

A Happier Mother's Day for Every Mom, Everywhere

From Malawi to Milwaukee, the birth of a child can be the most hopeful day of a parent's life. Yet for too many, that hope is cut short: each year 6.3 million children still die of mainly preventable and treatable causes before they reach their fifth birthday.

This need not be the case. The latest evidence shows that we can end unnecessary deaths of mothers and children globally by 2035. What we do today, though, will decide if we meet that goal. New legislation now proposes a smarter, more effective approach to getting us there.

With Mother's Day approaching, there's no better time to remind our communities and decision makers that every mother everywhere wants to see her children grow up healthy, go to school, and build a bright future. Use the media to tell your Member of Congress that your Mother's Day wish this year is that every child has the chance to thrive. Here's your step by step guide:

1. **Reference a recent story in the paper** on children, families, a health issue, or Mother's Day. Try appealing to values and experiences that easily relate to your community.
2. Tell readers **what you want for Mother's Day** or what you want to give as a Mother's Day gift this year: a healthy, bright future for millions of mothers and children worldwide.
3. Emphasize that **this isn't just a pipe dream**. The evidence shows that the end of preventable maternal and child deaths is possible, and forth-coming legislation will help **turn this lofty goal into a viable plan**.
4. **Mention your members of Congress** by name, saying you hope they'll take a stand for moms and babies all over the world this year by adding their names to the new bill.

Legislation to help finish the job

The United States has long been a leader helping moms and babies survive and thrive, partnering with developing countries to support things like vaccines and quality nutrition. However, a high-level review by a panel of business and development leaders concluded that we will not meet our goals without first addressing underlying bureaucratic challenges.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), our main global development agency, is already implementing some of the panel's proposed reforms. But this alone will not be enough. **New, bipartisan legislation will hold USAID accountable for a smarter, more effective approach to ending preventable maternal and child deaths.** Requiring a centralized and coherent strategy, the bill will maximize our investments, with returns measured in lives saved and healthy, prosperous communities.

Getting your name in print

Try following the “EPIC” format like the sample below. Remember to keep it short (100-200 words), and be sure to include a local “hook” (preferably a story already printed in the paper). By tying your letter to a Mother’s Day memory or a local story about childhood or parenthood, you can increase your chances of publication and make your letter more easily relatable.

<u>Engage</u>	The new maternity ward downtown helped this new grandmother breathe easier as my first grandbaby was born last month (“6 ways Ithaca’s new maternity ward has improved childbirth,” <i>Ithaca Voice</i> , Mar. 9). Now my wish for Mother’s Day is that every baby has the same healthy start to life.
<u>Problem</u>	Millions of grandmothers like me miss out on the chance to see their grandkids grow up healthy and strong. We tragically lose 6.3 million children every year before they reach their fifth birthday. Most of those deaths can be prevented.
<u>Inform about the solution</u>	Forthcoming legislation in Washington will help put us on a track to end senseless deaths of young children once and for all.
<u>Call to action!</u>	When the bill is introduced, I hope Rep. Tom Reed will co-sponsor it, making bright futures for every mom and baby a top priority, just like here in Ithaca.

Get started now, ahead of Mother’s Day. [Recent county health rankings may be a good hook](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org) (<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org>). Once your letter is finished, have someone read it over, then submit it according to the requirements of your paper. Not every letter gets published every time, but the more you send, the more likely you are to meet with success.

Magnify Your Voice with an Op-Ed

Ready to take your Mother’s Day media to the next level? Try an op-ed. Find tips for powerful op-eds in the [RESULTS Activist Toolkit](#).

Once You’re Published

If your letter gets published, amplify its impact by sending a copy to your members of Congress, reminding them why this issue matters, and asking them to take action. If you’re on social media, share it there as well, mentioning your member of Congress and the newspaper that published you. Then be sure to share your letter with your fellow advocates and RESULTS staff.

Need More Background Information?

Use this [fact sheet](#), watch our [webinar](#), or read about [USAID’s child survival work](#) online.