



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## News Release

### San Diego Researchers First to Report Positive Impact of Text4Baby Program

*San Marcos, CA* – Researchers at the National Latino Research Center (NLRC) at Cal State San Marcos and the Department of Reproductive Medicine at UCSD will present data at the American Public Health Association Conference in Washington D.C. this week demonstrating impact of text4baby, a free mobile health information service for pregnant women and new mothers in San Diego.

Research indicates high satisfaction with the service and an increase in users' health knowledge, improved interaction with healthcare providers, improved adherence to appointments and immunizations and increased access to health resources. The findings demonstrate the positive impact of mobile health interventions, like the text4baby program.

Funded by the Alliance Healthcare Foundation, researchers partnered with the San Diego County Medical Society Foundation, Voxiva, Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition and the San Diego Text4Baby Coalition to introduce text4baby to San Diego County. Text4baby is a free mobile health information service that provides pregnant women and new moms with maternal, fetal and newborn health information via text messages and connects them to national health resources.

The San Diego research team is the first in the nation to evaluate the text4baby service. Phase one of the evaluations describes the experience of San Diego women enrolled in text4baby and shows promising results.

- Women reported high satisfaction with text4baby, with Spanish speaking women reporting even higher satisfaction scores than English-speaking women.
- 63.1 percent of women reported that text4baby helped them remember an appointment or immunization that they or their child needed.
- 75.4 percent reported that text4baby messages informed them of medical warning signs they did not know.
- 71.3 percent reported talking to their doctor about a topic that they read on a text4baby message.

- 38.5 percent reported that they called a service or phone number that they received from text4baby.

According to principal investigator Dr. Konane Martinez, "the results of this phase of the research provide promising data that mobile technology can be an important source of health information." Judy Meehan, CEO of the Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition says, "This independent, formal evaluation illustrates that text4baby is a practical, valuable resource for today's moms. We appreciate the hard work of our San Diego partners in conducting the study and more broadly, promoting the service."

Stuart Cohen, MD, vice chair for the California District, American Academy of Pediatrics and president of the San Diego County Medical Society Foundation Board, says the results show that text4baby can improve health outcomes for infants. "Not only are women getting information they did not know, but the information is starting conversations between the parent and healthcare provider. A better informed parent provides the best chance for a healthy baby."

Alliance Healthcare Foundation Board chair Robert B. McCray, a healthcare technology entrepreneur and president of the Wireless-Life Sciences Alliance, is excited about the potential for mobile health information. "It's clear from the results of the study that women like receiving health information via text messages, and will act upon the knowledge they receive. This should prove beneficial for other health issues as well, regardless of the socioeconomic status of the target population."

The San Diego text4baby coalition and implementation team will begin customizing referrals to services in San Diego in lieu of the national resources and anticipates an evaluation of this customized San Diego Resource in 2012. Project coordinator Anna Hoff states that team hopes that "customization of local prenatal and newborn resources in San Diego will facilitate easier access and utilization of free and low cost services for expectant and new parents."

To date, more than 2,200 expectant and new parents have enrolled in and used the text4baby mobile messaging service in San Diego. Expectant and new parents can enroll in text4baby by simply texting "baby," or "bebe" for Spanish language messages, to 511411. The service is free. In addition to local funding from Alliance Healthcare Foundation and First 5 San Diego, the program receives support nationally from Johnson & Johnson, CTIA the Wireless Foundation and Grey Healthcare Group.

For more information on text2baby, contact Anna Hoff at 760-750-3504 or [ahoff@csusm.edu](mailto:ahoff@csusm.edu), or Konane Martinez at 760-750-8567 or [kmartine@csusm.edu](mailto:kmartine@csusm.edu).

#### **About the National Latino Research Center**

The NLRC is a dynamic university-based research center bridging the university community to local, state, and national organizations. Specializing in research on Latino populations, the Center designs tailored research studies and innovative projects to fit a broad range of critical topics and needs.

**About California State University San Marcos**

California State University San Marcos combines the ambiance of a mid-sized, personal, modern campus with the unequalled value of the California State University. Since its founding in 1989, the campus has distinguished itself. Students benefit from the latest facilities and equipment, a superb faculty that enjoys teaching, and a rigorous academic program that prepares students for a successful life in and out of the workplace. A recent survey reported that our annual spending in the region was \$161 million, generating a total impact of \$307 million on the regional economy. 85 percent of CSUSM's alumni stay in the region. CSU San Marcos is located on a 304-acre hillside overlooking the city of San Marcos. It is fifteen miles east of the ocean; just thirty miles north of downtown San Diego.

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