



## USING MATERIALS IN THIS PACKET

Individual activities and those conducted with partners at the state or community level will raise awareness about what can be done to promote healthy pregnancies and positive birth outcomes.

- Contact state or local businesses. Companies may add information about birth defects awareness and prevention to their corporate or wellness newsletters, sponsor events such as baby fairs, or donate door prizes such as folic-acid rich food baskets to bridal fairs, health fairs, and other community events.
- Share the important prevention messages and resources in the packet with staff at your state’s Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, Tobacco Control, Refugee and Immigrant Health, and Public Health Nursing Programs. Other state level programs that serve women of childbearing age such as home visiting may also be interested. They may have ideas for distribution to local public health and other community partners.
- Ask local food banks, women’s shelters, HeadStart and other similar services to provide information to their clients.
- Ask community colleges and universities to place materials in their health center waiting rooms. Information about birth defects, alcohol consumption, smoking cessation and the importance of folic acid is especially relevant given the number of unplanned pregnancies.
- Supply pamphlets or fact sheets for patients and professionals to health care provider groups, such as managed care organizations, doctors’ offices, HMOs, and clinics especially Federally Qualified Health Clinics.
- Collaborate with hospitals or clinics on community outreach projects to promote an awareness of birth defects and prevention. Topics could include preconception counseling, and healthy lifestyles.
- Volunteer to present information on birth defects and birth defects prevention to professional groups such as nurses, nutritionists or genetic counselors, as well as community health workers and health advocacy groups.
- Connect with supportive partners in the media. Prepare public service announcement scripts and write educational articles that may be used or adapted by local media. Recruit a “birth defects prevention champion” for media interviews.
- Contact the Communications lead for your agency. Ask that Birth Defects Prevention Month and the packet be announced in the agency newsletter, or in an “ALL” email.