



## Preventing Stillbirth in Massachusetts

***Massachusetts has the 44th highest stillbirth rate in the country, losing 336 babies a year to stillbirth<sup>1</sup>.***

Within those distressing statistics, racial disparities paint a more startling picture. African American women experience stillbirth at twice the rate of the general pregnant population. Native American and Asian women, and mothers of Hispanic ethnicity, all have elevated rates of stillbirth as well. Parents of all races are ten times more likely to lose their baby to stillbirth than they are to SIDS, yet little prenatal education is dedicated to what can be done to prevent stillbirth.

***Count the Kicks is on a mission to change that!***

Count the Kicks<sup>2</sup> is a stillbirth prevention public health campaign that teaches pregnant moms to literally count their babies' movements daily in their third trimester. Our free mobile app makes it easier than ever to count kicks and even records a 21-day history, so a mom can see her baby's own kick patterns. Evidence shows that when moms know what is normal for their baby, they also are more aware of possible signs of distress and are empowered to speak to their medical provider. Count the Kicks has yielded tremendous success in Iowa, where the campaign got its start. In the first five years, Iowa's stillbirth rate decreased 26% and went from the 33<sup>rd</sup> worst to the 3<sup>rd</sup> best stillbirth rate in the country.

Massachusetts is fortunate to be the home of one of our volunteer Count the Kicks Ambassadors. Jillian Ducharme, of Lowell, tragically lost her daughter Dorothea to stillbirth in 2017. *"I'm so grateful I can honor my daughter by working with Count the Kicks to save babies' lives in Massachusetts and across the nation. I hope you'll join me."*

We are on a mission to reduce stillbirth by 26% in every state, just as we did in Iowa. For Massachusetts, that means saving the lives of 87 babies every year. We achieved this in Iowa not only with mom-to-mom sharing, but through a strategic public health awareness campaign aimed at maternity care providers – OB/GYN clinics, birthing hospitals, childbirth education classes, visiting nurses and social service providers. Four states – Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, and Nebraska – have local funding agreements through health departments, foundation grants and/or private donations to ensure all our printed materials are free of charge across their states. Although our educational materials are available for purchase, we would like to see them available free of charge to Massachusetts providers as well. We currently have no funding for dedicated outreach in Massachusetts but are actively seeking partners.

***We invite you to save babies with us!***

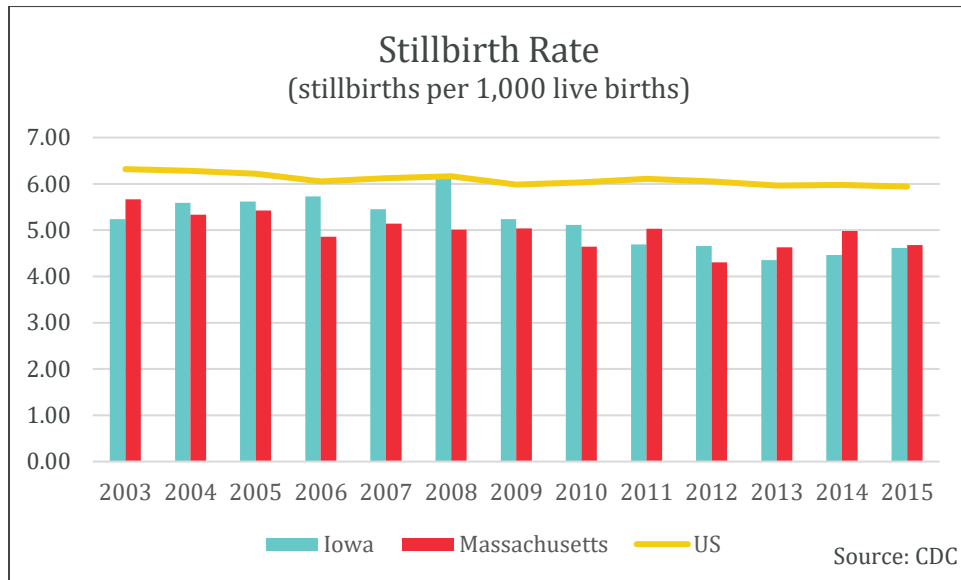
To learn more about Count the Kicks and to order materials, please visit [www.CountTheKicks.org](http://www.CountTheKicks.org).

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<sup>2</sup> Count the Kicks is a stillbirth prevention campaign of Healthy Birth Day, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization based in Des Moines, IA.

## Massachusetts specific data



To fully launch Count the Kicks in Massachusetts, we would:

- Conduct a call and mail campaign with all known maternal health providers and offer our printed educational materials be sent to them for free
- Inform all maternal health providers of our free digital tools they can use to implement Count the Kicks into their practice, such as how-to videos and lesson plans for incorporating kick counting into your prenatal classes
- Strategically place social media ads to expecting Massachusetts moms, encouraging them to download the free Count the Kicks app
- Have a presence at a well-attended baby show for direct mom-to-mom outreach
- Continue to tell Jillian's story in the media – and the story of the babies we save! – to raise awareness and influence more women to download the free Count the Kicks app

To measure program implementation, we will track:

- Massachusetts provider material orders, broken down by zip code
- Massachusetts Count the Kicks app downloads and use numbers, broken down by zip code
- Social media interaction with Massachusetts moms
- Media attention garnered in Massachusetts, and more

Program success will be measured by actual stillbirth numbers, as tracked by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and/or the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

To learn more about how to launch Count the Kicks in Massachusetts, please contact Executive Director, Emily Price, at [price.emily@healthybirthday.org](mailto:price.emily@healthybirthday.org) or Associate Director of Programs, Lina Tucker Reinders, at [reinders.lina@healthybirthday.org](mailto:reinders.lina@healthybirthday.org). You can also reach us by phone at 515.523.5MOM.