



December 2022

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Birth Defects Awareness Month 2023

National Birth Defects Awareness Month January 2023

The goal for National Birth Defects Prevention Month is to raise awareness of the impact of birth defects in our communities and to share tips for preventing birth defects. The 2023 theme ***"Healthy Communities, Healthy Babies"*** expands the discussion beyond prevention and opens the door to building stronger partnerships with community-based systems and services.

The *Prevention Tips For Healthy Communities and Health Babies* have been updated this year to include topics like reproductive life planning and mental health, promoting individual actions and community aspects that can serve to guide parents in the decisions they make to improve health outcomes for their family.

The [Tips Resource Map](#) allows birth defects programs and their partners to pin local resources with respect to each of the tips. [Submit your suggestions](#) for local resources to make a more comprehensive map today!

Birth Defects Awareness Month 2023 Toolkit

Please share birth defects prevention and awareness social media messages on behalf of NBDPN. Please edit for your community and share widely. [Visit the website for more Birth Defects Awareness Month resources.](#)

January is National Birth Defects Awareness Month! Join us throughout the month as we share information you might not know, tips you might try out, and resources you might find useful. #HealthyCommunitiesHealthyBabies #NBDAM

Free vitamins containing folic acid are available in most states. Zoom in on your state on our Tip Resources Map below to get more information. Don't see a resource on this map that you know about? Please let us know! <https://www.nbdpn.org/bdam.php> #HealthyCommunitiesHealthyBabies #NBDAM

If you are pregnant or planning to be, visit your healthcare provider early and often to discuss chronic medical conditions, prenatal care, medication use, family medical history and so much more. #HealthyCommunitiesHealthyBabies #NBDAM

Reducing your risk of infection reduces risks for you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about vaccines, sexually transmitted illnesses, CMV, Group B Strep and other infections that can lead to birth complications. #HealthyCommunitiesHealthyBabies #NBDAM

Care for your body and mind before and during pregnancy to set you and your baby up for success. If you think you have depression or anxiety, seek treatment from your healthcare provider as soon as possible.

#MentalHealthMatters #HealthyCommunitiesHealthyBabies #NBDAM

Honoring and listening to your body by choosing nourishing foods that you enjoy, moving your body in ways that give you energy, and managing your stress are great habits to build before, during, and after your pregnancy.

#HealthyCommunitiesHealthyBabies #NBDAM

Substance use (alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, marijuana, etc.) and or substance misuse can be harmful to a pregnancy and infants who are breastfeeding. If you are already pregnant, it's not too late to get help. #HealthyCommunitiesHealthyBabies #NBDAM

Announcements and Updates

NBDPN National Conference - Join us!

NBDPN is looking forward to hosting its next in-person National Conference from August 14-16, 2023, in Atlanta, GA.

The theme is: **Connect. Share. Collaborate.** As the only National Conference for population-based birth defects surveillance programs in the United States, participants are given an opportunity to learn about current advances and opportunities for birth defects surveillance, research, intervention, and prevention through sharing of best practices at state, local and national levels.

[Visit the website](#) to learn about the conference, the upcoming Call for Proposals (opening January 2023), and information regarding registration, hotel, and much more.

International Clearinghouse for Birth Defects Surveillance and Research (ICBDSR) Distinguished Service Award

Paul Romitti, professor of epidemiology in the University of Iowa College of Public Health, received the 2022 Distinguished Service Award from the International Clearinghouse for Birth Defects Surveillance and Research (ICBDSR). The award honors an individual who has provided distinguished service to the clearinghouse.

The ICBDSR is a WHO-affiliated organization that includes 42 surveillance programs from 36 countries. Romitti has served on the executive committee for ICBDSR for the past several years, including three years as chair of the committee. [Visit the website to learn more about this award and eligibility.](#)

ProofCON Pro! Session January 2023 Addressing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and Prenatal Disparities

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, or FASD, affect us all, and we're bringing top experts together to examine the many intersections of FASD and society through a series of quarterly virtual events.

