

## Take 5 for Title V

As we celebrate our Mothers during the month of May, please take 5 minutes of your day to send a **letter to the editor** to express the importance of preserving the only federal program dedicated to improving the health of all women and children, the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant.

- **Now is the time.** Congress is making decisions this spring that will impact future funding of the Title V MCH block grant.
- **Members of Congress need to hear from you.** The opinions of constituents matter to elected officials. They need to hear about how this federal funding is vitally important to maternal and health programs in his/her state.
- **The media is a powerful tool.** Members of Congress staff scan the media for articles that mention them by name and clip them for a Member of Congress to read. Submitting a letter to the local newspaper is another way for your voice to resonate with elected officials.

### How do I submit a letter to the editor?

- 1) **Select a newspaper.** Local newspapers are fine.
- 2) **Review the guidelines.** These are typically posted on line.
- 3) **Be concise.** Space is limited and letters typically range in 150-200 words. Below is a draft template
- 4) **Email your letter.** Most newspapers prefer emailed submissions. Refer to the newspaper guidelines for additional information.
- 5) **Include your contact information.** First and last name, phone number and email address.
- 6) **Rejection.** If the newspaper rejects the letter to the editor please send it to another newspaper in the region or state.
- 7) **Publication.** If your letter is published let AMCHP staff know!

### DRAFT Letter to the editor

As Congress drafts funding bills for fiscal year 2013, I strongly urge Senator/Representative (insert name) to sustain funding for the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant at \$645 million.

For instance Title V programs (insert a few short state or local examples of services Title V provides or your personal story)

While tough decisions need to be made to restore our fiscal standing, I hope our elected officials don't decide to further cut the Title V MCH Services Block Grant and balance our budget on the backs of our nation's most precious resources – our children and our families.