

**Massachusetts Recognized for *Promising Practices* for Goal One**  
**Fact Sheet**

**Goal One- Ready to Learn**

The aim of Goal One is to ensure that all children in America are ready to learn when they start school. The objectives of Goal One specifically target ensuring that all children have access to high quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs; parental involvement in the formative years, with the support and training new parents need; and children receiving the nutrition, physical activity experiences and health care needed to arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies ready to learn.

The indicator used in *Promising Practices* was the Children's Health Index which measures whether states have reduced the percentage of infants born with one or more of four health risks: late or no prenatal care; low maternal weight gain; mother smoked; or mother drank alcohol during pregnancy.

**Massachusetts:** This state is among both the most improved and the highest-performing states on the Children's Index. State officials attribute the success to the following programs and policies:

- *Closing the Gaps: Strategies for Improving the Health of Massachusetts Infants*, a report issued by the state Department of Public Health, initiated efforts to lower health risks for infants.
- The report's recommendations were instrumental in closing the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged infants and families.
- Massachusetts Healthy Start Program was effective in promoting information on and participation in referral services, health education, advocacy and follow-up care.
- The program relied on a multilingual staff and a toll free phone line that was instrumental in enrolling over half the women already on MassHealth.

**What is *Promising Practices*?**

- A report that details successful practices and policies in place in the states that have made progress toward the eight National Education Goals.
- Highlights the programs and policies that state officials attributed for their success.
- Serves as a tool to help states and schools replicate the highlighted successes. By extension it encourages greater progress in education, focused attention on results and helps sustain public support for education improvement.
- For a copy of *Promising Practices*, please visit [www.negp.gov](http://www.negp.gov) or call 202-724-0015.

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