

Fresno County Preterm Birth Collective Impact Initiative

What is this initiative about?

Across Fresno County, experts and families agree that improving the health of women and babies is very important. One major challenge is the high rate of babies born prematurely. Fresno County has one of California's highest rates of babies born prematurely: approximately 1 out of every 9 babies. Being born too soon can cause serious physical and mental disabilities or even death before the baby's first birthday. It has enormous human and financial costs for our families and affects the overall health of our community. **Conditions in Fresno County must be changed so that more women can have healthy pregnancies and healthy babies.**

To address this challenge, leaders in Fresno have come together to build a cross-sector, collaborative effort. Institutions and organizations across the County are working together, even those that have not previously worked together or that may not usually focus on health issues. This initiative will both improve the coordination of programs and services that are working well in the County, as well as introduce new and innovative practices.

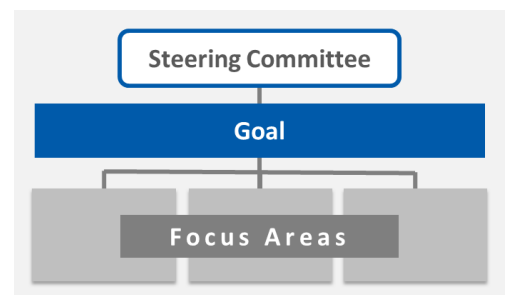
This initiative will serve all women and families in the County, while also providing specific support and services to the communities that are at highest risk for premature birth – for example, low income families, families living in southwest Fresno, and African American, Hispanic, and Southeast Asian families.

Who is contributing to this initiative?

A **Steering Committee** guides this initiative, providing leadership and oversight. To date, the Steering Committee has developed the effort's goals and focus areas with input from the community. The Steering Committee includes leaders from healthcare, education, community-based organizations, business, and other sectors that affect women & families:

- Andrea Powell, Mother with Lived Experience
- Artie Padilla, Every Neighborhood Partnership
- Captain Mark Salazar, Fresno Police Dept. Southwest District
- Davena Witcher, AMOR Foundation
- Dawan Utecht, Fresno County Dept. of Behavioral Health
- Emilia Reyes, First 5 Fresno County
- Gregory Hund, Cal Viva Health
- Dr. Joseph Castro, CSU-Fresno
- Dr. Kathryn Catania, Fresno County Office of Ed.
- Dr. Ken Bird, Fresno Department of Public Health
- Dr. Larry Rand, Preterm Birth Initiative/UCSF
- Dr. David Christensen, Valley Children's Hospital
- Dr. Subha Ladella, UCSF-Fresno
- Kristi Hernandez, Mother with Lived Experience
- Lynne Ashbeck, Community Medical Centers
- Niecia Harris, Mother with Lived Experience
- Preston Prince, Fresno Housing Authority
- Ruben Chavez, Clínica Sierra Vista
- Yolanda Randles, West Fresno Family Resource Center

Members of the community in Fresno County will be broadly engaged in this initiative to provide their perspectives on the health of women and families, recommend specific actions, and serve as partners in taking action in the focus areas identified. To date, over 150 experts and community members have contributed their ideas to this initiative.



What is the vision and goal for this initiative?

This **vision and goal** was created with input from people from across the community and may evolve based on our conversations with community members.

We envision a future in which **all women in Fresno County are in the best health before, during, and after pregnancy so that more babies are born healthy**. We will work tirelessly to **serve all women, babies, and families** in Fresno County, **with particular focus on those who are most at risk** for premature birth. In Fresno County, **everyone in the community**, including government, businesses, schools, universities, community colleges, churches, nonprofit organizations, and healthcare providers, has an important role in supporting the health of women and babies.

Our goal is **to reduce preterm births in Fresno County from 11.1% to 7% by 2025**. This is a 37% reduction of babies born prematurely in Fresno County as a result of good health for all women well before, during, and after pregnancy.

What will this initiative do?

The Steering Committee has identified three important **focus areas** for improvement in Fresno County:

 Health & Education before Pregnancy Deliver primary, behavioral, reproductive health services, and health education to empower women and men to be healthy before having children.	 Care and Support for Pregnant Women Deliver services and resources to women in their communities and neighborhoods to improve birth outcomes, address stress, and improve social and emotional support during pregnancy.	 Coordination of Care for Women Improve the coordination and integration of physical and behavioral healthcare, social services, and other support for women before, during, and after pregnancy
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The initiative has also identified several **strategies** that it will use across all of the focus areas:

- Changing **policy**
- Providing health and support services informed by a strong **understanding of the customs and practices of different cultures** in Fresno County
- Delivering services in the **communities and neighborhoods** where people live
- Addressing the **natural and built environment's** impact on the health of women
- In collaboration with other initiatives, improving **education and economic opportunities** for women and men

Data will also play an important role in helping this effort to track its progress, improve its impact, and communicate progress to the community. A committee of data specialists will help the initiative to do this.

What input can you provide today?

We need your help in answering the following questions based on your experience:

- Does the **goal** seem relevant and important for Fresno County?
- Will the three **focus areas** described above enable us to reach this goal?
- Is there anything critical **missing** from these focus areas?

If you would like to offer additional comments, please contact Sandra R. Flores at shflores@csufresno.edu or Olga Nuñez at nunezo@csufresno.edu. You may also call (559) 228-2126. Please visit our Facebook page at, <https://www.facebook.com/fresnocountypbtbi/>.