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# DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

## Health Resources and Services Administration

## Summary of Responses to Request for Information (RFI): Opportunities to Apply a Department of Health and Human Services Message Library to Advance Understanding about Toddler and Preschool Nutrition and Physical Activity

**AGENCY:** Health Resources and Services Administration, HHS.

**ACTION:** Summary of Responses to Request for Information (RFI)

**SUMMARY:** On January 29, 2013, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) issued a Request for Information (RFI) to solicit ideas and information related to ways in which the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) can work with interested partners to disseminate and apply TXT4Tots, a library of short, evidence-based messages on nutrition and physical activity targeted to parents, caregivers, and health care providers of children ages 1-5 years. HRSA released the TXT4Tots library in English and Spanish on February 19, 2013; and followed with an Open Forum on February 20, 2013, to provide further opportunity for input on dissemination and application of the library of messages. HHS received over 25 written responses to the RFI, and approximately 100 individuals participated in the Open Forum.

**COMMENTS AND RESPONSES:** The written responses to the RFI as well as the comments received through the Open Forum indicate that TXT4Tots aligns with the activities of many existing organizations and programs. Several of the respondents expressed an interest in

collaborative opportunities to incorporate the messages into current outreach and educational efforts. Some examples of current programs that could leverage the TXT4Tots messages include initiatives at the federal, state, and local levels. The majority of the suggested organizations and programs focus on promoting healthy choices for children and their families. Recommendations included integrating the TXT4Tots messages into their programs and services or using the internet to disseminate the information through websites and social media.

Respondents also emphasized that mobile health, social media, and other innovative strategies are a valuable resource to reach a diverse population and can be effectively leveraged to support equitable access to health information. With regard to vehicles for dissemination of the TXT4Tots messages, respondents suggested that they needn't be complicated, but should be user friendly. In addition, respondents noted that the most effective tools for dissemination are those that can fully engage the end users. Specific suggestions for dissemination of the TXT4Tots messages included social media, existing tools and applications, existing websites and web services, and text messages, as well incorporating messages into baby product packaging, curricula, health fairs, emails, newsletters, and print materials. Emphasis was placed on leveraging existing platforms that promote healthy choices for young children and could readily integrate the TXT4Tots message content. Respondents also recommended that the TXT4Tots messages be linked to additional sources of information; for example, if utilized as a text message program, URLs could be included to link the message recipients to websites with additional information. In addition, social media posts could link to websites with ideas for healthy recipes and age-appropriate activities to compliment the messages. Some respondents indicated that the use of certain technology-based platforms may restrict access to the underserved, who might have limited access to smartphones or the internet. One additional

concern that was voiced by numerous respondents was confusion regarding the purpose of TXT4Tots and how it is intended to be used.  Specifically, it was unclear that this is a library of messages that could be used in a variety of existing platforms and products and not exclusively a text messaging service.  Guidance regarding specific details about the use of the TXT4Tots messages has been added to the TXT4Tots webpage (http://www.hrsa.gov/healthit/txt4tots).

HRSA appreciates all of the thoughtful comments received either via the RFI or Open Forum.  Guidance regarding specific details about the use of the TXT4Tots messages has been added to the TXT4Tots webpage (http://www.hrsa.gov/healthit/txt4tots).  It is our hope that the thoughtful recommendations and comments will spur others to explore innovative ways for disseminating the TXT4Tots content.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  Bethany Applebaum, MPH, Health Resources and Services Administration, Office of Women's Health and Office of Health Information Technology and Quality, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 7-100, Rockville, Maryland 20857, or email bapplebaum@hrsa.gov.

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Administrator

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