

20th Anniversary

1992-2012



- 1992-1993: Philip Gilbert (deceased)
- 1994: The Honorable Kathy Chinoy
- 1995-1996: Barbara Gordon
- 1997: George S. Lewis
- 1998: Shelley Hall, M.D.
- 1999: Herb Johnson
- 2000: Pam Norman (deceased)
- 2001: Thomas Chiu, M.D.
- 2002: PeJay Jackson
- 2003: Kathy Mankinen
- 2004: Beverly London, M.D.
- 2005: Thomas Chiu, M.D.
- 2006: Joy Burgess, R.N., M.S.N.
- 2007: George S. Lewis
- 2008: Rev. Tom Rodgers
- 2009-2010: Karen Wolfson
- 2011-2012: Linda Asay, J.D.

These funders have made the work of the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition possible over the last two decades. We appreciate and value their support!

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| The Jacksonville Children’s Commission | Mayo Clinic |
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| The C.J. Foundation for SIDS | CityMatCH |
| The Chartrand Foundation | Feed the Children |
| The Dorothy Wilson Mabry Family | The University of South Florida – Chiles Center |
| The Women’s Giving Alliance | Fl. Commission on Responsible Fatherhood |
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Contributors: Tom Basich, Jade Douso, Erin Petrie and Nancy Winkler-Zuniga. Design by Jade Douso.

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For twenty years the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition has been serving women, children and families of Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties.

Ashley Tompkins' mom died when she was 21. The pain of losing her mother and the inspiration she received from the women she met through the Magnolia Project led her to complete a health science education degree from UF. After graduation, Ashley completed a term of service with AmeriCorps at the Magnolia Project and eventually joined the staff as an outreach worker.

"The Magnolia Project is so inspiring, it gives women the information they need on how to take care of yourself as a woman."



Mandi Edmonds and her husband Eugene didn't think they could get pregnant, so their first and only child Kelvon was quite a shock. With their carwash business struggling and a tight income, Mandi knew she would need help.

"I was scared. I knew we weren't prepared to do this the right way. I wanted my son to have everything he needed. That's why I went to the Healthy Start program in Fernandina Beach."



Shantell Brown was pregnant with her first child when she first joined the Duval County Health Department Healthy Start program in 2006. During the pregnancy, Shantell experienced complications due to an incompetent cervix and lost the baby at 21 weeks. It was a devastating time for her and her husband.

"I did counseling through Healthy Start. They helped me."

Twenty stories celebrating 20 years of saving babies, strengthening families and building communities.
www.nefhealthystart.org/20th



(1) Ashley Tompkins and daughter, Parker Madison (2) Shantell Brown (3) Mandi Edmonds and son, Kelvon. (4) Dannielle Hucks and son, Christopher.

Jamie Griffin credits the Healthy Start program at the Duval County Health Department for helping her get through her difficult pregnancy. The pregnancy brought on heart complications and affected her blood pressure. There were scary flashes of dizzy spells and fear that she was not going to be able to carry her baby through to term.

New complications arose after the pregnancy. Casey was a healthy weight of 6 pounds 3 ounces at birth, but then stopped eating. He ended up in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for the first week of his life.

The Camellia Project, an education and support group, helped Jamie learn to eat healthier, manage her household and deal with stress.

Jamie still keeps in touch with several women in the group.

See the full stories and share your own on our 20th anniversary website at:
www.nefhealthystart.org/20th

When Dannielle Hucks welcomed Healthy Start Clay County social worker Trish Hoffman in to check on her newborn son, Christopher, there was a marvelous moment of recognition. They had worked together before, during the first year after Dannielle's six-year-old daughter Nicole was born.

"She was shocked to see how much she had grown and loved seeing her again," Dannielle said. "I was glad to see her too."

The continuity and comfort of being able to work with someone that she knew mattered immensely to Dannielle.

Matt and Miranda Cox have been partners for a long time – from the days on the playground at age 4, to their rebellious teen years, to the family of five they now have at age 25.

It's been a tough road, but beyond having each other to fall back on, they've thrived with the support of others: family, friends and others who have encountered the family along the way.

Miranda was 15 when she first found out she was pregnant. Family helped out with diapers, clothes and other necessities.

After filling out a screen at her doctor's office, the couple received emotional, social and educational support through the Duval County Health Department Healthy Start program and their assigned case manager, India.

The odds were against Merceida Jordan. Her mother died when she was six. Her father was murdered before her eyes at age 10. She waited with him as he lay on the side of the road, mortally wounded by a shotgun blast. That was when she was sent to live with relatives, and when the beatings, molestations and rapes started. Merceida learned to use drugs and alcohol to ease her pain. Addiction ruled her life for the next 35 years.

