

# Text4baby & PHS WIC:



## Best Practice of Incorporation into WIC Practices



*Harnessing the Power of Mobile for Maternal & Child Health in the U.S.*

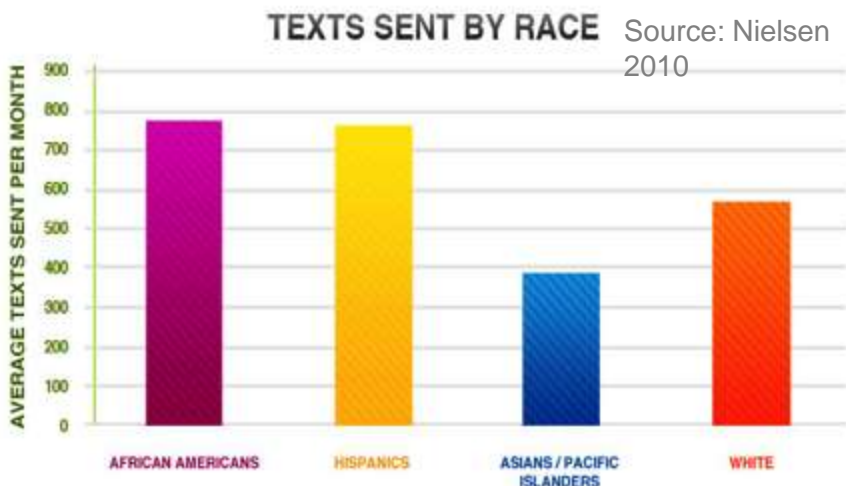
# What is Text4baby?

- Text4baby is an evidence-based **free mobile health information service** designed to promote maternal and child health through text messaging.
  - Free service created in partnership by *National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition* and *Voxiva*.
  - Wireless carriers make this service free to the nation, even if the participant doesn't have unlimited text messaging.
- Text4baby is the largest national mobile health initiative reaching **over 712,000** moms nationally and since launch four years ago.
- Text4baby is available in both **English** and **Spanish**.
- Partners:
  - National WIC Association & USDA
  - The White House Office of Science & Technology
  - The Department of Health & Human Services
  - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  - Over 1,100 partners



# Why Go Mobile?

- 89% of young women have cell phones
- 99% of text messages are read.
- 90% are read within 3 minutes.
- People of color are more likely to text than their White counterparts
- Low-income Americans text more than higher-income adults



## Texting

% of cell phone owners who use their phone to send or receive text messages

All cell phone owners (n=2,581)	80%
Men (n=1,163)	81
Women (n=1,418)	80
<b>Age</b>	
18-29 (n=451)	97***
30-49 (n=770)	92**
50-64 (n=710)	72*
65+ (n=599)	34
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	
White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,586)	79
Black, Non-Hispanic (n=434)	80
Hispanic (n=351)	85
<b>Annual household income</b>	
Less than \$30,000/yr (n=690)	78
\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=456)	78
\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=345)	89**
\$75,000+ (n=646)	90**
<b>Education level</b>	
No high school diploma (n=187)	65
High school grad (n=681)	75
Some College (n=679)	85**
College + (n=1,020)	86**

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, Summer Tracking Survey, August 7-September 6, 2012. N=2,581 cell phone owning adults ages 18 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones (1,206 cell calls were completed). Margin of error is +/- 2.2 percentage points. \* indicates statistically significant difference compared with others in same grouping

# WIC Moms & Technology

- **8144** WIC Moms participated on on-line survey\*
- Text messaging is among top **3** technologies used by WIC moms of all races ( text messaging, e-mail, internet)
- **92.5 %** own cell phones
- **93.6 %** are texting (**79 %** unlimited texting)
- **67.4 %** download apps
- **54.6 %** unlimited data plans (**18 %** limited data plans ~ estimate)

\*source: USDA Western Region WIC Electronic Technologies Project Advisory Group:  
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/wicworks/Documents/Millennial%20Generation/Project%20Information/WR%20WIC%20Electronic%20Technology%20Project%20Abstract--%20NWA%20May%2022%202012.pdf>

# Mobile Provider Partners

Participating mobile providers have agreed to deliver **Text4Baby** to their subscribers **at no charge**.



