



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 21, 2005

No. 149

[www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)

**MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG ANNOUNCES HEALTHY WOMEN/HEALTHY BABIES INITIATIVE TO REDUCE UNINTENDED PREGNANCIES**

*New York to be First City in the Country to Fund Emergency Contraception Outreach –  
Goal is to Reduce Abortions and Improve Women's Health*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today announced a new \$3 million comprehensive program to improve women and infant health and reduce unintended pregnancies. Healthy Women/Healthy Babies Initiative will increase access to Emergency Contraception (EC), increase funding for family planning and expand the number of communities served by the Nurse Family Partnership program. Over 60% of pregnancies in New York City are unintended; women with unplanned pregnancies are less likely to seek early prenatal care and more likely to use alcohol and tobacco during pregnancy. The Mayor made the announcement after receiving the NARAL Pro-Choice New York's Champion's of Choice award for his commitment and achievement in protecting and expanding women's access to reproductive health.

"Unintended pregnancies can be prevented," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Through education and outreach we can increase access to Emergency Contraception, reduce the number of abortions and improve the lives of thousands of New York's women. Protecting the health of women goes beyond a commitment to choice and the right of women to control their own bodies. It means tackling the complex issues of reproductive health, so that all women, rich or poor, can have access to the latest advances in birth control and can make healthy and informed decisions."

The Mayor's \$3 million proposal for reducing unintended pregnancies and improving reproductive health include the following initiatives:

- **Emergency Contraception Education and Outreach Campaign:** The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) will spend \$1 million in partnership with community-based and health care organizations and primary care providers to increase awareness and access to emergency contraception. The program will be targeted to women at higher risk of unintended pregnancies and educate the public and health care providers about the benefits of emergency contraception.
- **Public health detailing on family planning:** DOHMH will conduct a campaign of one-on-one visits to all primary care providers by trained outreach professionals in neighborhoods with high rates of unintended pregnancy. Specialists will provide tools, resources, and materials for both providers and patients about birth control options, including emergency contraception.

*(more)*

- **Pharmacist outreach and education:** Many New York City pharmacies do not carry Emergency Contraception, and information about efficacy and safety can be improved. DOHMH will visit pharmacists in targeted neighborhoods to educate them about Emergency Contraception and encourage pharmacy stocking of the FDA-approved EC, Plan B. Pharmacists will also be encouraged to display and distribute educational materials on EC.
- **Advance Prescriptions:** Health and Hospitals Corporations will offer advance prescriptions for EC to women. This will ensure that women who choose to use EC will have it available to them when they need it.
- **Family Planning Initiative:** DOHMH will launch an initiative to promote family planning and emergency contraception to reduce unintended pregnancy through public education, family planning surveillance, as well as the Family Planning Providers Group, through which providers share best practices to improve access to comprehensive, high quality reproductive health care services. Public education activities include distributing to providers throughout the city patient-friendly education materials. DOHMH has produced EC palm cards available in English, Spanish and Chinese and brochures on the latest birth control options available. Additional funding will enable DOHMH to increase program reach and print additional materials.
- **Expansion of the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP):** In 2003, DOHMH piloted NFP, a comprehensive, nurse home visiting program with demonstrated improvements in maternal and child outcomes for first-time mothers in Jamaica, Queens. In 2004, DOHMH worked with HHC to implement NFP in Central Harlem. Most recently, NFP was launched in Central Brooklyn as part of a joint public-private partnership with the Robin Hood Foundation. This year, the \$500,000 used to serve 100 families in Central Harlem will be baselined in DOHMH's budget and an additional \$550,000 will enable DOHMH to bring this proven program to 100 families in the South Bronx, enrolling women during pregnancy, and following them through their child's second birthday.

- 30 -

Contact:	Edward Skyler / Jordan Barowitz	(212) 788-2958
	Sandra Mullin (DOHMH)	(212) 788-5290