



Friends of NCBDDD

In Support of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

NCBDDD and Public Health: Making the Connection

What is the mission of CDC, NCBDDD?

The mission of the CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) is to promote the health of babies, children and adults, and enhance the potential for full, productive living. Much of its work focuses on protecting people who are especially vulnerable to health risks – babies, children, people with blood disorders, and people with disabilities. To achieve its mission, NCBDDD works to:

- Identify the causes and reduce the incidence of birth defects and developmental disabilities;
- Help children to develop and reach their full potential; and
- Promote health and well-being among people of all ages with disabilities, including blood disorders.

NCBDDD seeks to accomplish these goals through translational research, partnerships, and prevention/education programs.

How does the CDC define public health?

Public health is defined as:

- Science and art of preventing disease
- Promoting physical and behavioral wellness
- Supporting personal responsibility
- Prolonging life in communities where people live, work and learn

How does the work of CDC, NCBDDD support public health?

It is clear by looking at the mission of NCBDDD and the definition of public health, and integrating the two, that the core work performed at NCBDDD is focused on applying public health practices to serving vulnerable populations, simply stated, serving children and adults with birth defects, disabilities and blood disorders.

Public health focuses on population level solutions to morbidity and improving health and wellness. Through practicing basic public health principles - surveillance, education, research, and deploying interventions tailored to the needs of its specific vulnerable populations - NCBDDD is the only place in the federal government serving these populations utilizing a public health strategy.

Division of Human Development and Disability (DHDD):

The mission of the DHDD is to promote the health, quality of life, and full social participation of people with disabilities through application of a public health approach. More than 50 million Americans report having some level of disability. People with disabilities need health care and



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health programs for the same reasons anyone else does – to stay well, active, and be a part of the community. However, the public health needs of people with disabilities present obstacles to traditional approaches. Overcoming barriers caused by physical, sensory, intellectual or cognitive conditions requires a special focus on these populations. To be healthy, people with disabilities require health care that meets their needs as a whole person, not just as a person with a disability. Following a public health framework, DHDD works to ensure that people of all different abilities are able to live their life to the fullest. DHDD work focuses on promoting the health of people with disabilities, preventing complications or other health conditions secondary to a person's disability and reducing health disparities.

Division of Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (DBDDD):

Birth defects affect 1 in 33 babies and are a leading cause of infant death in the United States. More than 5,500 infants die each year because of birth defects. In addition, over 500,000 children are diagnosed with a developmental disability. The DBDDD funds surveillance and research to identify causes and risk factors of birth defects and developmental disabilities. In addition, funding is targeted at reducing preventable birth defects and assuring proper screening and follow-up for autism and other developmental disabilities. This comprehensive approach has made a measurable impact by reducing alcohol exposed pregnancies, neural tube defects and helping identify children with autism at a younger age.

Division of Blood Disorders (DBD):

Bleeding and clotting disorders - such as thrombosis, thrombophilia, hemophilia, sickle cell disease, and Cooley's anemia - affect millions of people each year in the United States, cutting across the boundaries of age, race, sex, and socioeconomic status. Men, women, and children of all backgrounds live with the complications associated with these conditions, many of which are painful and potentially life-threatening. For example, as many as 600,000 Americans will experience blood clots (thrombosis/thrombophilia) and there are 100,000 deaths related to clots each year. With proper preventive actions and early intervention, many of these disorders and their complications could, to a large extent, be eliminated. The Division and allied stakeholder organizations are dedicated to reducing the public health burden resulting from these conditions by contributing to a better understanding of blood and clotting disorders and their complications; ensuring that prevention programs are developed, implemented, and evaluated; ensuring that information is accessible to consumers and health care providers; and encouraging action to improve the quality of life for people living with or affected by these conditions.

For further information about the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, please visit www.cdc.gov/ncbddd or the Friends of NCBDDD website at www.friendsofncbddd.org

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