# How Text4baby Works



Mom/family member texts **BABY/BEBE** to **511411**



Mom/family member gives **due date/DOB** & **zip code**



Mom/family member gets **free tips 3x/week** throughout **pregnancy & until baby's 1<sup>st</sup> birthday**



Through Text4baby, moms can also learn more about certain topics; get support for enrolling in Medical; take quizzes; get urgent health alerts; sign up for appointments, WIC meetings and vaccination reminders; provide feedback on specific messages; and get connected to support hotlines.



# Text4baby Addresses Critical Maternal and Child Health Topics

- 267 Messages Total
- Breakdown of messages by broad topic area:
  - 61 Safety
  - 56 Development
  - 45 Nutrition
  - 44 Support
  - 30 Infectious disease
  - 20 Health care access
  - 18 Well baby visit
  - 18 Symptoms
  - 11 Screening
  - 9 Prenatal care
  - 8 Oral health



# Current Text4baby Nutritional Message

- **Connect moms to Health & Nutrition resources:**
  - WIC resources, Women and Infant Health Resources, National Hunger Helpline, Breastfeeding Support, etc.
- Provide moms with Critical Health and Nutritional Information & **Reinforce WIC/SNAP nutrition** messages:
  - You need calcium to build your baby's teeth & bones. Good sources of calcium are low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt & hard cheeses (like cheddar).
  - Healthy eating is important for you & your baby! If you need help buying food, connect to WIC. Call 800-311-2229 & ask for your local WIC office.
  - If you need help getting food, call the National Hunger Hotline at 866-348-6479.

"Both text4baby and WIC share a common goal of helping pregnant women and new moms learn about the importance of healthcare and proper nutrition throughout their lifetime and the lifetime of their new baby. Texting is one of this generation's most popular forms of communication and text4baby is a wonderful, free, relevant service."

-Beth Nitkin, LDN, CLC  
WIC Director, East Bay  
Community Action Program,  
Newport, RI



# Interactivity in Text4baby Service



- 58% contain additional health and resource info
- 46% (123 messages) link to Text4baby mobile web pages developed in partnership with major medical associations
- 25% (68 messages) provide a resource phone number
- 45 links to videos
- 15 visit & appointment reminders
- 6% of messages link to external websites
- 9 messages prompt mothers to text back LIKE when they find a message helpful
- 7 messages encourage mothers to text back MORE to get additional information
- 4 interactive user feedback and engagement survey questions (e.g. “Did you ask your provider about a health topic covered in Text4baby?”)
- 2 Quizzes (Food safety in pregnancy and car seat safety in infancy)

# Mobile Web Pages Provide More Information

## Message

(1/2) text4baby: Every week of pregnancy is important for your baby's development. So if you have a healthy pregnancy, wait for labor to begin on its own. (1/2) Go to [text4b.org/088](http://text4b.org/088) to watch a fun video about waiting for at least 39 weeks.

## Layers of Additional Resources

The screenshot shows the text4baby mobile app interface. At the top, there is a pink header with a home icon, the text "text4baby", and a "Back" button. Below the header, the main content area has a title "Why do babies need at least 39 weeks?" in pink. Underneath, it says "Being pregnant 39 weeks gives your baby's body all the time it needs to grow." followed by a list of bullet points:

- Important organs, like his brain, lungs and liver, get the time they need to develop.
- He is less likely to have vision and hearing problems after birth.
- He has time to gain more weight in the womb. Babies born at a healthy weight have an easier time staying warm than babies born too small.
- He can suck and swallow and stay awake long enough to eat after he's born. Babies born early sometimes can't do these things.

At the bottom of the page, it says "Watch this fun video about making it to 39 weeks". Below the main content, there is a blue bar with an "About" button and a "Sign Up" button. At the very bottom, there is a navigation bar with icons for "About", "Topics", "Sign Up", "Hotlines", and "More".

