular check-ups with primary care providers
 - Talking with community agencies such as Healthy Start, WIC providers, and home visiting programs
- Health care providers, at every medical visit with women of reproductive age, should discuss:
 - Family planning and a key question: Do you plan to get pregnant in the next year?
 - Prescribe/offer most effective methods of contraception, if appropriate.
 - Address chronic conditions that could compromise maternal health/ pregnancy outcomes.
- A significant and controllable determination of a baby's health is the health of his or her mother.

Messages Related to Pre- and Interconception Care

Source: CDC

- Improving preconception health can prevent and reduce societal costs and improve pregnancy-related outcomes by:
 - Identifying risk factors related to maternal and infant mortality.
 - Preventing the development of conditions that could jeopardize the health of the mother or baby.
 - Promoting healthy weight, good nutrition, physical activity, immunizations, and periodontal health.
- Preconception care plays an important role in lowering both maternal and infant mortality rates. By taking action on health issues before pregnancy, future health problems for the mother and baby can be prevented.
- Intentional pregnancy can increase the likelihood of a healthy baby.
- Interconception care can address the continuity of maternal risk from one pregnancy to the next.
- The amount of time between births is an important risk factor for maternal and infant health – Women with an interval of 18-23 months have a decreased risk for preterm birth.
- The use of long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) or other effective methods of contraception can assist women in family planning, therefore ensuring she has access to appropriate care and the right support for a healthy pregnancy and a good birth outcome.

Messages Related to Smoking Cessation

[Source: Tobacco Use and Pregnancy, CDC](#)

- Smoking makes it harder for a woman to get pregnant.
- Women who smoke during pregnancy are more likely than other women to have a miscarriage.
- Smoking during pregnancy causes additional health problems, including premature birth (being born too early), certain birth defects, and infant death.
- According to the 2011 Pregnancy Risk Assessment and Monitoring System (PRAMS) data from 24 states, approximately 10% of women reported smoking during the last 3 months of pregnancy. Of women who smoked 3 months before pregnancy, 55% quit during pregnancy. Among women who quit smoking during pregnancy, 40% started smoking again within 6 months after delivery. ([Source: Reproductive Health, CDC](#))
- Quitting smoking can be hard, but it is one of the best ways a woman can protect herself and her baby's health

Messages Related to Pre and Early Term Birth

[Source: CDC](#)

- Preterm birth is the birth of an infant before 37 weeks of pregnancy.
- In 2014, preterm birth affected about 1 of every 10 infants born in the United States.
- Preterm birth is the greatest contributor to infant death, with most preterm-related deaths occurring among babies who were born very preterm (before 32 weeks).
- Preventing preterm birth remains a challenge because the causes of preterm births are numerous, complex, and not always well understood. However, pregnant women can take important steps to help reduce their risk of preterm birth and improve their general health. These steps are to:
 - Quit smoking. For help in quitting, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)
 - Avoid alcohol and illicit drugs
 - Get prenatal care as soon as you think you may be pregnant and throughout the pregnancy
 - Seek medical attention for any warning signs or symptoms of preterm labor
- A progesterone medication (17-alpha hydroxyprogesterone caproate, or 17P) may prevent preterm birth among women who have had a prior preterm birth. Women who have had a preterm birth or a family history of preterm birth should talk to their healthcare providers about 17P.

Messages Related to Safe Sleep

[Source: Basic Talking Points for the Safe Sleep® Campaign](#)

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden, unexpected death of a baby younger than 1 year of age that doesn't have a known cause even after a complete investigation.
- SIDS is the leading cause of death among infants between 1 month and 1 year of age.

- SIDS is just one type of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death or “SUID,” which includes those from no clear reason, such as SIDS, and those from a known reason, such as suffocation, neglect, homicide, or other sleep-related causes.
- To reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death,
 - Always place baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night
 - Put baby to sleep alone – share your room, not your bed.
 - Use a firm sleep surface, covered by a fitted sheet

Messages Related to Social Determinants of Health

- Conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes. These conditions are known as social determinants of health (SDOH). ([Source: Social Determinants of Health: Know What Affects Health, CDC](#))
- Analysis on trends and variations in infant mortality reveals not only considerable differences in infant mortality rates among racial/ethnic groups but the persistence of disparities over time. ([Source: Fact Sheet: Health Disparities in Infant Deaths, CDC](#))

Messages Related to Risk Appropriate Perinatal Regionalization

[Source: Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs](#)

- Perinatal regionalization is a system of designating where infants are born or are transferred based on the amount of care that they need at birth.
- The goal of a regionalized system is to reduce infant deaths.
- In regionalized systems very ill or very small infants are born in hospitals that are able to provide the most appropriate care, with high-level technology and specialized health providers.
- Infants receiving risk-appropriate care are hypothesized to be more likely to survive when born too little or too soon.

