

# Reproductive Life Plan Change Package

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**Rationale:** A reproductive life plan is a set of goals and action steps based on personal values and resources about whether and when to become pregnant and have (or not have) children. Reproductive life plans are intended to promote planned, healthy pregnancies, positive birth outcomes, and overall health and well-being for women, men, and infants. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that all women, men, and couples be encouraged to have a reproductive life plan.<sup>1</sup>



Currently, about half (51%) of the 6.6 million pregnancies in the United States each year are unintended. Unintended pregnancies include pregnancies that are reported by women as being mistimed or unwanted. Unintended pregnancies lead to significant economic costs and are associated with adverse maternal and child health outcomes, such as delayed prenatal care, premature birth, and negative physical and mental health effects for children.<sup>2</sup>

Encouraging women, men, and couples to have a reproductive life plan is an important strategy to support healthy mothers and healthy babies. This includes assessing Healthy Start participants' personal goals about becoming pregnant and pregnancy intention, counseling participants on reproductive life planning, and improving access to and use of contraception to reduce rates of unintended pregnancy.

Reproductive life planning can be initiated at any time (e.g., prenatal, postpartum or interconception) and should be offered to everyone, irrespective of assumptions or biases about individual circumstances. Furthermore, reproductive life plans should be considered fluid, and updated regularly per changing goals, needs, and life circumstances (or updated at least annually). Addressing reproductive life planning during the perinatal periods offers an opportunity for Healthy Start grantees to provide education, support, and resources to help the women and families they serve achieve optimal pregnancy goals.

**Purpose/Objective:** This change package provides recommended strategies and a selection of resources and evidence-based practices to aid Healthy Start grantee organizations, partners and their staff in supporting the women and families they serve in developing a reproductive life plan. **Healthy Start Screening Tools**, available on the Healthy Start Epic Center website and referenced in the change package strategies, can be used to assist in comprehensive and consistent assessment of Healthy Start participant needs and standardized data collection to support monitoring and reporting on Healthy Start benchmarks.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Recommendations to improve preconception health and health care — United States: a report of the CDC/ ATSDR Preconception Care Work Group and the Select Panel on Preconception Care. MMWR 2006;55(No. RR- 6).

<sup>2</sup> Guttmacher Institute. Unintended Pregnancy in the United States. Fact Sheet. July 2015.

## Healthy Start Change Package Strategies for Reproductive Life Planning

**Healthy Start Program Goal:** Increase the proportion of Healthy Start women participants who have a documented reproductive life plan to 90%.

Level of Strategy	Strategy	Select Resources & Evidence-Based Practices
<b>Program Level</b>	<b>Build Capacity to Promote the Reproductive Life Plan</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Educate all providers and staff on the importance of reproductive life planning to promote healthy pregnancy and birth outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Before, Between, and Beyond Pregnancy : The National Preconception Curriculum and Resources Guide for Clinicians</a></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Integrate reproductive life planning into your program (e.g., medical visits or family planning sessions with Healthy Start participants).                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>KEY MESSAGING:</b> Help Healthy Start participants plan if and when they want to become pregnant again.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Putting the QFP into Practice Series: Integrating Reproductive Life Planning (RLP) into Your Family Planning Session</a></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Train providers and direct service staff in the skills necessary to screen, counsel, and refer Healthy Start participants for contraceptive use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">CDC Contraceptive Method Guidance: Slide Sets and Continuing Education Opportunities for Health Care Providers</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Family Planning Counseling</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">One Key Question Patient Provider Materials</a></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Train providers and direct service staff on how to support Healthy Start participants in making informed choices on contraceptive use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Family Planning Basics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Effectiveness of Family Planning Methods</a></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Educate Healthy Start grantee staff on ACA requirement for health insurers to offer certain preventive health services free of co-pays or coinsurance, including contraceptive methods and counseling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Health Cares About IPV Screening and Counseling Toolkit</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Getting the Coverage You Deserve: What to Do If You Are Charged a Co-Payment, Deductible, or Co-Insurance for a Preventive Service</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Individual &amp; Family Level</b>	<b>Assess Pregnancy Intention at Every Encounter</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Assess pregnancy intention at every encounter with Healthy Start participants.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>KEY QUESTIONS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you plan to have any children at any time in your future?</li> <li>- Would you like to become pregnant</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">One Key Question Initiative (OKQ)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Healthy Start Screening Tools</a></li> </ul>

Level of Strategy	Strategy	Select Resources & Evidence-Based Practices
	<p>in the next year?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Refer to the <b>Healthy Start Screening Tools</b> for additional key questions</li> </ul> <p>If yes, discuss patients' readiness for pregnancy, overall health and opportunities for improving health, and potential risk factors for adverse pregnancy outcomes.</p> <p>If no, provide counseling about family planning, and provide or refer for birth control.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Assist Healthy Start participants in developing a reproductive life plan, or updating an existing plan, annually. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>KEY MESSAGING:</b> A reproductive life plan helps to promote planned, healthy pregnancies and positive birth outcomes. One example of a reproductive life plan is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "I am in a good relationship and I'm pretty healthy. I want to stop using birth control and try to get pregnant. I'm going to talk to my doctor to find out what I can do to have a healthy pregnancy."<sup>3</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">My Reproductive Life Plan</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Putting the QFP into Practice Series: Integrating Reproductive Life Planning (RLP) into Your Family Planning Session</a></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide evidence-informed counseling to Healthy Start participants about the full range of contraceptive methods for postpartum use.</li> <li>➤ Provide Healthy Start participants and their partners with information and education resources on contraceptive method options.</li> <li>➤ Refer Healthy Start participants to a local health care provider to obtain contraceptive method of choice as warranted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Providing Quality Family Planning Guidelines</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Birth Control Methods: Frequently Asked Questions</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Method Match</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Birth Control for Men</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Your Birth Control Choices Fact Sheet</a></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Refer Healthy Start participants to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Nurse Family Partnership</a></li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> CDC. Reproductive Life Plan worksheet.

<http://www.cdc.gov/preconception/documents/reproductivelifeplan-worksheet.pdf>.

Level of Strategy	Strategy	Select Resources & Evidence-Based Practices
	community-based programs (e.g., home visiting) that provide support and resources to during the pregnancy and postpartum periods, including reproductive life planning and contraceptive counseling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Early Intervention Program (EIP) for Adolescent Mothers</a></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Assist Healthy Start participants in enrolling in and obtaining health insurance to support access to contraceptive services and other preventive care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">From Coverage to Care</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Getting the Coverage You Deserve: What to Do If You Are Charged a Co-Payment, Deductible, or Co-Insurance for a Preventive Service</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Health Insurance Marketplace</a></li> </ul>
<b>Community Level</b>	<b>Promote Awareness on Reproductive Life Planning Among Community Groups and Partners</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Distribute education materials on reproductive life planning to community partners and programs that serve women, children, and families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Every Woman North Carolina: North Carolina Preconception Health Campaign</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">My Reproductive Life Plan</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Putting the QFP into Practice Series: Integrating Reproductive Life Planning (RLP) into Your Family Planning Session</a></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Promote awareness on reproductive life planning among community partners, other programs serving women, children, and families, and the public through social marketing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Show your Love Campaign</a></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Establish referral systems with local health provider organizations that provide a broad range of contraceptive methods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Providing Quality Family Planning Guidelines</a></li> </ul>

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\*This change package can be accessed electronically: <http://healthystartepic.org/healthy-start-approaches/improve-womens-health/>