## Videos and more information

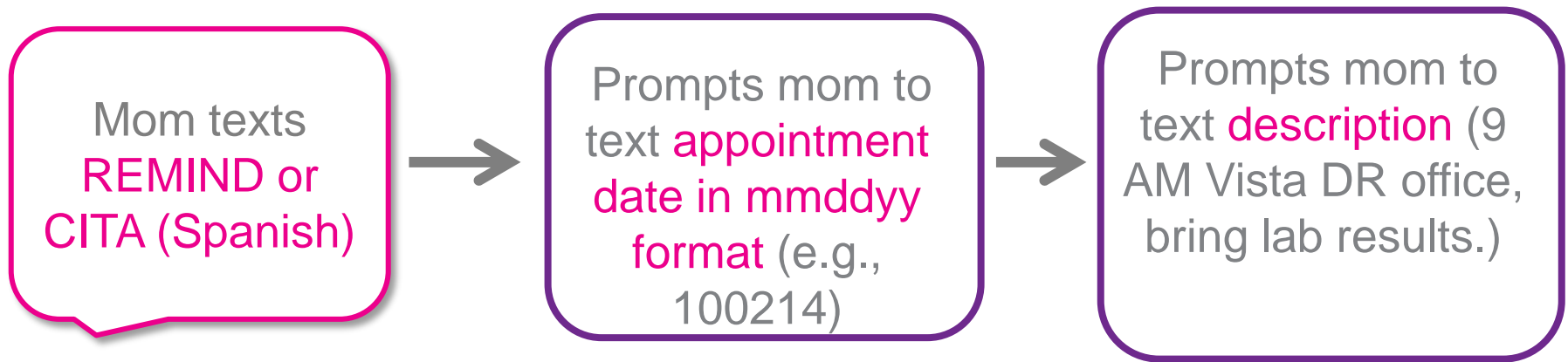


# Text4baby Alerts Moms of Urgent Health News, Recalls, Outbreaks, etc.

- Tylenol recall, May 2010
- Pertussis outbreak CA (CDC), July 2010
- Similac formula recall, September 2010
- Sleep positioners warning (FDA), October 2010
- New car safety seat guidelines (AAP), March 2011
- Deadly hot cars (Safe Kids), July 2011
- Benzocaine warning (FDA), August 2011
- Warning about crib bumpers (AAP & CDC), October 2011
- Carbon monoxide poisoning (CT & MA) in response to power outages, November 2011
- Warning about button batteries (Safe Kids), December 2011
- CMS enrollment (CMS), February 2012
- Medicine safety (CDC), March 2012
- Pertussis - 7 states (CDC), April 2012 and 44 states (CDC), June 2012
- Hurricane Sandy Refrigerated Food – 12 states, November 2012
- Health Insurance Marketplace & free/low cost plans (CMS), August 2013, March 2014
- Water Contamination (WDPH & CDC)

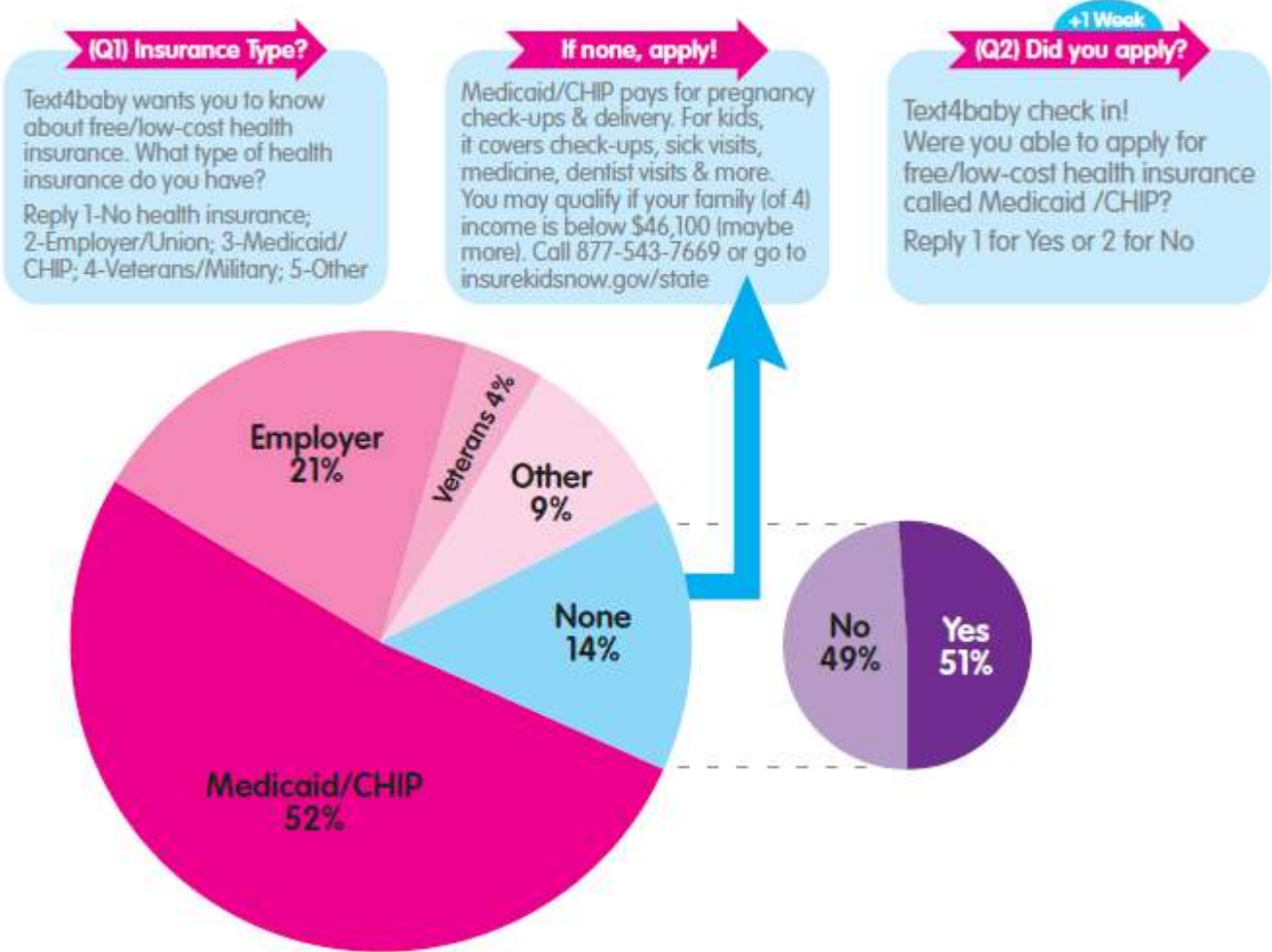
99% of text messages are read  
90% are read within 3 minutes

