

Safe Motherhood

Preventing Pregnancy-Related Illness and Death

Closing the Gap, Maternal Health • January/February 2004

The Safe Motherhood Program provides national leadership and coordinated action by bringing together states and many other partners devoted to safeguarding the health of mothers. The Safe Motherhood Program provides national leadership and coordinated action by bringing together states and many other partners devoted to safeguarding the health of mothers. The Safe Motherhood Program's mission is to promote the health of women before, during and after pregnancy. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and its federal partners work with state and local health departments and other organizations to collect and analyze data on maternal health, conduct research and translate the findings into high-quality, effective programs.

- ❖ Approximately 6 million American women become pregnant each year, and more than 10,000 give birth each day.
- ❖ Each day in the United States, between 2 and 3 women die of pregnancy-related causes. A pregnancy-related death is one that occurs during pregnancy or within 1 year after pregnancy and is caused by pregnancy-related complications.
- ❖ The risk of pregnancy-related complications has not decreased since 1982.
- ❖ The risk of death due to pregnancy varies greatly in different racial and ethnic groups. African American women are 4 times more likely and Hispanic women are 1.7 times more likely than White women to die of pregnancy-related complications.
- ❖ Among women who become pregnant in the United States each year, at least 30 percent have a pregnancy-related complication.
- ❖ Childbirth is the most common reason for hospitalization in the United States, and pregnancies with complications lead to more costly hospitalizations.

For more information on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Safe Motherhood Program, go to http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/bb_motherhood/

