

2015 Text4baby State Enrollment Contest Large State Winner: Virginia

Text4baby's 5th Annual State Enrollment Contest ran from May 10 to October 17, 2015. The State Enrollment Contest is a national competition that aims to empower pregnant women and new mothers with important health and safety information by encouraging them to enroll in Text4baby.

States competed in three distinct groups based on the overall distribution of 2013 live births with the goal of having states with similar numbers of estimated NEW pregnancies and NEW infants competing against each other. The large state category includes all states with live births in the upper quartile (highest 25%). The medium state category includes all states with live births in the middle 50%. The small state category includes all states with live births in the lower quartile (lowest 25%).

The states were ranked based on how many new users enrolled in Text4baby in each state during the contest period as a percentage of eligible moms.

Enrollment in Text4baby

According to the March of Dimes' Peristats, there are approximately 102,147 live births in Virginia annually—and state partners' efforts focused on recruiting these expectant and new mothers during the contest period. As a result of their outreach, **Virginia earned first place for the large state group**, enrolling 25 per 1,000 estimated new pregnant women and moms into the service. During the contest period, a total of 2,213 new users enrolled in the Text4baby service in Virginia.

Promotional Activities during the Contest Period

The Commonwealth of Virginia has been a strong advocate of Text4baby since the program launched. A coalition of Virginia Text4baby partners from various state agencies and other stakeholders joined together to promote the service and their interest was invigorated by Text4baby's inclusion in the Virginia Department of Health's Infant Mortality Strategic Plan. A strategy outlined in the plan was the promotion of both Text4baby and 2-1-1 Virginia. This Text4baby coalition set a goal of increasing Text4baby enrollment by 25% (6,125 new enrollees) to a total of 30,625 enrollees by February 2015.

In addition, Virginia's participation in the Collaborative Innovation Network (COIN) initiative led by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, generated excitement about the Text4baby service as it pertained to safe sleep and smoking cessation.

These two initiatives allowed VDH to customize the Text4baby service, by including state-specific resources within the messages for pregnant women and new moms. This process also allowed the monthly dissemination of ad-hoc messages on topics of interest including but not limited to: prevention of child abuse, smoking cessation, risk of heat stroke, breastfeeding, car safety, newborn screening, pre-term birth, and car safety.

Virginia Premier, a health plan, also partnered in the promotion of Text4baby by providing free cell phones to its members under the government's Lifeline program. Members who opted into this free benefit and who were identified as being pregnant automatically received Text4baby messages on their new cell phones. This approach allowed Virginia Premier to connect several hundred members to real-time messaging and resources as provided by the Text4baby service.

Congratulations to Virginia – your efforts have proven to be successful in continuing to connect more women to critical health and safety information!

Special Thanks go out to Text4baby Partners in Virginia, including:

Capital Area Health Network
Central VA Health Services, Inc.
City of Richmond Early Childhood Development Initiative
Comprehensive Health Investment Project (CHIP) of Virginia
Family Maternity Center of the Northern Neck*
Group for Women
HCA Virginia
Infant Toddler Family Day Care
Inova Health Care Services
James Madison University, Healthy Families Page County
MajestaCare
Mountain View Pediatrics
Loudoun Community Health Centers
Navy Federal Credit Union
Northern Virginia Lactation Consultants
Optima Health
Sentara Healthcare
SIDS Mid-Atlantic
Smart Beginnings Danville Pittsylvania
Smart Beginnings Franklin/Patrick
Smart Beginnings of Martinsville and Henry County
Southern Health Services, Inc./CareNet (Coventry)
University of Virginia Medical Center OB/GYN
Virginia Department of Health* including local health districts
Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services
Virginia Early Childhood Foundation
Virginia Physicians for Women
Virginia Premier Health Plan, Inc.