# Improve Appointment Attendance: Text4baby Appointment Reminder Service



- Text4baby participants can set up reminders for their appointments (e.g. prenatal, postpartum, well baby, WIC, dental)
  - Moms and parents enrolled in Text4baby with and without smartphones can receive FREE text appointment reminders
- Moms receive a reminder **three days before** and **morning of appointment**.

# Connecting Families to Health Care and Health Coverage: Medicaid Module



(Q1) N = 90,165, Response Rate = 46%; (Q2) N = 4,752, RR = 40% Source: Text4baby Database 3/24/2014

# Immunization Module Pilot Overview

## Background/Goal

- Piloted with Immunize Nevada and California Department of Health
- Encourage timely well-baby visits and immunization at birth, 2, 4, 6, and 12 months and gain insight around self-reported visit attendance and immunization

## Design

- **Hep B:** Education before birth & follow-up after asking if baby received vaccine
- **Well-baby Visits & Immunization:** (1) Education 2 weeks prior to baby's 2, 4, 6, and 12 mo. birthdays, (2) Opportunity to set up reminders at two points, (3) Follow-up 2 weeks after baby's 2, 4, 6, and 12 mo. birthdays asking if they went to their well-baby visit and got their baby vaccinated (for those who attended)
- **Evaluation:** Follow-up 3 weeks after 6 or 12 month birthday asking if messages helped to get baby vaccinated

## Sample

- A total of 11,117 participants provided one or more responses to questions asked from 3/5/13 – 5/23/13; over 40% responded to at least one question and 10% responded to every question

\*Source: National Immunization Survey. Note: text4baby vaccine coverage is self-reported, whereas national data is collected from medical records.



# Immunization Module: Immunization Key Findings

## Well-baby Visit Attendance Higher Among Moms Who Receive Education & Reminders

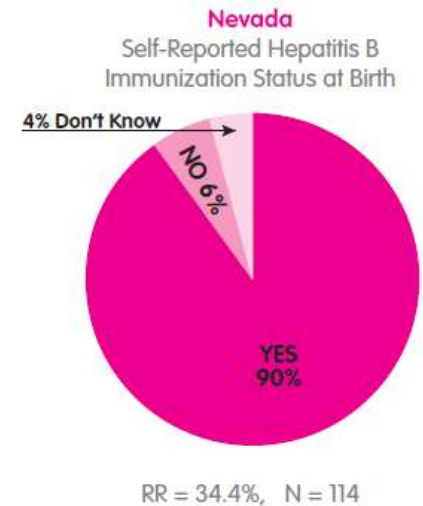
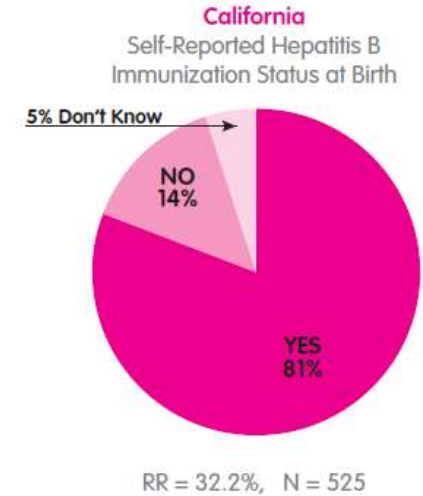
- Well-baby visit attendance is higher among participants who receive educational and reminder messages about their upcoming visits.
- This relationship was stronger among respondents receiving messages in Spanish.

