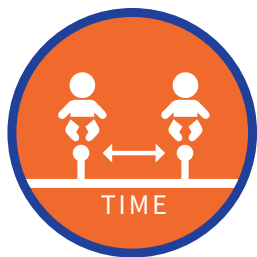


OPTIMAL BIRTH SPACING

HEALTHY START PERFORMANCE MEASURE



Healthy Start Benchmark:

Reduce the proportion of Healthy Start women participants who conceive within 18 months of a previous birth to 30%.

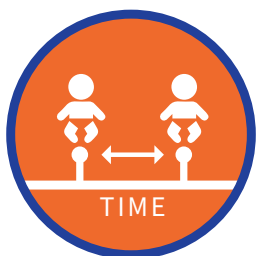
Rationale

Pregnancies should be spaced at least 18 months apart to reduce health risks for both mother and baby. Increased risks for babies conceived within 18 months of a previous birth include preterm birth, low birth weight, and small size for gestational age. Short birth spacing also increases the likelihood of pregnancy complications such as placental abruption and preeclampsia. Additionally, in order to achieve optimal health before another pregnancy, the mother needs time to fully recover from the previous birth.

Helping women plan and space their pregnancies is an important strategy to support healthy mothers and healthy babies.

This Resource Sheet 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 achieving optimal birth spacing and family size.



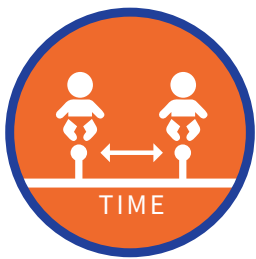


OPTIMAL BIRTH SPACING

Program Level Strategy

BUILD CAPACITY TO PROMOTE BIRTH SPACING

Strategies	Select Resources & Evidence-Based Practices
<p>Educate all providers and staff on the importance of optimal birth spacing and reproductive life planning to promote healthy pregnancy and birth outcomes.</p>	<p>Family Planning: Get the Facts about Pregnancy Spacing Before, Between, and Beyond Pregnancy : The National Preconception Curriculum and Resources Guide for Clinicians</p>
<p>Integrate reproductive life planning into your program (e.g., medical visits or family planning sessions with Healthy Start participants).</p>	<p>Putting the QFP into Practice Series: Integrating Reproductive Life Planning (RLP) into Your Family Planning Session My Reproductive Life Plan</p>
<p>Train providers and direct service staff in the skills necessary to screen, counsel, and refer Healthy Start participants for contraceptive use.</p>	<p>CDC Contraceptive Method Guidance: Slide Sets and Continuing Education Opportunities for Health Care Providers Family Planning Counseling One Key Question Patient Provider Materials</p>
<p>Train providers and direct service staff on how to support Healthy Start participants in making informed choices on contraceptive use.</p>	<p>Family Planning Basics Effectiveness of Family Planning Methods</p>
<p>Establish referral systems with local health provider organizations that provide a broad range of contraceptive methods.</p>	<p>Providing Quality Family Planning Guidelines</p>
<p>Establish a process in your program or workflow to assess birth spacing and pregnancy intention at every encounter with Healthy Start participants.</p>	<p>Providing Quality Family Planning Guidelines One Key Question Initiative (OKQ)</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Getting the Coverage You Deserve: What to Do If You Are Charged a Co-Payment, Deductible, or Co-Insurance for a Preventive Service</p>

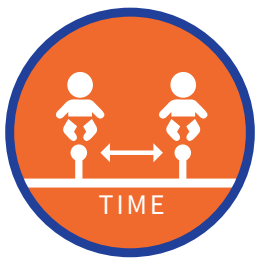


OPTIMAL BIRTH SPACING

Individual & Family Level Strategies

Assess Birth Spacing and Pregnancy Intention at Every Encounter

Strategies	Select Resources & Evidence-Based Practices
<p>Assess birth spacing and pregnancy intention at every encounter with Healthy Start participants.</p>	<p>One Key Question Initiative (OKQ) Healthy Start Screening Tools</p>
<p>Provide Healthy Start participants and their partners with information and education resources on optimal birth spacing.</p>	<p>Family Planning: Get the Facts about Pregnancy Spacing</p>
<p>Assist Healthy Start participants in developing a reproductive life plan.</p>	<p>My Reproductive Life Plan</p>
<p>Provide evidence-informed counseling to Healthy Start participants about the full range of contraceptive methods for postpartum use.</p> <p>Provide Healthy Start participants and their partners with information and education resources on contraceptive method options.</p> <p>Refer Healthy Start participants to a local health care provider to obtain their contraceptive method of choice as warranted.</p>	<p>Providing Quality Family Planning Guidelines Birth Control Methods: Frequently Asked Questions Method Match Birth Control for Men Your Birth Control Choices Fact Sheet</p>
<p>Refer Healthy Start participants to community-based programs (e.g., home visiting) that provide support and resources during the pregnancy and postpartum periods, including reproductive life planning and contraceptive counseling.</p>	<p>Nurse Family Partnership Early Intervention Program (EIP) for Adolescent Mothers</p>
<p>Assist Healthy Start participants in enrolling in and obtaining health insurance to support access to contraceptive services and other preventive health care services.</p>	<p>From Coverage to Care Getting the Coverage You Deserve: What to Do If You Are Charged a Co-Payment, Deductible, or Co-Insurance for a Preventive Service Health Insurance Marketplace</p>



OPTIMAL BIRTH SPACING

Community Level Strategies

Promote Awareness on Optimal Birth Spacing Among Community Groups and Partners

Strategies	Select Resources & Evidence-Based Practices
Distribute education materials on optimal birth spacing and reproductive life planning to community partners and programs that serve women, children, and families	Family Planning: Get the Facts about Pregnancy Spacing My Reproductive Life Plan Putting the QFP into Practice Series: Integrating Reproductive Life Planning (RLP) into Your Family Planning Session
Promote awareness on optimal birth spacing and reproductive life planning among community partners, other programs serving women, children, and families, and the public through social marketing.	Show Your Love Campaign



Healthy Start EPIC Center Webinar Resources:

[Ask the Expert: Reproductive Life Planning: Setting Goals for a Healthy Family](#)

[Ask the Expert: Quality Family Planning Recommendations and Healthy Start](#)

This Resource Sheet can be accessed electronically: <http://healthystartepic.org/>