Tips for Talking with Media

Strategies for Every Interview

- Understand who you're speaking with and why
- Speak in your own voice
- Stay consistent, compelling and fresh
- Drive home the campaign's key messages
- Use metaphors and analogies
- Use real examples and customer stories
- Think in terms of sound bites (media love them)
- Deliver facts reporters can use
- Tie into trends

Media Dos

- Prepare – get excited and put away your phone
- Always stay on the record
- Listen for the intent of each question and think before answering
- Infuse answers with key messages and bridge to your agenda
- Think about the problem and solution
- Be redundant – always recap the key messages
- State your conclusion first, then provide the evidence

Media Don'ts

- Never speak “off the record”
- Don't become defensive when challenging questions are posed – keep your composure
- Don't be led by the interviewer; you are there to tell your story
- Don't ramble, that's when you're most likely to make a mistake
- Don't lie, speculate or share information that isn't yet public
- Don't participate in interviews until reviewing it with your PR team
- Do not reschedule interviews

When Speaking With Media

You must be:

- Memorable
- Relevant and interesting
- Driving the discussion
- Compelling

It's important to be:

- Pleasant
- On message
- Responsive
- Polite

Staying on Track

- Hostile questions are designed to make an official spokesperson defensive
- Official spokespeople should stay cool and on message
- Leading or loaded questions must be addressed so that there is no misunderstanding or misrepresentation
- Don't repeat the negative
- Messages are a safe harbor
- Find common ground

Sample Social Media Posts

Throughout the month of September, please use the hashtag #InfantMortalityMonth on your social media posts. NICHQ will be posting content throughout the month with the hashtag, so it is easiest to share, like or retweet posts from NICHQ's Facebook and Twitter feeds. However, if you are interested in posting your own original content, here are some sample posts.

Twitter:

Tweets

- Knowing #SafeSleep rules is only half the battle. @drClaire shares the importance of following them: <http://bit.ly/2bl7sUN> @HarvardHealth
- Limited #healthcare access has contributed to a recent rise in U.S. #MaternalMortality. @JLMattern explores: <http://bit.ly/2bYXfgT>
- Why #LARC is an easy, safe #birthcontrol option for women over 40: <http://huff.to/2bWfqDK> via @HuffingtonPost
- @CDCgov has released new public #health strategies to #prevent #preterm #birth. Read about it here: <http://bit.ly/2bg9V0b>
- #DYK: Almost half of US #pregnancies are unplanned? Blog explains how One Key Question is tackling #infantmortalitymonth http://nichq.org/blog/2016/june/improving_preconception_health
- Longer intervals between #pregnancies means healthier #babies and mothers. #infantmortalitymonth www.NICHQ.org/IM-Month-2016
- Ways to prevent #preterm labor, a leading cause of #infantmortality. http://nichq.org/blog/2016/august/underserved_populations_preterm_birth
- Read about the importance of #smokingcessation in underserved communities to reduce #infantmortality http://nichq.org/blog/2016/august/underserved_populations_smoking_cessation
- #Education has the power to close the knowledge gap on #safesleep to lower the #infantmortality rates in underserved areas http://nichq.org/blog/2016/july/underserved_populations_safe_sleep
- Did you know well Woman Doctor's Visits are covered by Insurance? @SYL_today <http://showyourlovetoday.com>

Facebook/Google+:

- Most parents know about safe sleep, but not all parents follow best practice: "At one month, 21% of infants were put to sleep on an unsafe surface, and 14% were not put to sleep on their back." <http://bit.ly/2bl7sUN>
- The CDC recently published a report on public health strategies to prevent preterm birth. Check it out here: <http://bit.ly/2bg9V0b>
- Preconception care starts before a woman knows she wants to become pregnant and is crucial when planning to become pregnant. Learn what Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health's One Key Question initiative is doing to stem unwanted

pregnancies and increase maternal and infant health

http://nichq.org/blog/2016/june/improving_preconception_health

- The Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network to Reduce Infant Mortality is working to improve infant and maternal health by encouraging healthy birth spacing. Learn more www.NICHQ.org/IM-Month-2016
- Pre-term birth affects about one in 10 babies born in the U.S. and is a leading cause of infant mortality. Our newest blog discusses why carrying to full term helps to protect against some of the greatest threats to infant health
http://nichq.org/blog/2016/august/underserved_populations_preterm_birth
- Smoking while pregnant is closely associated with the two leading causes of infant mortality, pre-term birth and sudden infant death syndrome. Learn more about how helping disadvantaged groups quit smoking decreases pre-term births and sudden infant death syndrome:
http://nichq.org/blog/2016/august/underserved_populations_smoking_cessation
- Practicing safe sleep is one of the best ways to prevent infant deaths due to sudden infant death syndrome. Learn why educating underserved populations is crucial to lowering infant mortality.
http://nichq.org/blog/2016/july/underserved_populations_safe_sleep
- SHOW YOUR LOVE TODAY-Show Your Love is a national campaign designed to promote the wellbeing and support young women and men strive to achieve their goals and make healthy lifestyle choices today. [Showyourlovetoday.com](http://showyourlovetoday.com)

Infographic

Feel free to share this infographic on social media or your state/organization's website. Alternatively, you can link to the post of the infographic on the Infant Mortality Awareness Month section of the NICHQ website (www.NICHQ.org/IM-Month-2016) in the "Know the Stats" section.

