



## Working to Assure a Better Future for All of America's Children

### Who we are:

Looking to a healthier future for babies everywhere, the **National Birth Defects Prevention Network (NBDPN)** was founded in 1997 as a membership organization of public health officials, epidemiologists, academics, parents, and others sharing a commitment to understanding factors that may lead to birth defects, identifying strategies for reducing birth defects, working to prevent potential secondary disabilities through early intervention, and serving the needs of children and families affected by birth defects.

The collaborative mission of **NBDPN** is to establish and maintain a national network of state and population-based programs for birth defects surveillance and research.

To fulfill its mission, the Network pursues the following goals:

- Improve access to, and application of information about the prevalence and trends of birth defects
- Increase collaboration among members within the birth defects community
- Advance science through birth defects surveillance and its application to public health efforts and resource allocation

### What we do:

Although current knowledge does not allow us to prevent or understand the cause of all birth defects, **NBDPN** is helping to reduce the risk for specific birth defects and improve the lives of those living with birth defects. To fight against birth defects, we:

- Collect, analyze, and disseminate state and population-based birth defect surveillance data
- Improve the quality of birth defect surveillance data
- Promote scientific collaboration for the prevention of birth defects by providing technical assistance for the development of uniform methods of data collection
- Encourage the use of birth defect data for decisions regarding health services planning, including the prevention of secondary disabilities
- Conduct birth defects surveillance and research to assess the impact of birth defects upon children, families, and health care
- Identify factors that can be used to develop primary prevention strategies
- Assist families and their providers in the prevention of secondary disabilities
- Create and disseminate information related to birth defects

# 1 in 33

For 1 out of each 33 births in the United States, a family is faced with a heart-wrenching combination of joy and sorrow due to the occurrence of a birth defect in their newborn.

Birth defects are the leading cause of infant mortality in the United States. Children who survive the more serious forms may face a myriad of medical and social challenges.

Progress is being made in finding causes of and ways to prevent defects, and in reducing the long-term effects of those that do occur. **NBDPN's** facilitation of research based on reliable data and of improvement of professional and lay education leading to effective prevention measures will continue to reduce the number and devastating effects of birth defects.

## The difference we make:

- Collaboration through **NBDPN** has led to better data availability to support birth defects research and prevention.
- **NBDPN's** Birth Defects Surveillance Guidelines serves as a guide to agencies tracking birth defects in the U.S. and abroad.
- **NBDPN's** Annual Report on Birth Defects Prevalence within the United States makes data available to researchers, public health agencies and advocates.
- Each year, **NBDPN** creates a Birth Defects Prevention Month Packet that provides focused and informative materials on a different specific birth defects prevention topic.
- **NBDPN** provides professional educational opportunities and resources to its members and to others.



## How you can help:

We encourage individuals and groups to join the **National Birth Defects Prevention Network** as we strive to improve birth defects surveillance, research, prevention and treatment, provide support for families, and reduce secondary disabilities and health consequences.

Both professionals and the lay public can help our efforts through contributions and memberships. Membership entitles you to full access to our web resources, including regularly updated information and training opportunities. Professionals and parents can contribute expertise as active members. Find complete membership information at: [http://www.nbdpn.org/join\\_nbdpn.php](http://www.nbdpn.org/join_nbdpn.php).

## The future we see:

**NBDPN's** future plans include:

- Expanding of our national network of programs to gather even more data from as many states as possible
- Increasing our efforts to support research to assess the impact of birth defects upon children, families, and healthcare systems
- Increasing our ability to help children with birth defects and their families lead better, healthier lives

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