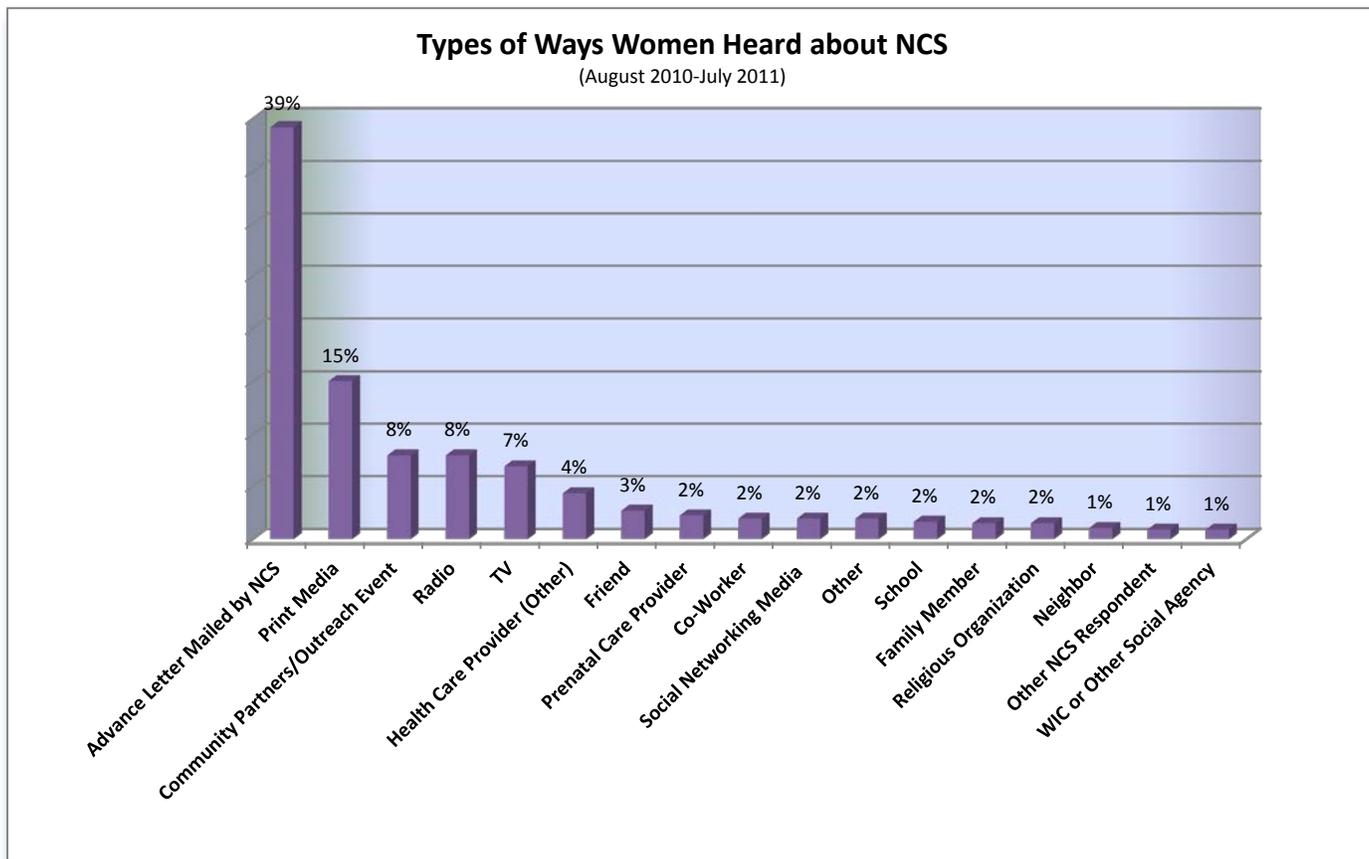


Elizabeth A. Greenwell, ScD; Susan Johnson, PhD; Patricia Nash, MS; Jill Landsbaugh, PhD; Nick Flattery, MPH; Tabria Winer, MPH; Dana Dabelea, MD, PhD  
on behalf of the Colorado Study Center

## Outreach and Engagement Strategies in Douglas County, Colorado: Patterns of Response and Associated Costs

**Introduction:** The development of an extensive outreach and engagement marketing strategy is essential for self-referral and enrollment of the target population into the Two Tier High-Low Intensity NCS Recruitment Strategy. We describe the methods used to increase public awareness and recruitment of study participants as well as overall personnel and materials (non-labor) costs associated with these methods.

