The mission of the National Research Center for Women & Families is to improve the health and safety of adults and children every day.

Our Cancer Prevention and Treatment Fund helps adults and children reduce their risk of developing cancer and ensures that they get the best possible treatment.

As a trusted, impartial voice that uniquely blends research and advocacy, we gather, synthesize, and apply medical and scientific information to improve programs and policies that affect people’s lives. We scrutinize research findings, conduct new studies, and provide information to the public, the media, opinion leaders, and policymakers. We are dedicated to making a difference for adults and children across the country, from the White House to your house.
In 2007 and 2008, the National Research Center (NRC) for Women & Families significantly advanced its mission as a trusted and influential source of unbiased information on health and safety.

We initiated a Cancer Prevention and Treatment Fund, which will expand our work aimed at preventing cancer and helping adult and children cancer patients.

We tackled issues ranging from the rising number of unnecessary mastectomies to the regulation of dangerous substances in plastic bottles, toys, and other common household items.

Our presence on Capitol Hill increased, as did our impact on individuals across the nation. It has been so gratifying when they write to us and thank us for our work on their behalf.

The media continued to turn to NRC as a credible source for the latest health news, with coverage including USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Washington Post, the CBS Evening News with Katie Couric, MSNBC’s Hardball, The Rachel Ray Show and National Public Radio. Our three web sites received more than 25 million hits, attesting to NRC’s importance as a public health resource.

Specific accomplishments include:

• We worked with the House and Senate to pass the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, which was signed into law in August 2008. The new law requires that toys be tested for safety before they are sold and be free of lead and six types of phthalates, a chemical used in plastic that has been linked to genital changes in boys and cancer.

• We were instrumental in persuading Congress to improve the national laws regulating medications, vaccines, and medical devices, to strengthen the safeguards that protect consumers.

• We wrote a series of survival guides for working moms and our first survival guide for military spouses. The series resulted in NRC’s first book: The Survival Guide for Working Moms (and Other Stressed-Out Adults), funded and published by the office supplies company Quill Corporation.

• We developed and disseminated our first free, continuing medical education course, a comprehensive online course on breast cancer treatment for primary care physicians and other health professionals.

• We partnered with the Environmental Protection Agency to develop fact sheets on several environmental health issues of importance to older women, such as the risks of exposure to certain cleaning fluids and pesticides.

Whether explaining well-established, but complicated scientific information to families and their doctors, or making sense of controversial new research, we scrutinize what research does and does not show and provide unbiased analysis to the public, the media, and policy-makers. As we have since our founding in 1999, our research and advocacy work continues to represent the interests and needs of ordinary women and their families, who are too often left out of policy debates.

Diana Zuckerman, PhD
President
NRC’s mission is to improve programs and policies that affect the health and safety of adults and children. In 2007-2008, we provided free information for breast cancer patients and the doctors who serve them, testified before Congress and the Food and Drug Administration to improve the safety and effectiveness of medical products, won hard-fought improvements in the safety of toys and children’s products, advised parents and policymakers about the new HPV vaccine for cervical cancer, improved policies that could reduce childhood obesity, and shared useful suggestions about how to juggle work and family responsibilities. Highlights from our programs and initiatives from 2007-2008 follow:

Cancer Prevention And Treatment Fund

Helping Curtail the Alarming Rise In Unnecessary Mastectomies

Every year, more than 250,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer or "pre-cancerous" conditions that may never become cancer. Experts agree that more than 75 percent of these women do not need mastectomies if they have access to other, equally safe treatment. Yet, as unbelievable as it may seem, in some parts of our country, medically unnecessary mastectomies are increasing, not decreasing.

NRC believes that by translating research findings into clear, everyday language and making that information widely available, we can reduce the number of mastectomies and improve cancer treatment at the same time. We can reach this goal by making sure that women understand their treatment options, doctors communicate more clearly with their patients, insurance companies cover the best treatments, and doctors and patients are aware of the best ways to prevent cancer.