The January 2023 ProofCON Pro session will explore the many intersections of FASD and prenatal disparities and discuss how we can advance health equity in prenatal care. The theme is **Advancing Health Equity in Prenatal Care** and will be presented via virtual webinar on January 31, 2023, 12:00-3:30pm Central. [Visit the website for more information and registration.](#)

NBDPN Board of Directors

Announcing the 2023 Board of Directors

NBDPN is pleased to announce that Nina Forestieri, Peter Langlois, and Jean Paul “JP” Tanner have been elected to the [Board of Directors](#), effective January 2023. The new Board and officers are as below:

- Wendy Nembhard – Chair
- Nina Forestieri – Vice Chair
- Amanda Elmore – Treasurer
- Vinita Leedom and Brennan Martin – Secretary
- Russell Kirby
- Peter Langlois
- Sonja Rasmussen
- JP Tanner

NBDPN offers our deepest appreciation to all candidates who were on the ballot this year. The network is privileged to have such a depth of knowledge and skill ready and willing to support our mission and our members.

Watch the NBDPN Annual Membership Meeting

In case you missed it, a recording of the November 2022 Annual Membership Meeting is available [here](#). NBDPN Board and Committee Chairs provided an overview of NBDPN activities over the past year and shared plans for the future.

Important Upcoming Dates

- January 2023 Birth Defect Awareness Month
- **August 14-16, 2023** **2023 NBDPN Conference**

Partner Corner

CDC

Join CDC in Recognizing National Birth Defects Awareness Month!

CDC is excited to raise awareness this January for National Birth Defects Awareness Month. Partner with us in this nationwide effort!

1. Share our [National Birth Defects Awareness Month Digital Toolkit](#), which includes a [resource appendix](#) to link providers and families with helpful tools.
2. [Connect with CDC on social media!](#) Use the National Birth Defects Awareness Month hashtags (#AcrossTheLifeSpan and #BirthDefects) to help us track tweets, likes, clicks, and other engagement. CDC has [graphics](#) and [sample posts](#) that you can modify to fit your organization’s mission or individual preferences.
3. Encourage any families in your organization to share their story and continue the conversation! CDC will be sharing [personal stories](#) to help promote greater understanding of the needs and experiences of people living with birth defects.

Folic Acid: The Best Tool to Prevent Neural Tube Defects (Free CE Available)

This webinar focused on the sustained impact of folic acid on the prevention of neural tube defects (NTDs), addressed different forms of folate and why folic acid is the only form proven for NTD prevention, and provided recommendations for people with *MTHFR* gene variants.

Did you miss the live event during Folic Acid Awareness Week in September? The recorded [webinar](#) is now available to view for CE credit until **September 14, 2024**.

American Academy of Pediatrics Provides Birth Defects and Infant Disorders

Resources

Birth defects are structural changes present at birth that can affect almost any part of the body. Of the nearly 4 million infants born in the United States each year, approximately 3% have some type of birth defect.

These resources can help educate individuals, parents, and families by providing them with the information they need to seek proper care. Healthcare clinicians can also learn more on how to deliver the best care for patients across all stages of life: before and during pregnancy, and in infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

[Utilize these free resources](#) to learn more about birth defects and infant disorders, including Spina Bifida, Congenital Heart Defects, Fragile X Syndrome, and Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

March of Dimes / International Conference on Birth Defects and Disabilities in the Developing World

Join other maternal and child health professionals and organizations from around the world to learn about the latest research tools and approaches to surveillance, diagnosis, and improving care for babies with birth defects and disabilities.

The theme is ***Accelerating Action for Birth Defects and Disabilities: Surveillance, Prevention, Diagnosis, Management and Family-Centered Care***. The conference is being held March 1-4, 2023, in Santiago, Chile. General registration deadline January 31, 2023. Visit the [website](#) for more information.

[Publications](#)

Connections

The NBDPN Social Media Workgroup develops content for the NBDPN social media feeds Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Most of our posts include information for the maternal and child health population, but most of our followers are YOU. Please bookmark our social media pages and **share** our posts, which cover all topics related to birth defects/anomalies.



Connect with your local partners on social media (eg. county health departments, federally qualified health centers, culturally specific community-based organizations, and more) to get the messages out further. Follow and share the NBDPN pages listed below:

NBDPN SOCIAL MEDIA WORKGROUP INVITES YOU TO:

SHARE OUR POSTS TO REACH LOCAL COMMUNITIES!

OUR SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS ARE YOU, BUT OUR MESSAGES ARE FOR THE PUBLIC. HELP US SPREAD THE WORD!



Connect With Us



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