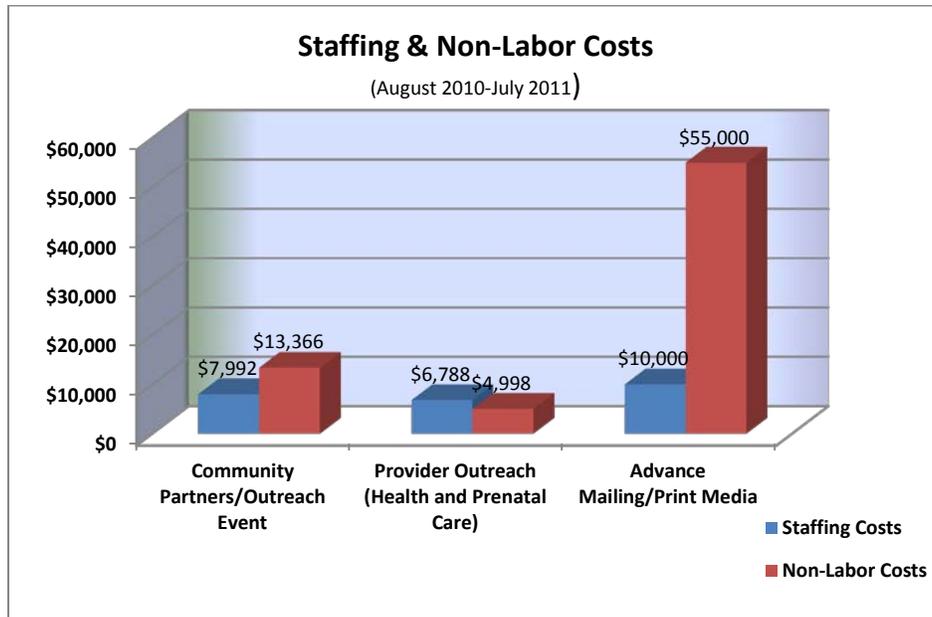
**Methods:** The Colorado Study Center outreach team developed and implemented several conventional marketing strategies such as direct mail, print, television/radio advertisements and community events (Table 1). Health and prenatal care providers were contacted to solicit their interest in distributing informational brochures to potential participants. Social networking media such as Facebook and a local study center web site were established. Marketing materials and study information were distributed to community partners and businesses, obstetric and pediatric clinics, health provider offices, local media sources, and posted on the Internet. We employed 17 outreach and engagement methods from August 2010 through July 2011 to elicit about 1150 women to complete a Pregnancy Screener. Overall, about 700 women responded to the question “How did you hear about the NCS?” and about 450 women did not indicate a response.



**Figure 1.** Types of Ways Women Heard about the NCS by Outreach and Engagement Strategy (\*Denominator is based on N=700 participants who completed the pregnancy screener and responded to the question "How did you hear about the National Children’s Study?" It does not include N=450 participants that did not indicate a response).

**Results:** Figure 1 indicates our most effective outreach method was receipt of an advance letter (e.g. eligibility packet, door hanger, or postcard) mailed or delivered to a geographically eligible dwelling unit (39% of responses). Other successful strategies were print media (15%) (e.g. direct advertisements in local newspapers, mall or movie theatre ads, postcards, distribution of informational materials), community partners/outreach events (8%), radio (7%), television media campaigns (7%) followed by health care providers

(4%). Overall, 3% of women heard about the NCS from one source only; 20% heard from 2 sources, 6% from 3 sources, and 2% from 4 or more sources. Staffing and non-labor costs are depicted in Figure 2. Non-labor costs include marketing materials such as brochures, pamphlets, posters, supplies, print materials and postage for advance mailings but does not include incentives or development costs. Figure 2 shows that advance mail/print media require higher staff and non-labor costs than both community outreach events and provider outreach methods.



**Figure 2.** Staffing and Non-Labor Costs by Outreach and Engagement Strategy

**Discussion:** The use of multiple outreach strategies has been successful in increasing public awareness and self-referral into the High-Low recruitment strategy at our study center. So far, the most successful and cost-effective approaches to increase awareness and elicit self-referral were advance mail and print media. Future strategies will also incorporate social media marketing.