AMERICA'S PROBLEM: INFANT MORTALITY

Here are the numbers and how you can prevent it

SEPTEMBER is Infant Mortality Awareness Month

The U.S. ranks **25th** out of 29 industrialized countries for infant mortality¹

6/1,000 babies born will not live past their first birthday²

23,215 infant deaths occurred in 2014 (enough to fill 1,000 kindergarten classrooms)³

>2x the rate of death for babies born to black mothers vs. white mothers in the U.S.²

>\$26 BILLION annual U.S. economic burden for preterm births (a leading cause of infant mortality)³

A large portion of infant deaths are preventable with good preconception and interconception health

Start Talking

Talk about family planning with your healthcare provider to prevent an unintended pregnancy or prepare for a healthy pregnancy.

Preconception Care

Create a healthy lifestyle (e.g., quit smoking, good nutrition, exercise) prior to pregnancy to increase the likelihood of improved birth outcomes.

Interconception Care

Access postpartum contraception to support healthy birth spacing, ensure physical recovery and better birth outcomes.

Get more info at NICHQ.org/IM-Month-2016

Join the conversation on social: [#InfantMortalityMonth](https://twitter.com/InfantMortalityMonth)

1. cdc.gov/nchs/data/haa/haa15.pdf
2. cdc.gov/nchs/data/haa/haa15/mw45/mw45_04.pdf
3. hhs.gov/ashracommittees/nichdbookseries/infantMortality/CorrespondenceRecommendations2013.pdf

This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant #U49MC26514 providing support for the Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (CoIIN) to Reduce Infant Mortality for \$2,879,458 (for this year 09/20/2015-09/20/2016). This information or content and contributors are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

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Links to Other Resources

Here is a list of additional campaigns, websites and resources that can help support your IM Awareness Month efforts.

Healthy Start Infant Mortality Awareness Campaign / Toolkit

[http://www.nationalhealthystart.org/what we do/infant mortality awareness campaign](http://www.nationalhealthystart.org/what_we_do/infant_mortality_awareness_campaign)

The *Celebrate Day 366...Every Baby Deserves a Chance* Infant Mortality Awareness Campaign supports and inspires people from around the nation to take action in support of the Healthy People 2020 goal to improve the health and well-being of women, infants, children and families. Join the National Healthy Start Association and be part of the generation that ensures that every baby has a chance. [This kit](#) includes tips for advocacy, media relations and fundraising among other tactics and strategies. The [campaign web page](#) includes downloadable pdfs and materials to print.

Show Your Love, National Preconception Campaign

Show Your Love is a national resource and campaign designed to improve the health of young adults by providing information and resources to manage health care and wellness. The Show Your Love social media campaign's main goal is to create an online community of young adults that encourage healthy choices and engage in healthy behaviors before becoming pregnant. Visit the [Show Your Love](#) website to learn more about the benefits of preconception care.

Before and Beyond Toolkit & Resources

The [BeforeandBeyond](#) website was created and is maintained by the Clinical Work Group of the National Preconception Health and Health Care Initiative, a public-private partnership working to advance preconception knowledge and care of all men and women of reproductive age in this country. To learn more about the National Initiative, tools and resources, click [here](#).

Safe to Sleep Campaign®

Led by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in collaboration with other organizations, *The Safe to Sleep®* campaign offers a variety of materials to help share safe infant sleep messages with different audiences. Many of these items are available for download and order from the [website](#), where there is also [a list of all NICHD publications related to SIDS and Safe to Sleep®](#). For items that you can use to promote the Safe to Sleep® campaign or your outreach, check out their [E-Toolkit](#).

The Campaign for Black Babies

[The National Birth Equity Collaborative \(NBEC\) Campaign for Black Babies](#) seeks to reduce African-American infant mortality rates (IMR) in the ten US cities with the highest Black IMR. Their goal is to move the needle on African-American infant mortality by reducing rates by 25% in the next 5 years and 50% in ten years. NBEC's National Coalition for Black Babies mobilizes the nation's leading maternal and child health organizations and African-American civil rights institutions towards the goal of reducing Black IMR by 2025. For more on campaign programs and strategies, click [here](#).