

Texting Teen Moms Proves To Be A Convenient Source For Support Bloomington-Based Teen Parenting Group Sees Benefits Of Texting New Teen Moms



Released on: April 29, 2010, 2:31 pm

Author: **Bloomington Hospital**, Amanda Roach

Industry: [Healthcare](#)

Bloomington, Ind. (April 29, 2010) – Nearly half (47%) of US teens say they can text with their eyes closed. That's how vital texting has become in their lives.

This trend sparked the new text4baby campaign, a free health education program from the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition that sends pregnancy tips directly to expectant mothers' cell phones. The new service will send weekly text messages, timed to the mother's due date or their baby's birth date.

The messages, written by government and nonprofit health experts, deal with nutrition, immunization and birth defect prevention, among other topics. To sign up, mothers-to-be can just text "BABY" to 511411.

While the national text4baby campaign is new, Bloomington Hospital has already seen the benefits of texting to communicate with new moms. Bloomington Hospital's Gina Forrest began integrating texting into her Teen Parenting Group in 2008. Forrest sends tips and

reminders directly to her teen mom's cell phones through text messages.

"I communicate with the mothers through texting because that is the easiest and fastest way to do so. Texting has helped me build a relationship with them. They know that they can text me and I will answer," says Forrest

For Natalie Wineinger, one of the teen moms in Forrest's group, having texting as a communication option has been really beneficial.

"As a teen mom, I don't really have time to pick up the phone. Texting is much more convenient for me," says Wineinger.

Monroe Smart Start Birth to Five Coalition, a local group dedicated to coordinating existing resources to help children in their earliest years, also sees benefits in using texting to communicate with expectant and new moms. Lois Hutter-Pishgahi, director of Monroe Smart Start, is happy to see this new communication method being used nationally and on a local level because of its effectiveness in sharing information about pregnancy and early parenting with young parents. "We believe it makes sense to utilize existing services rather reinventing them. We realized that this is a very effective way of sharing information about pregnancy and early parenting," says Hutter-Pishgahi.

Because four out of every five teens have a mobile device, Forrest and Hutter-Pishgahi know texting is an effective means of reaching teens like the ones in the Teen Parenting Group.

Forrest texts the mothers to send them reminders about upcoming appointments or meetings. This keeps them updated and less likely to miss appointments. Members of the Teen Parenting Group agree that texting is a convenient way for them to receive information.

"If I don't know the date for my next appointment, I just text Gina and she can look it up for me. It's as simple as that," says Wineinger.

Text messaging represents an enormous yet unused channel for delivering vital health information to those who need it most. Over five billions text messages are sent daily, with texting use higher among women of childbearing age.

"Anytime they might have a question, they can just text me. And I can text back quickly with an answer for them," says Forrest.

Forrest says she also often sends out simple messages such as “Good Morning!” just to let the mothers know someone out there is thinking about them.

“Sometimes I ask Gina things through text message that I don’t feel comfortable discussing them with my mom. I know that she’s there for me and she always has a quick response,” says Wineinger.

Hutter-Pishgahi says Monroe Smart Start hopes more parents take advantage of the exciting new service.

“I think the beauty of this service is that it pertains to all parents – class, culture, and income don’t matter – we can all use more information when it comes to having a healthy pregnancy and caring for an infant,” says Hutter-Pishgahi.

###

For more information:

Amanda Roach
Media Relations Coordinator
Bloomington Hospital
P.O. Box 1149
Bloomington, IN 47402
t 812.353.9691
ajroach@bloomingtonhospital.org
bloomingtonhospital.org

~~~~~

Press release distributed via EPR Network (<http://express-press-release.net/submit-press-release.php>)