



# 2022 POLICY PRIORITIES

March of Dimes leads the fight for the health of every mom and baby. 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 end preventable maternal health risks and death, end preterm birth and close the health equity gap for all families.



## 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.

**Extend medicaid postpartum**  
**Expand Access to midwives and doulas**



## 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. We're advocating for a comprehensive national response to high maternal mortality and morbidity rates, especially among women of color.

**Support implicit bias training**  
**Support access to mental health services**



## 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.

**Fund maternal mortality review committees**



## PROTECT MOMS AND BABIES DURING COVID-19

March of Dimes is working to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and fight for pregnant women, infants and their families to remain as healthy as possible during the public health crisis.

**Invest in public health infrastructure**

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## INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

- Expanding access to Medicaid, including extending coverage for moms after childbirth to 12 months.
- Supporting expanded access to midwifery care for women who desire services by further integrating midwives into maternity care, and promoting full practice authority by removing restrictive laws and regulations.
- Advocating for Medicaid and private insurance coverage for doula care services.
- Increasing 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.
- Opposing harmful Medicaid block grant proposals, work requirements and other barriers to coverage.



## IMPROVE RESEARCH AND SURVEILLANCE

- Advancing legislation to enhance, standardize best practices and sustain Maternal Mortality Review Committees (MMRCs) and Perinatal Quality Collaboratives (PQCs) to further patient safety.
- Supporting federal and state legislation to protect and enhance newborn screening and ensure every state tests each newborn for all conditions on the Recommended Uniform Screening Panel (RUSP).
- Promoting surveillance and research 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.
- Championing funding for preterm 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.



## SUPPORT HEALTHY WOMEN AND BABIES

- Supporting authentic and standardized implicit bias training for health care providers and staff, caring for women before, during and after pregnancy and training accountability and governance policies to enhance the broader goal of achieving equity for moms and babies.
- Supporting 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 moms and reduce health disparities in the workplace such as 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.



## PROTECT MOMS AND BABIES DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

- 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're prepared for the next public health emergency.
- Ensuring the unique needs of pregnant women, moms and infants are prioritized in our nation's response to COVID-19.
- Ensuring affordable coverage and access to diagnostic testing, treatment and vaccinations without fear of out-of-pocket costs during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Supporting the CDC's Emerging Threats to Moms and Babies initiative to provide real-time clinical and survey data from all states and jurisdictions on the impact of COVID-19 on pregnant women and their babies.
- Advocating for families struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic by improving emergency paid sick days and paid leave policies, increasing access to nutrition programs and strengthening home visiting programs.

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