



Indiana  
Department  
of  
Health



# Genomics and Newborn Screening Newsletter

June 2023

## June is Men's Health Month

Join the Genomics and Newborn Screening team in observing Men's Health Month and celebrating Father's Day. Men's Health Month aims to encourage boys and men to take charge of their health by implementing healthy living decisions. Men are encouraged to take steps to enrich their health and wellness through proper screenings and care.

This year, Father's Day is Sunday, June 18. We devote this time to celebrating fatherhood and recognizing the impact fathers have on families and society. Men's health can play a vital role in shaping families, from preconception to child-rearing. Preconception care for men is beneficial for reproductive and overall health and can help improve pregnancy outcomes. Incorporating a healthy balanced diet with foods rich in zinc and vitamin E, increasing physical activity, avoiding alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs, improving sleep habits, and limiting exposure to excessive heat can all contribute to improving reproductive and overall health in men. For additional information or to find out how to get involved, please visit the link below.

#MensHealthMonth #FathersDay

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## Newborn Screening

### Families' Decide: Storage of Residual Dried Blood Spots

The NBS Program is working to increase awareness about the importance of ensuring every NBS card has its Dried Blood Spot (DBS) Storage Consent Card completed and sent to the NBS Lab. Every family should be given the opportunity to decide whether or not they opt into the storage for three years. If families consent, the leftover blood can also be used to save lives! The information that can be learned from de-identified blood spot research leads to improved identification and treatment of life-threatening conditions. The DBS storage consent card on the back of every sample MUST have a selection box checked and include the parent's signature and date signed. Reach out to Jenn Weaver, NBS Program Manager, at [JWeaver@health.in.gov](mailto:JWeaver@health.in.gov) if you would like to see your facility's consent card completion rate.

### NBS Spotlight

The NBS program would like to highlight Lucy Happel and Baptist Health Floyd for their dedication and commitment to best practices in submitting timely and accurate monthly summary reports (MSR). Baptist Health Floyd has a 100% on-time rate for MSR submittals and only 4.6% of their samples submitted to the NBS lab had blank or missing dried blood spot (DBS) consent cards. Baptist Health Floyd submits roughly 80 dried blood spot samples per month with less than 18% quality indicators.

The GNBS program appreciates your hard work!



### Juneteenth and World Sickle Cell Awareness Day

June 19 is recognized as Juneteenth in the United States and World Sickle Cell Awareness Day globally. World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is celebrated annually to increase public knowledge and understanding of sickle cell disease. Sickle cell disease is a genetically inherited red blood cell disorder that causes the cells to become sickle or crescent-shaped, making it difficult to pass through small blood vessels. Sickle cell disease disproportionately affects people of African descent and currently affects more than 100,000 Americans. Juneteenth, short for June Nineteenth, commemorates the end of slavery in the United States. On June 19, 1865, federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to announce the end of the Civil War and take control of the state to ensure all enslaved people were freed. Recognition and celebration of Juneteenth and World Sickle Cell Awareness Day highlight the importance of history, diversity, and awareness. For more information or to learn more, please visit the link below.

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### Meet Nia Thoroughgood!

Nia is the newest member of the GNBS team, serving as the Genomics and Newborn Screening administrator. In this role, she provides support to the Indiana Birth Defects and Problems Registry (IBDPR) and the Newborn Screening Programs. Nia brings years of administrative and public health experience previously serving as a community health worker, health navigator, and office administrator. She received her Bachelor of Science in medical humanities and health studies from Indiana University in Indianapolis and is working to complete her master's in public health. In her free time, she enjoys traveling and spending time with family and friends.

## Did You Know?

### ADDM Network Award

The Indiana Birth Defects and Problems Registry (IBDPR) program is excited to announce our new award in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on a four-year surveillance project. Indiana is one of the newest sites within the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network working to help better understand the prevalence of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and the impact of ASD within the state to expand community resources.

This collaborative will aid in identifying changes in ASD occurrence over time, measure progress in early identification, and compare how common ASD is in different regions of the country. Ultimately, this work is aimed at improving health services and outcomes and expanding partnerships and collaborations through beneficial surveillance and transparency with the data to support individuals living with ASD and their families. More information to come on this exciting new opportunity!

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