## High Self-Reported Hep B Vaccination

- Respondents report high rates of hepatitis B vaccination (81% in CA; 90% in NV).

## Respondents Find Messages Helpful

- 72% of respondents reported messages were helpful in remembering to get baby vaccinated.
- 90% of Spanish-speaking respondents reported the messages were helpful.



# Text4baby is Making an Impact

46%

Register in 1<sup>st</sup> trimester

95%

Would refer a friend

## Evidence of Knowledge and Behavior Change

### Increasing Health Knowledge and Preparedness:

74%

...of total respondents who participated in the CSUSM/UCSD evaluation reported text4baby messages informed them of medical warning signs they did not know.

3X

A George Washington University-led randomized evaluation found that text4baby mothers were nearly three times more likely to believe that they were prepared to be new mothers compared to those in the no exposure control group.<sup>5</sup>

### Appointment Attendance:

65%

...of total respondents who participated in the CSUSM/UCSD evaluation reported text4baby helped them remember an appointment or immunization that they or their child needed.

### Facilitating Interaction with Health Providers and Improving Access to Health Services:

67%

...of total respondents who participated in the CSUSM/UCSD evaluation reported they talked to their doctor about a topic they read on a text4baby message.

40%

...of total respondents reported they called a number for a service they received from text4baby, with a higher percentage of uninsured respondents reporting they called a service number.

"I love that text4baby gives out really good ideas for my baby to be safe, and it goes by your baby's age, so it's just the right timing. Text4baby has been so helpful: even though I have four boys already, text4baby gave me great support throughout my pregnancy, advised me on how to make myself more comfortable, and when to call my doctor. When I gave birth, text4baby was still there congratulating me! It felt great!"

-Norma C, San Elizario, TX, Cricket Customer



# George Washington University Evaluation Findings

- **George Washington University Randomized Evaluation:**
  - Text4baby mothers were nearly **3X times** more likely to believe that they were prepared to be new mothers compared to those in control group (N=123).
  - Text4baby mothers with high school education or greater were significantly more likely to believe that drinking alcohol during pregnancy will harm the unborn baby
  - Approaching significant ( $p < .10$ ) improvement in the following attitudes among t4 mothers with a HS education or >:
    - **Fruit/vegetable consumption**
    - **Taking prenatal vitamins**
    - **Understanding effects of smoking**
    - **Importance of visiting health care provider**

## Alliance of Chicago Community Health Services

**11% vs 17%**

There was a lower percentage of missed appointments among t4b users (n=917) vs. non-users (n =1647) \*

\* Note: not the result of rigorous research methods

# WIC Moms Like the Service



- 99% of WIC participants in an Emory University study (baseline n=468) had no concerns about enrolling in text4baby;
- 95% reported the enrollment process was easy;
- 92% regularly read text4baby messages;
- 88% planned to continue to use text4baby.

# WIC & Text4baby: Building on a Shared Mission

- **National Partnership with NWA & USDA**

- **Promotional Materials & Outreach**
- **WIC agencies engage across the Nation including:**

Benton et al County WIC program (IN)

Brownwood WIC (TX)

Crozer-Chester Medical Center WIC Program (PA)

Jasper Newton County WIC Program (TX)

Massachusetts WIC Nutrition Program

Utah County WIC Program (UT)

Public Health Foundation Enterprises WIC (CA)

Rhode Island WIC

Riverside County WIC (CA)

L.A. Bio Med WIC (CA)

Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center WIC Clinic (MO)

Southwestern Community Services WIC (NH)