To this end, in 2007 the Center established the Cancer Prevention and Treatment Fund, devoted to the prevention of all types of cancers, improved screening, and an increase in the numbers of patients who receive the best treatments. The Fund is supported in part by donation through the Combined Federal Campaign (#11967). NRC also received a generous grant in 2008 from the Jenifer Altman Foundation to strengthen its scientific scrutiny of exposures that cause cancer.

Many larger organizations are committed to research on cancer, but NRC is the only one focused on quality of care and translating research into practice. A generous grant from the Blaustein Family Foundation has enabled us to develop two new patient booklets, one for DCIS and one for LCIS, the two most common forms of "pre-cancerous" breast conditions. We also developed a Continuing Medical Education (CME) course to help primary care physicians and gynecologists be more knowledgeable about the latest treatment. This CME course is available online on the Medscape Web site.

Reducing Toxins In Our Homes

Certain kinds of plastic containers contain harmful chemicals that seep into foods and beverages. Phthalates and Bisphenol A (BFA) are both "endocrine disruptors" that have been linked to genital abnormalities, early puberty, cancer and other health problems. BFA is found in hard clear plastic, such as baby bottles, and in the lining of canned food and infant formula. Phthalates are used in personal care products and to soften plastic.

Until recently phthalates were also used in toys that often ended up in babies’ mouths. Thanks to the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, which NRC was instrumental in drafting and getting signed into law in August 2008, toys sold in the U.S. will no longer contain phthalates. NRC fought and prevailed over ExxonMobil, which manufactures the main phthalate used in toys (DINP) and spent tens of millions of dollars in its failed lobbying effort.

NRC is an active member of the Coalition on Health and the Environment (CHE) and co-chairs a policy taskforce on women’s health and the environment (WHEI). We also worked with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop fact sheets produced in 2007 on several environmental health issues of importance to older women, such as the risks of cleaning fluids and pesticides.

Ensuring the Safety Of Medical Products

“FDA-Approved” Doesn’t Necessarily Mean Safe for You

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration reviews thousands of new medical devices every year be — most without
As long as the products are “substantially equivalent” to others on the market, a loose definition that does not require that they be made of the same material or use a similar mechanism of action, they can be sold in the United States. In addition, the vast majority of prescription drugs and implantable devices are approved on the basis of short-term safety and may not be proven safe for long-term use. More needs to be done to keep us from being harmed by products meant to help us.

NRC has taken a leading role in improving policies meant to protect the public from unsafe medical products. Our report, FDA Advisory Committees: Does Approval Mean Safety?, revealed a flawed system where “independent scientists” publicly admit that they have doubts about the safety and effectiveness of medical products that they are recommending for FDA approval. The media and the public have used the report to better understand the FDA and policymakers have used it to consider policy changes to improve that process. In 2008, NRC’s president authored the article “Do Conflicts of Interest Undermine FDA Approval Decisions?” in The Journal of Regulatory Affairs and was frequently interviewed and quoted on the inadequacy of government guidelines to reduce conflicts of interest.

In 2007 and 2008, NRC was one of the nation’s most effective nonprofit organizations working to improve the law which gives the FDA authority to protect consumers from unsafe medical products. NRC helped ensure that the FDA Advancement Act, signed into law in October 2007, included new safeguards and increased resources to strengthen the safety of prescription drugs and medical devices. As a result of our work, NRC president, Dr. Diana Zuckerman was asked to join the Board of Directors of the Reagan Udall Foundation, which was created as a public-private partnership to help strengthen the FDA.

Testifying Before Congress and the FDA

NRC played an important role in FDA legislation that was introduced in 2006 and became law in September 2007. In May 2007 and June 2007, Dr. Zuckerman testified before the U.S. House of Representatives’ Energy and Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Health, on the need to improve safeguards in medical device legislation. We are proud to say that this bill was significantly improved because of our efforts regarding medical devices, public access to clinical trial data, and post-market safeguards.

