

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

Annual Report | Fiscal Year 2013



Message from the Director



It is my pleasure to present the 5th annual report for the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The 2013 Annual Report provides a snapshot of our activities and major accomplishments. I am excited to highlight some of the achievements that moved us closer to the Center's goal to promote the health of babies, children and adults, and enhance the potential for full, productive living.

We have many achievements to report on our path to [save babies through birth defects research and prevention](#). One such achievement was discovering that nearly all of the medications most commonly used by pregnant women lack sufficient evidence to determine fetal safety or risk. To address this issue, we expanded our support of Treating for Two, an initiative on safer use of medications in pregnancy.

We continued to make advances in our endeavor to better [understand autism to help children live to the fullest](#). For example, NCBDDD reported on the research methods of the Study to Explore Early Development (SEED), the largest epidemiologic study of autism. This is a first step in releasing results of this important study, which will help us learn more about factors that may put children at risk for autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities.

In addition, an important milestone this year was publishing the first ever comprehensive [report on children's mental health](#) in the United States. The report, released in collaboration with Mrs. Rosalyn Carter and the Carter Center, describes federal efforts on monitoring mental disorders and presents estimates of the number of children with these conditions. We hope to build on these efforts in the coming years.



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One of our successes this past year in the effort to [protect people and prevent complications of hemophilia](#) was working with partners to launch a surveillance program that will capture, among other data, information on inhibitors, a significant and costly complication of treatment for hemophilia. The surveillance will result in the first estimates of the incidence and prevalence of inhibitors among people with hemophilia in the United States.

All of us, including people with disabilities, need health programs and services to live the healthiest life possible. NCBDDD strives to [improve the health of people with disabilities](#) and we made great progress in 2013. For example, we increased public health capacity in 18 states using the Disability and Health Network to plan, prepare and include people with disabilities in health-protecting programs and services.

As I reflect on our many accomplishments, I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge one person who we lost this year, Dr. Tom Bartenfeld, Associate Director for Public Health Practice. Tom was beloved by his peers because of his remarkable wit and strategic thinking. His presence and contribution to complex public health problems will be sorely missed.

I am grateful to, and inspired by, the commitment of the people who work at NCBDDD and our partners and champions across the country with whom we work every day. Although our work ahead will be challenging, I know together we will continue to make a difference in the lives of the millions of Americans we serve.

Sincerely,



Coleen A. Boyle, PhD, MS(Hyg)

Director of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD)

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<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/aboutus/annualreport2013>

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