



**HEALTHY  
MOMS.  
STRONG  
BABIES.**

## 2023-2024 POLICY PRIORITIES

March of Dimes leads the fight for the health of all moms and babies. We advocate for women, infants, children and families across a wide range of issues at the federal, state and local level. The diagram below outlines the highest priority issues March of Dimes will champion to improve health equity, reduce prematurity, prevent maternal mortality and make measurable strides for the health of every family.

### **INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE**

March of Dimes advocates for access to quality, high-value, private health insurance and public health coverage, as well as programs that provide integrated health care services.

**Medicaid postpartum extension**

**Access to midwives and doulas**

**Access to quality telehealth services**

### **SUPPORT HEALTHY WOMEN AND BABIES**

March of Dimes supports a broad range of policies and programs to promote health, improve health equity, prevent disease, further patient safety and prevent infant mortality. Advocating for a comprehensive national response to high maternal mortality and morbidity rates, especially among women of color who face health disparities.

**Access to mental health services**

**Workplace policies for families**

### **IMPROVE RESEARCH AND SURVEILLANCE**

March of Dimes advocates for innovative medical research and robust health surveillance programs, which are essential to discovering ways to prevent, diagnose and treat maternal and child health conditions, track occurrence and promote health equity.

**Maternal Mortality Review**

**Newborn screening modernization**

**Vaccination compliance**

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## INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

- Expanding access to Medicaid, including extending coverage for mothers after childbirth to 12 months.
- Support expanded access to midwifery care for women who desire services, by further integrating midwives into maternity care, and promote full practice authority by removing restrictive laws and regulations.
- Advocate for Medicaid and private insurance coverage for doula care services.
- Increase access to quality telehealth services and technology to providers and pregnant women, especially for women living in maternity care deserts or with other obstacles to receiving care.
- Oppose harmful Medicaid block grant proposals, work requirements and other barriers to coverage.



## SUPPORT HEALTHY WOMEN AND BABIES

- Support authentic and standardized implicit bias training for health care providers and staff, caring for women before, during and after pregnancy, as well as training accountability and governance policies to enhance broader goal of achieving equity for moms and babies.
- Support efforts that are critical to addressing and improving maternal mental health through; access to and insurance coverage, universal screening, referral and treatment coordination, consumer and provider education and surveillance and data collection.
- Advocating for policies and programs to prevent and treat substance use, including opioids and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) surveillance programs, with a focus on the safety and care of pregnant women and infants.
- Advancing policies to support mothers and reduce health disparities in the workplace such as parental leave, paid family leave, pregnancy accommodations, nondiscrimination and breastfeeding promotion.
- Promoting policies and practices that address social determinants (drivers) of health to help reduce health inequities related to housing, transportation, environmental health, food insecurity and access to nutritional foods.
- Ensuring coverage of immunizations and supporting efforts by federal agencies and Congress to address vaccine hesitancy and dispel misinformation about immunizations that endanger the public health.



## IMPROVE RESEARCH AND SURVEILLANCE

- Advancing legislation to enhance, standardize best practices and sustain Maternal Mortality Review Committees (MMRCs) and perinatal quality collaborative (PQCs) to further patient safety.
- Supporting federal and state legislation to protect and enhance newborn screening, ensure every state tests each newborn for all conditions on the Recommended Uniform Screening Panel (RUSP).
- Promoting surveillance, research and data collection on key maternal and child health priorities, including birth defects, preterm birth, health disparities, maternal depression and infant and maternal mortality.
- Supporting funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) to continue maternal, child and infant health research and data collection.
- Encouraging Congress to invest more in the nation's public health infrastructure including the CDC, state, local, tribal and territorial core public health infrastructure to ensure we are prepared for the next public health emergency.
- Champion funding for pre-term birth research at Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Promoting research to help pregnant and breastfeeding women and their health care providers know what medications are safe for them and their infants by advancing the recommendations of the Task Force on Research Specific to Pregnant Women and Lactating Women.



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