A National Approach To Reducing Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity is on the rise, and with it, younger and younger children are experiencing health problems normally associated with adults, such as dangerously high cholesterol levels and Type 2 diabetes, formerly known as “adult diabetes.” Thanks to a generous planning grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, NRC reached out to women’s and girls’ organizations to discuss strategies for fighting the epidemic of childhood obesity, and interviewed dozens of Congressional staff members from the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to compile information about policy strategies. In March 2007, Dr. Zuckerman appeared on the CBS Evening News with Katie Couric, to talk about the links between early puberty and obesity in girls.

Child obesity rates in Washington, D.C. are especially high, and in 2008 Dr. Zuckerman testified at the Public Oversight Roundtable on School Health Programs in DC’s Public Schools on the urgent need for schools to address this health risk.

Help for Working Moms In Today’s Hectic World

Balancing work and family a challenge that can affect the health and safety of all family members.

The UPS Foundation funded our Survival Guides for Working Moms with a very generous grant, allowing us to create 10 articles aimed at providing information to help reduce stress for working mothers. With the donation of design services by Ogilvy PR Worldwide, we were able to create survival guides with topics that included reducing stress, getting enough rest, preparing healthful meals despite a busy schedule, child care, organizing home and life, and teaching kids good behavior. In addition, a Survival Guide for Military Spouses on the topic of “Can Stress Make You Sick?” was produced and distributed.

In 2008, Quill Corporation, a billion
dollar office supply e-tailer and wholly owned subsidiary of Staples, Inc., partnered with NRC on a book, The Survival Guide for Working Moms (and Other Stressed-Out Adults). Written by the NRC President and Director of Public Affairs, Diana Zuckerman and Brandel France de Bravo, 50,000 copies of the book will be provided to Quill customers, employees, and to NRC’s friends and contributors.

Nearly one-third of all college students have experienced some form of dating violence. NRC’s brochure on violent dating relationships, targeted to college women, has been used on campuses across the country. Diana Zuckerman’s article in the October 2008 issue of Journal of Adolescent Health, “Teenagers and Cosmetic Surgery: Focus on Breast Augmentation and Liposuction” exposed the dramatic rise in plastic surgery among teenagers.

NRC also worked to improve federal policies on health insurance for children, sick leave, and regulating tobacco products to protect children.

Internships Honoring Role Models

Our summer internship program includes internships named for Ted Weiss and Marcy Gross, whose idealism and accomplishments have inspired our work.

Ted Weiss Internship

Rep. Ted Weiss (D-N.Y.) was a Congressional champion for domestic health policy and human rights, and was known as the “conscience of the Congress.” His Congressional oversight hearings were legendary, whether they focused on the safety of medical products, the need to marshal resources to defeat the AIDS epidemic, or how ideology interfered with science and public policy. Rep. Weiss was elected to the House of Representatives in 1976 and served until his death in 1992.

Thanks to our 2007 and 2008 Ted Weiss Interns, Christina Medina and Laura Walls, and other college student interns, NRC reached out to young women on MySpace and Facebook. Christina and Laura linked our Web pages on these social networks to students and advocacy organizations, to alert them about important legislation and health issues, including reproductive health and dating violence. In addition, both young women learned how to lobby Congress and work in coalitions.

Marcy Gross Internship

Marcy Gross was a nationally respected advocate for women’s health who served as a senior adviser at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Ms. Gross helped build the foundation for federal policies regarding sexual assault and other women’s health issues, and co-authored a report that became the basis of the federal Healthy Start Program, aimed at reducing infant mortality and promoting health care for children. After retiring from the federal government in 2002, Ms. Gross helped organizations dedicated to women’s health and safety. She worked closely with NRC on our efforts to improve the quality of care for breast cancer patients until her death in 2006.

Joan Dawson was our Marcy Gross Intern for the fall of 2007. Joanie has an MPH from The Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. She has worked as a cancer information specialist at Johns Hopkins Hospital and as an editorial coordinator at the National Academy of Sciences. As our Marcy Gross intern, Joanie focused on projects to reduce violence against women by reaching out to women’s centers, health centers, sororities, student groups, college professors, and research centers to form a network of affiliates. Joanie also encouraged colleges to reduce sexual assaults on campus, as well as distributed NRC’s pamphlet on abusive dating.

