

ACTION STEPS FOR PROMOTING A HEALTHY CHILDHOOD BY IDENTIFYING AND TREATING MATERNAL DEPRESSION

- ▶ Maternal depression is widespread and can negatively impact the health and welfare of children
 - ▶ Maternal depression can trigger child neglect and abuse, and can impair development of emotions essential to bonding and relationships
 - ▶ Maternal depression can be reduced with treatment
 - ▶ Reducing maternal depression can reduce child abuse and neglect and promote healthy child development
 - ▶ Professionals should screen mothers for depression and refer women for treatment when indicated
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- Change insurance coverage to permit providers to charge for family services and not limiting reimbursement to the child or the parent.
 - Provide for culturally competent services and increase Spanish speaking clinicians providing services to mothers and families.
 - Increase support for peer to peer programs for depressed mothers.
 - Offer child care at facilities that provide mental health services to mothers.
 - Provide creative outreach to depressed women in their homes and other non-traditional settings to engage them in services.
 - Train providers who work with families, including but not limited to social workers, home visitors, case workers and nurses, the skills necessary for assessing and referring depressed women to mental health services.
 - Increase use of social media such as YouTube, Facebook and MySpace to provide information, support and referrals for services.
 - Co-locate mental health services with other health care services in one location with a family focused community approach to eliminate the stigma in accessing mental health services and to offer easier access for mental health services.
 - Increase awareness and understanding about depression in mothers and its effects on the healthy development of children.
 - Promote and support research on maternal depression.