

### **Resolution 5.9.03**

#### *Resolution on Prenatal Care*

**Whereas**, the mother's physical and emotional well-being and adequate prenatal care are critical for a successful and healthy pregnancy.

**Whereas**, sustained parental anger and fear leads to the release of chemicals, which cross the placenta and compromise the development and health of the developing fetus.<sup>1</sup>

**Whereas**, a pregnant woman's use of cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs can impair the formation and connections between the developing fetus's brain cells, thus impairing healthy growth and development.<sup>2</sup>

**Whereas**, a developing fetus that is malnourished, due to the mother's diet, can suffer lasting behavioral and cognitive deficits, including slower language and fine motor development, lower IQ, and poorer school performance.<sup>2</sup>

**Whereas**, in the womb, the developing fetus is alert, aware, and attentive to activities involving voice, touch, and music.<sup>3</sup>

**Whereas**, a father's involvement, beginning in the prenatal period, can enhance the healthy emotional, physical, and mental development of the developing fetus.<sup>4</sup>

**Whereas**, prenatal stimulation yields a variety of benefits, including the enhancement of speech development, increased fine and gross motor performance, increased emotional self-regulation, better cognitive processing, greater confidence, greater activity at birth, and more intense bonding and greater family cohesion between family and developing fetus.<sup>3</sup>

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### **Therefore, be it resolved, that PCA America supports:**

Funding for programs that promote early prenatal care, prenatal bonding activities, maternal stress reduction techniques, and parent education, including voluntary home visiting services for families that provide support to pregnant women and their families throughout pregnancy and beyond.

Implementing accessible and affordable classes through hospitals, clinics, and other medical establishments that educate pregnant women and expectant fathers on how to best care for expectant mothers during their pregnancies.

Funding for programs that provide services that encourage and support appropriate father involvement to promote prenatal bonding.

Further research on the effects of prenatal stimulation, as well as maternal and environmental influences on gene expression.

Development of prenatal educational materials that include prenatal bonding and stimulation information, to be distributed to pregnant women at all clinics by physicians and other primary care professionals.



**Prevent Child Abuse**  
America

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- <sup>1</sup> Lipton, Bruce H. (1995). "Maternal Emotions and Human Development." *Life Before Birth: Very Early Parenting*.
- <sup>2</sup> Riley, Richard (1999). "How Are the Children?" *Report on Early Childhood Development and Learning*. U.S. Department of Education.
- <sup>3</sup> Chamberlain, David (Ed.) "What is Early Parenting?" *Life Before Birth: Very Early Parenting*. Association for Pre- & Perinatal Psychology and Health. Found online at <http://www.birthpsychology.com/lifebefore/early.html>.
- <sup>4</sup> Le Menestral, Suzanne (1999). "What Do Fathers Contribute to Children's Well-Being". Research Brief. *Child Trends*.

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**Prevent Child Abuse America**

200 South Michigan Avenue    17th Floor    Chicago, Illinois 60604.2404  
312.663.3520 *tel*    312.939.8962 *fax*    [www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org)