Reducing Health Disparities, Preventing Teen Violence, And More

“For Whites only” is an offensive phrase from another era. Yet many medical products that are sold to everyone are tested only on Whites.

NRC has been an effective voice for more diversity in clinical trials and NRC president Diana Zuckerman contributed a chapter entitled, “Ethics of Inclusion and Exclusion: Race, Gender and Age” to the forthcoming book, The Penn Center Guide to Bioethics.
COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

relationships.

Joy Simonson Internship

In 2007, NRC announced our new internship named in honor of Joy Simonson, our National Advisory Board member, Foremother, and friend, who passed away in June 2007 at the age of 88. Joy was well known in the women’s community as an activist and advocate into her 70s and 80s. That was just the latest in a long list of accomplishments, starting when she moved to Washington in the 1940s to work for the War Manpower Commission, and then to Egypt and Yugoslavia immediately after World War II to work for the United Nations. To honor and continue Ms. Simonson’s remarkable legacy, the internship will focus on health issues for midlife and older women.

Foremother Awards

The Foremother Awards Luncheon celebrates inspirational women who helped improve the lives and opportunities of women and children across the country. The honorees broke down barriers and continued their work long after they were expected to retire.

We recognized five distinguished women in both 2007 and 2008.

2007 Honorees

Helen Thomas has been cited as one of the 25 Most Influential Women in America, and is often called “The First Lady of the Press.” She is the former UPI White House Bureau Chief, and has covered every president since John F. Kennedy. Ms. Thomas was the only female print journalist traveling with President Nixon to China on his breakthrough trip in 1972.

She has the distinction of having traveled around the world several times with Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Clinton, and covered every world economic summit.

Dr. Bernice Sandler played a major role in the development and passage of Title IX and other laws prohibiting sex discrimination in education. The New York Times referred to her as the “Godmother of Title IX.” She is the author of three books, has made more than 2,500 presentations, and has written more than 100 articles. Nationally respected for her research and expertise in women’s educational equity, Dr. Sandler has focused on policies and programs affecting students of all ages, exposing the chilly classroom climate for girls and women.

Carmen Delgado Votaw has worked on behalf of women, children, and families in the United States and internationally. She served in public policy leadership positions for United Way of America and Girl Scouts of the USA. Ms. Votaw has visited nearly 70 countries to speak on human and civil rights and on development and women’s issues. She has participated in countless international forums of governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including five United Nations World Conferences on Women.

Sophie Altman is the creator and executive producer of It’s Academic, recognized by the Guinness Book of Records as the world’s longest-running TV quiz show. Ms. Altman created It’s Academic to recognize the academic achievements of local high school students, and the show is now in its 46th season on Washington’s NBC4.

2008 Honorees

The event was emceed by Katharine Weymouth, the new publisher of The Washington Post and granddaughter of Katharine Graham.

Dr. Roselyn Payne Epps is a nationally respected physician who broke down barriers for women in medicine. In 1980, she was appointed the first Acting Commissioner of Health for the District of Columbia. Since 1998, she has served as a consultant for the public and private sectors, and as Senior Program Advisor at the Howard University Women’s Health Institute. Dr. Epps has written more than 90 articles for medical publications, co-edited The Women’s Complete Handbook, and was the first African American president of several organizations, including the American Medical Women’s Association.

Mary Frances Berry is best known as the outspoken member of the U.S. Department of Education.
Commission on Civil Rights under President Carter, who was fired by President Reagan for criticizing his civil rights policies. She won reinstatement in federal district court. In 1993, President Clinton designated her Chairperson of the Civil Rights Commission, where she served until December, 2004. Under Dr. Berry’s leadership, the Commission issued several important reports, including an investigation of eligible voters who were told they could not vote during the November 2000 election in Florida. She is on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania.