## Tailored Enrollment Strategies:

- Flyers in waiting rooms, nutritionist's office, and displayed on digital screens in centers.
- Digital promotion (website, social media).
- Identified sign-up Touch Points
  1. *At Prenatal & New Born WIC Enrollment*
  2. *Following Prenatal Classes & at specific group classes*

**Text4baby**



**National WIC Association**



# Case Study: Implementing Text4baby At Public Health Solutions



*Paulette Sinclair-Weir, Director of Neighborhood WIC*

*Arielle Burlett, Manager of Community Services, Neighborhood WIC*



# PHS Neighborhood WIC Program: Overview

- **PHS Neighborhood WIC provides access to** nutritious food, health education, and referrals to appropriate health and social services for WIC participants
- **PHS Neighborhood WIC operates 9 centers** throughout New York City area
- **Serves almost 46,000 women, infants and children**, approximately 10% of all WIC participants in New York State
- **Very diverse client base:** Over 25 languages and dialects spoken
- Offers various **nutrition and healthy lifestyle-based initiatives** for moms and families:
  - Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program
  - Let's Eat!* and *Let's Move!* Sessions
  - Participant-Centered Nutrition Assessment (PCNA)
  - Grocery store tours through our Cooking Matters at the Store for WIC Participants program

# Why Did PHS Partner with Text4baby?

- PHS established its initial partnership with Text4baby in 2012; official campaign launch in all WIC Centers took place in **June 2013**
- Text4baby was **first mobile health initiative** to target WIC audience
- **Reinforces WIC nutrition education** by providing evidence-based information and resources through simple, effective text messages
- **Supports critical role of breastfeeding peer counselors** as advocates of text4baby and maternal and child health in our centers
- **Considered an innovative strategy** to improve WIC participant retention

# Enrollment Process



# Tools and Resources Provided for Staff

- Conducted one-hour staff trainings at each center at onset of campaign
- Conducted separate training for **13** Breastfeeding Peer Counselors
- Breastfeeding Peer Counselors designated as advocates of initiative!
- T4B Training manual created for each center




# Text4baby Outreach and Promotion

- Staff pins, text4baby outreach materials, promotion during participant sharing time at the centers
- Participation in 2013 Enrollment Contest (Agency Contest and National Contest)
- Promotion of Text4baby on digital screens in each of our 9 centers
- Distribution of promotional materials to participants and community partners



# PHS Enrollment Tracking

- Breastfeeding Peer Counselors tracks enrollment daily
  - Collected by Peer Counselor Coordinator monthly
- Between August 2013 and October 2013, WIC participants were asked to complete a T4B Participant Feedback Form
- Official evaluation has not been completed
  - Questions to consider:
    - How many participants are utilizing appointment reminder feature?
    - Are we reducing our 'no-show' rate?
    - Are we improving participant retention?

  
TEXT4BABY FEEDBACK FORM

Please tell us about your text4baby experience!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ WIC Center: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your favorite part of text4baby?

\_\_\_\_\_

How has text4baby helped you?

