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**Maine Birth Defects Program (MBDP)  
Annual Report to the Legislature for 2010  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
May 10, 2011**

**Background**

In September, 1999, a Maine law went into effect (22 MRS §§8941-8945) that authorized the Department of Health and Human Services to collect information on birth defects in Maine. The Maine Birth Defects Program was established within the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Family Health, Children with Special Health Needs Program. The program started collecting data in 2003.

**Purpose**

The overall purpose of the Program, using a public health approach, is to assess the full impact of birth defects on Maine children and their families, to improve access to specialty services for families and locate resources for emotional and economic support which includes referring the infant with a confirmed birth defect to the Part C agency, monitor trends related to the prevalence of selected birth defects in Maine, and to educate the provider community and the general public on prevention strategies to decrease the incidence of birth defects in Maine.

**Highlights**

This 2010 report summarizes the current activities of the Birth Defects Program as well as the ongoing and upcoming activities of the Program for 2011. It also shows selected birth defects counts and birth prevalence for the years 2003-2007. Some of the activities that the Birth Defects Program undertook in 2010 included working with birth hospitals to send data in electronically, working with Environmental Health Tracking to present data online on 12 birth defects, connecting with families once an infant was found to have a confirmed birth defect, and making referrals to the Part C agency to receive early intervention services as appropriate or desired. The Birth Defects Program also worked collaboratively with the other New England states through the New England Birth Defects Consortium on issues pertinent to the region including data sharing and prevention activities.

In 2011, the Birth Defects Program plans to continue to expand on the ongoing work being done including expanding the reportable birth defects list, expanding outreach to families with babies identified with birth defects and will continue to working collaboratively with the other New England states and other agencies in providing prevention activities and research projects.

**For more information on activities of the Maine Birth Defects Program:**

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