



## Community Plan- Health

### Physically Healthy Mothers-to-Be

#### Strategic Area Result:

- Women of childbearing age and those already pregnant will be healthy.
- Colchester babies will be born healthy.

#### Why is this Important:

- Good prenatal care supports healthy birth weights and reduces pre-term birth, resulting in fewer health issues for babies.
- Good prenatal nutrition is important for a baby to have normal brain and physical development.
- A mother's health before she becomes pregnant and during pregnancy has a direct influence on the health and development of her baby.
- Poor nutrition, lack of folic acid, tobacco smoke, excessive alcohol, toxic chemicals, obesity, diabetes, and other risks can increase the risk for miscarriage, birth defects, and slow fetal growth and development.
- Prematurity and low birth weight babies are often related to the mother's health problems such as diabetes, obesity, or high blood pressure.
- Negative prenatal experiences can greatly increase the child's lifelong risk for hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and many other forms of chronic diseases.

#### What Works:

- All women will have access to resources that support the Social Determinants of Health related to healthy prenatal outcomes.
  - Resources should address: Housing instability • Food insecurity • Transportation problems • Utility help needs • Interpersonal safety • Financial strain • Employment • Family and community support • Education including English language • Physical activity • Substance use • Mental health • Disabilities
- Good nutrition and healthy body weight for women of childbearing years and pregnant women.
  - Follow a healthy diet.
  - Eat sufficient fruits & vegetables.
  - Make healthy foods and beverages affordable, available, and the desired choice in the community.
  - Regular exercise for women of childbearing years and pregnant women.

- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).
- Quality, accessible, affordable prenatal healthcare visits.
- Strong preconception regular well care and preventative healthcare including screening for chronic conditions, preconception risk screening, and family planning.
- Targeted social service supports including mental health and substance abuse services for women of childbearing years.
- Home visiting programs.
- Continuing education programs for pregnant teens.

Learn more and find references at <http://healthyamericans.org/assets/files/TFAH-2015...>

### **Current Conditions: TBD**

#### **Strategies:**

- Encourage participation in SNAP and WIC for those who are eligible.
- Improve local systems and policies to promote good health for women of childbearing age and during pregnancy.
  - Access to health insurance
- Educate the community on the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)
- Educate the community on how to mitigate ACES through good nutrition, exercise, sleep, mental health supports, mindfulness, and other self-care practices.

#### **Selected Actions:**

- Provide a series of classes related to pre-natal and early infant health and well-being.
- Promote the WIC satellite hours and locations.