



POSTPARTUM SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS IN UNPRECEDENTED PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP TO ADDRESS RISING U.S. INFANT MORTALITY RATE

First-Ever Free Mobile Health Service [Text4baby](#) Provides Health Tips to Pregnant Women, New Moms

Santa Barbara, CA, February 4, 2010 – Today, Postpartum Support International announced that it is an outreach partner of [text4baby](#) –a new free mobile information service providing timely health information to pregnant women and new moms from pregnancy through a baby’s first year.

Women who sign up for the service by texting BABY to 511411 (or BEBE for Spanish) receive three 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. [Text4baby](#) messages also connect women to prenatal and infant care services and other resources.

An educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (HMHB), [text4baby](#) delivers timely health tips via text message to those who need it most. It is made possible through an unprecedented public-private partnership which includes the White House Office on Science and Technology Policy, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Voxiva, CTIA-The Wireless Foundation, Grey Healthcare Group (a WPP company) and founding corporate sponsor Johnson & Johnson. Premier sponsors include WellPoint, Pfizer and CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield and wireless carriers are distributing text messages at no charge to recipients. Implementation partners include BabyCenter, Danya International, Syniverse Technologies, Keynote Systems and The George Washington University.

“We believe the power of partnership and community can make an incredible difference in women’s and children’s lives,” said Judy Meehan, executive director of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition. “Text4baby brings HMHB’s mission to life and with the help of our partners, we believe we can be a strong catalyst for change.”

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 public health crisis. The infant mortality rate in the U.S. is one of the highest in the industrialized world, and for the first time since the 1950s, that rate is on the rise. Research shows that while 90 percent of Americans have a mobile phone fewer have access to the Internet, and texting is more prevalent among women of childbearing age.

“Postpartum Support International is proud to be a part of [text4baby](#),” said Birdie Gunyon Meyer, president of PSI. “Mobile health services around the world have demonstrated the ability to help change patient behavior and improve health outcomes, and we believe that this program can have a significant impact on maternal and child health in our country.”

Messages aimed at the mental health of mothers will direct women who need help to the PSI Warmline at 1-800-944-4PPD.

“By putting key health information directly into the hands of pregnant women and new moms, [text4baby](#) demonstrates the tremendous reach of mobile health technology and the ability of mobile phones to inform and engage people to help them live healthier lives,” said Paul Meyer, chairman and president of Voxiva, the mobile health platform provider. “These same tools can be applied to many of the America’s big health care challenges.”

“We believe programs like text4baby are critical to providing much-needed information and support to pregnant women and new moms, especially among underserved populations,” said Brian D. Perkins, corporate vice president of corporate affairs for Johnson & Johnson, text4baby’s founding sponsor. “We hope this program not only helps reduce infant mortality rates but also serves as an example of how the private and public sectors can work together to solve problems.”

Steve Largent, president of The Wireless Foundation and president and CEO of CTIA-The Wireless Association said, “Wireless technology has the unique ability to deliver valuable, life-enhancing information anywhere, anytime. We’re pleased to be part of this innovative partnership which promotes the birth of healthy babies, particularly those in underserved populations.”

The text4baby wireless carriers are voluntarily providing the critical communications link of the initiative, distributing text messages to recipients at no charge. Participating carriers include: Alltel, AT&T, Cellular South, Cellcom, Centennial Cellular, Cincinnati Bell, Metro PCS, N-Telos, Sprint, T-Mobile, U.S. Cellular, Verizon and Virgin Mobile.

“Fifty percent of people with chronic health problems in the U.S. have Internet access, but 90% of Americans have mobile phones,” said Lynn O’Connor Vos, CEO of Grey Healthcare Group. “That alone tells us the potential of mobile technology to reach more people with vital information to improve health outcomes.”

About the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition

The National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (HMHB) is the only coalition of its kind which acts as a catalyst for change by creating partnerships among community groups, nonprofit organizations, professional associations, businesses and government agencies. The Coalition promotes optimal health for mothers and babies, and works to strengthen families and build healthy communities.

About Postpartum Support International

Postpartum Support International (PSI) is the world's largest non-profit organization dedicated to helping women suffering from perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, including postpartum depression, the most common complication of childbirth. PSI was founded in 1987 to increase awareness among public and professional communities about the emotional difficulties that women can experience during and after pregnancy. The organization offers support, reliable information, best practice training, and volunteer coordinators in all 50 U.S. states as well as 26 countries around the world. To learn more, call PSI at 800-944-4PPD or visit www.postpartum.net.

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