

## Insights

# The Top Ten Children's Health Stories of 2019



In the final weeks of 2019, we're looking back at our most popular articles of the year. From supporting safe rooming-in to the benefits of co-regulation, here's a rundown of the top ten website stories you found most engaging over the past year.

Thank you for reading our articles, liking them and sharing them with your networks. With your help, we're building a vast community of stakeholders committed to achieving equitable outcomes for all children across the country.

Read on to make sure you didn't miss out on the stories your peers found most valuable in 2019.

**[Interrupting the Mother-Child Dyad is not the Answer to Infant Safety](#)**

Babies "rooming-in" with mothers after birth not only has the potential to improve health outcomes for moms and babies, but it is a critical strategy for closing equity gaps in breastfeeding and, in turn, equity gaps in maternal and infant health. [Here](#), three experts offer advice on keeping moms and babies together safely so that both can benefit from this critical practice.

### **[Social Emotional Development Starts with Co-Regulation](#)**

Before children learn how to make a friend or resolve a conflict, they need to develop the capacity to self-regulate their emotions. [Here](#), Gerard Costa, PhD, the founding director of the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health at Montclair State University, explains why pediatric health professionals need to talk to families about co-regulation. (Hint, he also offers a resource for inspiring those conversations).

### **[North Carolina Has a Plan to Address Social Determinants of Health](#)**

Health is about more than health care. That's why North Carolina is developing a system that connects individuals with resources to address social, economic and environmental barriers to their health—such as housing, food insecurity, and transportation. [Learn how they're improving health outcomes](#) by putting funding and policy efforts into addressing social determinants of health.

### **[Successful Strategies Hospitals Can Use to Support Safe Sleep](#)**

Hospitals on a national initiative to improve safe sleep recently came together and shared successes and lessons-learned. [Here](#), find their highest-rated strategies for driving meaningful change, all of which reflect early successes in their work. Hospitals seeking to improve safe sleep education can refer to this list as a place to start and guide for gaining quick wins.

### **[Fathers: Powerful Allies for Maternal and Child Health](#)**

Fathers play a vital role in supporting children's health and development, beginning in the prenatal period and continuing through early childhood and adolescence. Too often though, fathers face barriers that get in the way of their involvement. In [this article](#), NICHQ President Scott Berns, MD, MPH, FAAP, describes strategies to empower fathers, ideas to support systems-change, and insights on leveraging two-generation approaches.

### **[A Mother-Centered Approach to Treating Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome \(NAS\)](#)**

With rising opioid addiction rates, increasingly high numbers of babies are being born with NAS. Centering NAS care on the mother-child relationship has powerful potential for improving infant health outcomes, empowering mothers as caregivers, and supporting a holistic continuum of care. [Here](#), Matthew Grossman, MD, expands on the benefits of a mother-centered approach for treating NAS.

## **Providing Developmental Screenings and Services in Rural Communities**

Families in rural communities across the country face unique barriers to supporting their children's developmental health and well-being. In [this article](#), learn how community coalitions in Alaska are connecting families to needed supports and services so more rural children can start school ready to succeed.

## **"The Act of Making a Referral is Not Enough"**

Universal developmental screenings can help identify children at risk for developmental delays so they can reach their full potential. An effective screening process relies on successful referrals though—without a referral, families can never access the supports the child may need. [Here](#), Dipesh Navsaria, MPH, MSLIS, MD, provides five steps to build a referral process that works.

## **Breastfeeding in 2019: Safe Sleep, Bias, Gender Equitable Norms and Paid Leave**

In honor of National Breastfeeding Month, we've taken time with Lori Feldman-Winter, MD, MPH, an internationally and nationally recognized expert on breastfeeding nutrition, education and policy. [Here](#), she shares how harnessing successes, addressing bias and breaking down barriers that prevent equity can help us pursue sustainable improvements in the years ahead.

## **Eliminating the Consequences of Maternal Depression**

Experts from the Brookings Institution, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, the Medical University of South Carolina, and Postpartum Support Charleston analyze the impact of maternal depression on children and families, and describe concrete steps health professionals can take to ensure that more mothers are screened and referred to support and resources. Read [the article](#).

***What children's health innovation stories have you read lately? Share them with us @NICHQ on [Twitter!](#)***