\_\_\_\_\_

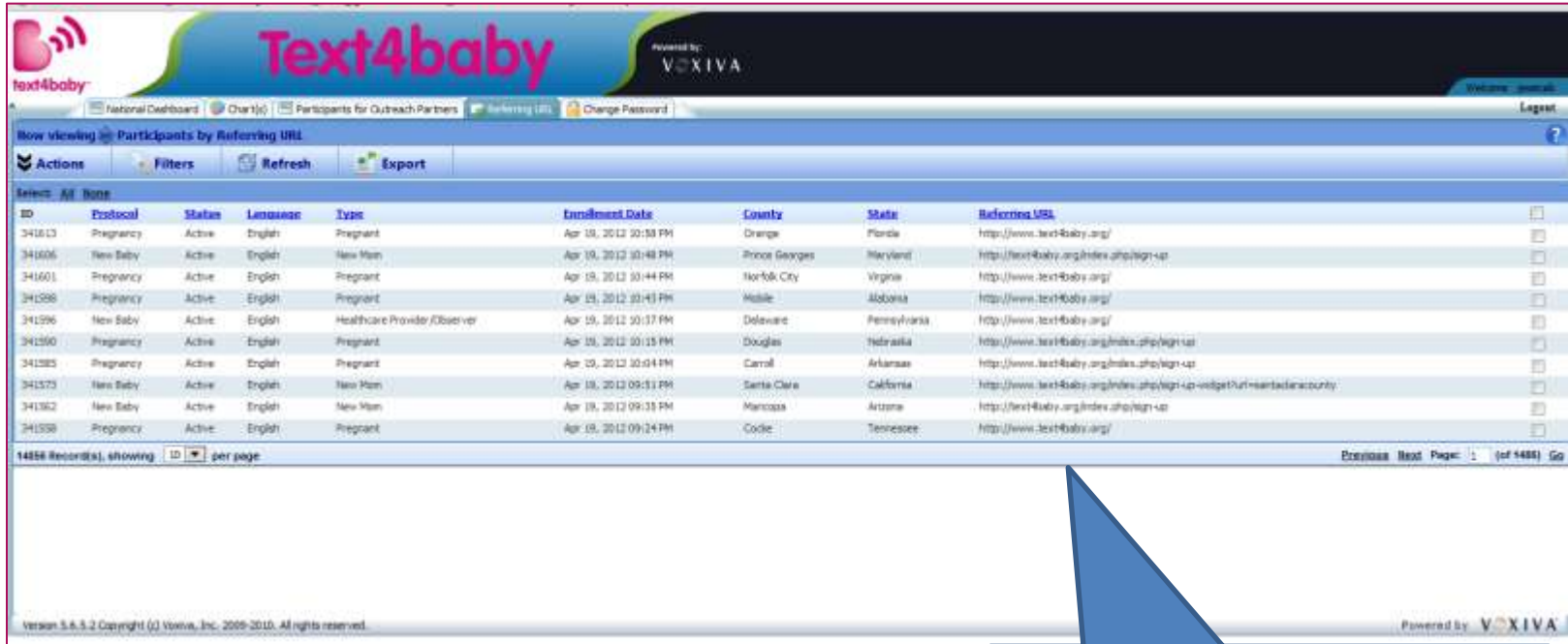
Would you recommend text4baby to friends and family?

\_\_\_\_\_



# Text4baby Enrollment Tracking

- Include text4baby web enrollment button on your website
- Zip code specific enrollment tracking through national staff



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**Consejos para  
mamás y  
futuras mamás**



Recibe mensajes de texto gratis acerca de:

- El cuidado antes del parto
- La salud del bebé
- Crianza de los hijos y más

**Regístrate ahora**



Gives the URL that was used to enroll.  
URLs such as this one:  
<http://www.text4baby.org/index.php/sign-up-widget?url=santaclaracounty>  
indicate the user enrolled using an enrollment button that has been placed on an Outreach Partner website.

# Lessons Learned

- Simplified enrollment process, so staff are clear on how to implement at WIC center
- More diversity in languages options would help to reach wider audience
- **Important that staff is clear on message and talking points**
- Consistency is key!
- Great talking point when conducting outreach in the community
- Great way to promote innovation in WIC program to community partners
- The number of mobile health initiatives are increasing—make sure your staff knows the differences between them and reasons why your program promotes Text4baby!

# Get Involved!

- All promotional materials (available in English and Spanish) are shipped **free of charge**.
- Train your staff to enroll WIC moms in Text4baby at specific appointments or group classes
- Visit [Text4baby.org](http://Text4baby.org) to:
  - Order materials.
  - Download tip sheets, tool kits, videos, and other training materials

The image displays various promotional materials for Text4baby. At the top left, the word "Posters" is written in pink. Below it are two posters: one in English with a photo of a woman kissing a baby, and one in Spanish with a pink background. To the right, the word "Tearpads" is written in pink. Below it are two tearpads: one in English with a photo of a woman and child, and one in Spanish with a grid of icons. At the bottom left, the word "Referral Cards" is written in pink. Below it is a navigation menu for the WIC website with four blue buttons: "Text4baby Basics", "Become a Partner", "Training Center", and "Order Free Text4baby Materials". To the right of the menu is a "Text4baby Tips" box with a red background and a "Partner Tools" box with a pink background. At the bottom right is a "Health Hotlines 4 Moms" box with a grey background.

# Questions?

If you have any questions about PHS Neighborhood WIC, please visit [www.wicnyc.org](http://www.wicnyc.org) or contact **Arielle Burlett** [aburlett@healthsolutions.org](mailto:aburlett@healthsolutions.org)

If you have questions about how to get involved with Text4baby, please visit [www.text4baby.org](http://www.text4baby.org) or contact **Anna Hoff** [ahoff@hmhb.org](mailto:ahoff@hmhb.org)

