

## **text4baby**

### **A healthier baby is just a text message away, thanks to an innovative nationwide program supported by the AmeriHealth Mercy Family of Companies.**

Earlier this year, we became an outreach partner for the national text4baby program. Text4baby is a new service providing timely health information via text messages to pregnant women and new moms, during their pregnancy and through their baby's first year.

“This makes a lot of sense for the AmeriHealth Mercy Family of Companies,” said Eric Berman, D.O., Chief Medical Office, Pennsylvania Managed Care, at a recent kickoff in Philadelphia. “In 2009, more than 11,000 babies were born to our Keystone Mercy members in Southeastern, Pennsylvania. We play an important role in improving their health.”

According to Dr. Berman, AmeriHealth Mercy is always looking for new ways to use innovative technologies to reach our members.

With text4baby, women sign up for the service by texting BABY to 511411 (or BEBE for Spanish). They then receive three free SMS text messages each week timed to their due date. These messages focus on a variety of topics critical to maternal and child health, including birth defects prevention, immunizations, nutrition, seasonal flu vaccinations, mental health, oral health and safe sleep. Text4baby messages also connect women to prenatal and infant care services and other resources.

Since the beginning of the year, the program has sent out more than one million messages to more than 30,000 women nationwide.

AmeriHealth Mercy has started promoting this free service to our members and the communities we serve at all our plans nationwide. So far, we developed posters and flyers, incorporated it into our existing prenatal program, distributed information at community events and we are placing the information on our Web sites.

Text4baby is an educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition and it is a public-private partnership which includes the White House Office on Science and Technology Policy and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as well as health plans, pharmaceutical companies and hospital systems across the United States.

The text4baby service is available to all pregnant women, so be sure to share the text4baby number with members and your friends who may be pregnant. Pregnant women can find more information, and sign up at [text4baby](http://text4baby).

This article appeared in the Second Quarter edition of “Notes,” the associate newsletter of the AmeriHealth Mercy Family of Companies.