

# Combining Resources and Leveraging Partnerships

## Building a State Coalition in New Hampshire

**Who:** The New Hampshire Text4baby Coalition (NH Coalition) is led by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Public Health's, Women Infants and Children Nutrition Program (WIC) and the Maternal and Child Health section.

**What:** The NH Coalition was created by building on existing contacts and networks within the field of public health across the state.

**When:** The coalition was formed in 2010 and has continued to grow and recruit members.

**Where:** To be most effective throughout New Hampshire, DHHS called upon multiple state partners to share in promotional initiatives and activities state-wide.

**Why:** With limited resources, DHHS realized that a coalition would be more effective and could accomplish more than each individual organization could on its own. The text4baby co-coordinators at DHHS worked with internal contacts to identify key public and private partners within the state.

**How:** Initially, leaders at DHHS reached out to community partners and stakeholders within their own specific programs and content area (such as WIC, Home Visiting, Tobacco Cessation, Oral Health) to raise awareness of text4baby. Local organizations were encouraged to focus on low-cost promotional activities to create sustained engagement. Efforts involved engaging colleagues, agencies and organizations to promote text4baby through retail and private sector partners, public association websites, publications, local radio, and more. The NH DHHS also worked with the Office of Early Childhood Education at the Department of Education and public schools to increase awareness of the service.

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Service's WIC and Maternal and Child Health programs have been active in printing customized text4baby posters and flyers, mailing materials, conducting outreach events, and facilitating conversations with district offices and local doctors around the state to increase awareness and promote text4baby. NH DHHS continues to do outreach to current audiences, as well as targeting some new groups such as NH's major health insurance providers.

**Results:** Through strategic networking and collaboration, DHHS has built a strong state coalition to leverage text4baby promotion. The hard work and collaboration of the NH Coalition earned the state 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 2011 Text4baby State Enrollment Contest. The number of users went from 1,263 to 1,795 which represented a 42% increase during the 5 month period. As of December 2012, the state of New Hampshire is leading the nation for having the highest rate of total unique users enrolled per 1000 estimated pregnancies and live births since launch in February 2010.

