

National Birth Defects Prevention Network

A network of population-based birth defects programs and individuals working at the local, state, and national level in birth defects surveillance, research, and prevention.

Impact of Birth Defects

- A leading cause of infant mortality in the United States, accounting for more than 20% of all infant deaths.
- Each year, the estimated lifetime cost to care for the number of US children born with 18 common birth defects exceeds \$8 billion.

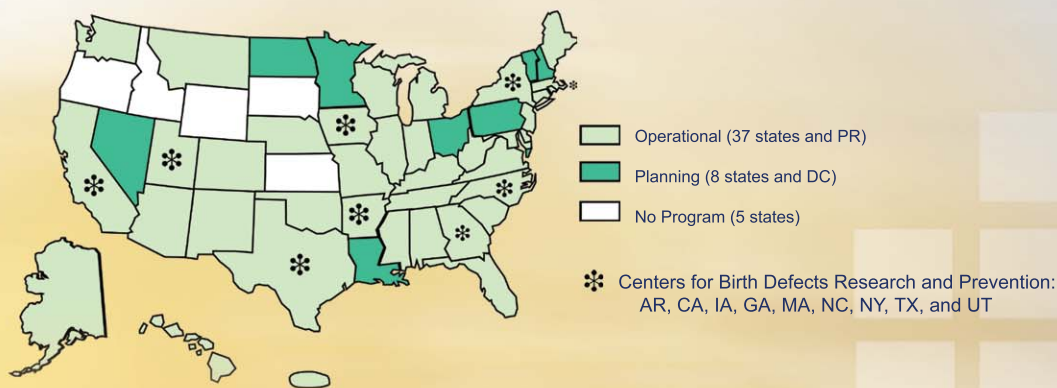
Research and Prevention

The causes of nearly two-thirds of all birth defects are unknown. To design effective prevention strategies, we must first have a better understanding of what risk factors are associated with birth defects.

Birth defects programs use data to:

- Monitor and detect trends in birth defects
- Find causes of birth defects
- Refer children to services
- Develop policy and prevention activities

State Birth Defects Programs



Activities and Initiatives of the National Birth Defects Prevention Network

- Development of the "Guidelines for Conducting Birth Defects Surveillance" manual
- Annual scientific meeting
- Publication of state birth defects data
- Promotion activities for "January is Birth Defects Prevention Month"
- Assessment of the impact of folic acid fortification on NTD rates.
Results: A 31% decline in the prevalence of spina bifida and a 16% decline in the prevalence of anencephaly
- National and international collaborative projects, e.g., WHO cleft project, premature birth and birth defects, gastroschisis, national estimates project