Marion Ein Lewin, a Holocaust survivor, is nationally recognized for her distinguished career in health care policy and particularly for serving as a “guiding light and mentor” in training talented health care professionals to assume leadership roles in federal health care policy and programs. From 1987 to 2001, she served as senior staff officer at the Institute of Medicine directing the Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellowships Program, the American Association of Nurses Nurse Scholar Program, and the national office of the Pew Health Policy Program.

Connie Morella won a seat in the Maryland General Assembly in 1978 and went on to be the first woman from the Assembly to be elected to U.S. House of Representatives. During her eight terms, she was often the lead Republican on legislation to support medical research and to improve the lives of women and families. She was instrumental in generating bipartisan support for those bills, becoming co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues.

Ms. Morella recently returned to the U.S. after serving as Ambassador to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver has worked tirelessly on behalf of persons with disabilities for the past four decades. At a time when there was considerable stigma associated with having a disabled child, she founded the Special Olympics, and remained Honorary Chair of what became a highly visible international movement “to demonstrate that people with mental retardation are capable of remarkable achievements in sports, education, employment, and beyond.” Today the Special Olympics serves more than 2 million athletes in 150 countries. Shriver has been recognized with numerous honors and awards, including The Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1984.

Friday Luncheon Series

On selected Fridays throughout the year, NRC hosts a luncheon devoted to controversial, cutting-edge health issues. We invite policy experts and researchers to provide objective, useful information on such issues. The luncheons, held at the Washington law offices of Reed Smith, are free and open to the public. The luncheons provide first-rate speakers and foster topical discussions. Sponsors include Corner Bakery Café Catering and Chevy Chase Bank. Lunches in 2007 and 2008 included the following:

- What Works Best to Prevent Cancer: The Real News Behind the Headlines. Larissa Korde, MD from the National Cancer Institute and Dr. Janet Phoenix, Director of Policy Research at NRC spoke at this luncheon.
COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

• Which are Safest: The Risks of Soaps, Creams, and other Care Products on the Health of Women and Children? This luncheon featured speaker Jane Houlihan, Vice President for Research, Environmental Working Group.

• The Myth and Reality of Dietary Supplements. Lesley Fair, Senior Attorney at the FTC’s Bureau of Consumer Protection, was the guest speaker.

• Can Being Green Improve Our Health? Bill Browning, Founding Partner of Terrapin Bright Green was the featured speaker.

• Cell phones and Your Health: How Safe Are They and What’s the Safest Way to Use Them? This lunch featured NRC’s own Diana Zuckerman.

• Buying Safe Toys and Gifts for the Holidays. NRC President Diana Zuckerman spoke at this luncheon.

Every year the Center also hosts a very popular luncheon for summer interns from across the country. In both 2007 and 2008, our topic was body image and the guest speaker was the FTC’s Lesley Fair.

NRC provides policymakers with an unbiased explanation of scientific data so that they can make educated decisions for their constituents and the nation. Our research and advocacy work represents the interests of ordinary women and families, who are often left out of policy debates. We educate leaders in our nation’s capital and across the country. We also helped organize the Patient and Consumer Coalition to educate members of Congress about the need for stronger FDA safeguards.

Speeches

Below is just a sample of speeches and addresses in 2007 and 2008:

• Dr. Zuckerman spoke about NRC and health policy to the Congressional Fellows at an event sponsored by the Women’s Research and Educational Institute on Capitol Hill in February 2007.

• Dr. Zuckerman presented at the annual conference of the American Public Health Association on the FDA and women’s health, November 2007.

• Dr. Zuckerman was the keynote speaker, talking about childhood obesity, at the biennial conference of Delta Kappa Gamma, an international honor society for women educators in April 2008.

• Dr. Zuckerman was an invited speaker at The Center for Science in the Public Interest’s Fourth National Integrity in Science Conference where she spoke on “Reducing Conflicts of Interest on Federal Advisory Committees.”

Events and Coalition Building

• In the summer of 2007, NRC hosted another media training workshop for nonprofit organizations. Turner Strategies generously donated its staff and time for the event. The organizations participating included the National Women’s Health Network, American College of Medical Genetics, The National Academies, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Association of University Women, and the American Lung Association.

• NRC’s Capitol Hill reception and book signing in September 2007 celebrated cancer survivors and public policies to prevent and treat cancer. It brought attention to an important new book by Dr. Devra Davis, The Secret History of the War on Cancer, as well as to a beautiful book for cancer survivors, Connie Reider’s In Shadow and Light: Looking for the Gifts of Cancer.

• We hosted a Capitol Hill briefing on Women, Medical Product Safety, and the FDA in June 2008. Diana Zuckerman spoke along with Dr. Kathleen Uhl, Director for Office of Women’s Health at the FDA; Dr. Susan Wood, former Assistant Commissioner for Women’s Health and NRC Board Member; and Amy Allina, Policy Director for the National Women’s Health Network.

• NRC conducted numerous coalition meetings and conference calls in 2007 and 2008 in its role as coordinator of the Patient and Consumer Coalition, which includes Consumers Union, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, the Union of Concerned Scientists, the National Women’s Health Network, Center for Medical Consumers, the National Consumer League, Title II Community AIDS Action Network, the Government Accountability Project, Our Bodies Ourselves, the Breast Cancer Fund, Breast Cancer Action, WoodyMatters, and U.S. PIRG.
In the News

In 2007 and 2008, the media continued to turn to NRC for timely health and medical information from a credible source. We responded to frequent requests from reporters and producers across the country for information, comments and interviews. Op-eds and letters to the editor from NRC staff appeared regularly. The following is just a small sample of our coverage in 2007-2008:

Television and Radio

NRC staff were interviewed on numerous national television programs as well as by many local affiliates. Television and radio broadcasts include: The CBS Evening News with Katie Couric, CNBC, MSNBC’s Hardball with Chris Matthews, the Washington affiliates of ABC and NBC, The Rachel Ray Show, National Public Radio (Morning Edition and All Things Considered), and Univision Radio.

National Newspapers and Periodicals

NRC and comments by staff were cited in national newspapers, including USA Today, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, Congressional Quarterly Weekly, and wire services such as Associated Press, Reuters, and Dow Jones, as well as in popular magazines and medical journals such as The National Enquirer and the New England Journal of Medicine.

Regional Newspapers and Their Web Sites


International News Outlets

International and foreign language media outlets that covered NRC include Canada’s National Post, Canada.com, The Guardian Unlimited (UK), The Tehran Times, and El Pregonero.

Online

Our Web sites—center4research.org and brestimplantinfo.org— are reaching more individuals around the world each year. During 2007-08, NRC’s primary Web site received up to 226,000 hits per month. The Web site dedicated to breast implant information averaged more than a million hits per month both years. Many Internet users are spending hours on each Web site, confirmation that NRC is a voice people trust to provide the information they need.

NRC launched a Spanish-language Web site on breast implants in 2007 (www.implantesdemama.org). Since July 2007, the Web site has gone from receiving 3,500 hits per month to over 15,000 most months in 2008.

With the help of our interns, we have established a presence on Facebook and MySpace to reach out to young people.

Among the many Web sites that mentioned or quoted NRC were:


Books, Book Chapters, and Articles in Professional Journals

• In late 2008, Quill Corporation published The Survival Guide for Working Moms (and Other Stressed-Out Adults), written by Diana Zuckerman and NRC Communications Director, Brandel France de Bravo.

• Diana Zuckerman wrote the chapter, “Ethics of Inclusion and Exclusion: Race, Gender and Age” in the forthcoming book, The Penn Center Guide to Bioethics.

• Diana Zuckerman co-authored the article, “Teenagers and Cosmetic Surgery: Focus on Breast Augmentation and Liposuction” that appeared in the October 2008 issue of Journal of Adolescent Health.

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

Current Assets

Property and equipment

Other assets

LIABILITIES

Current liabilities

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted

Temporarily restricted

Total Net Assets

REVENUE

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<th>Source</th>
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EXPENSES

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<td>Total Expenses</td>
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