"I went to the Mission. I asked for help. At 5:30, they started to send people out. I knew if I walked out of there I was going right back to find drugs," Merceida recalls. "Cathy DuPont from Azalea came to the mission and took me by the hand straight to detox at Gateway. I believe she saved my life that day."

When Ashley McLean found out she was pregnant with her second child, Cole, it was a surprise. But she knew where to find help. She had already been through the Healthy Start program with her daughter Tyler, now three years old.

"It was my second high-risk pregnancy, so I was not prepared for any of this so I met with Sue Murphy, who was the one of so many who supported me during my first pregnancy," Ashley said.

She received Healthy Start services through the Baker County Health Department's Healthy Start program.

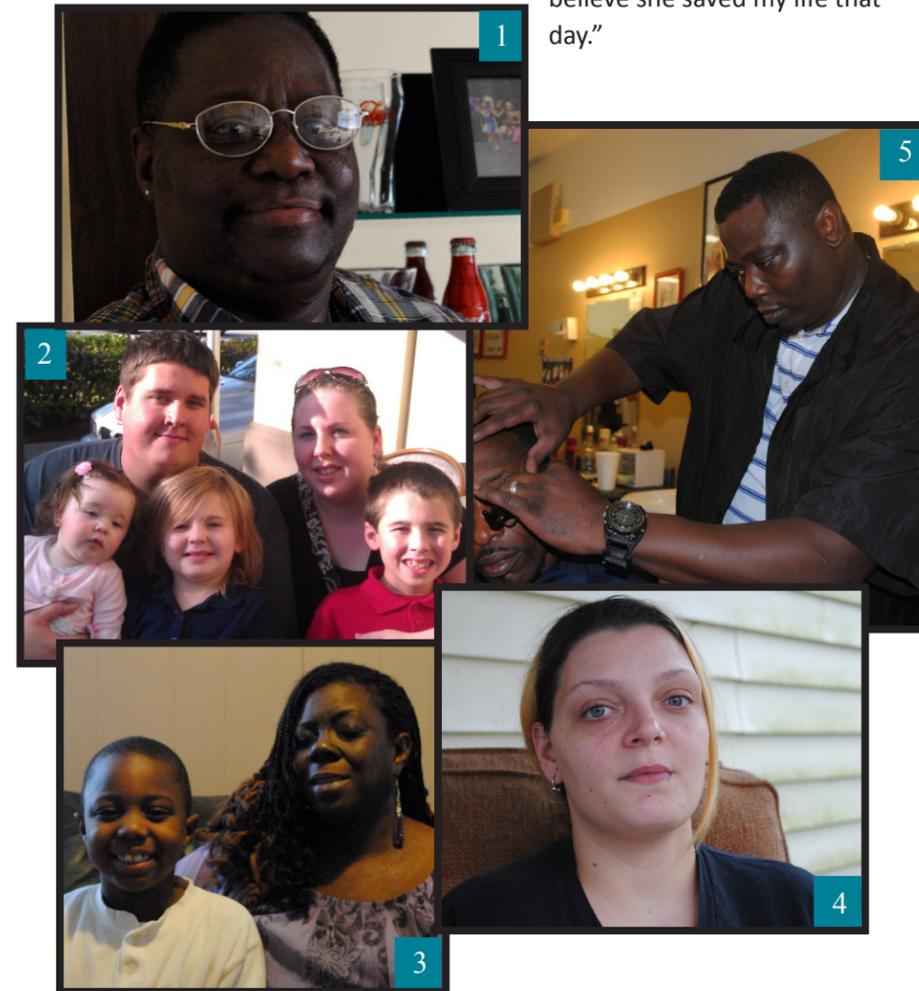


Gwendolyn Mote had already raised one child in her late teens and early twenties, so when she got pregnant at 34, it was quite a shock. She refused to accept the fact that she was pregnant for several months. The doctors she was referred to through the Healthy Start program at the Nassau County Health Department not only convinced her she indeed was pregnant, but they also laid out a health plan for her and her baby.



Johnnie Dwayne (J.D.) Upson has been a barber in his native Jacksonville for 14 years at The Cut Above Barber Shop in Arlington, where he has overheard and served as witness to social issues in his community. So he didn't hesitate when one of his clients, Jack Johnson, the Regional Outreach Director for Florida KidCare and the Responsible Fatherhood Program, asked him to get involved with the Healthy Start Coalition's Barbers for Babies project.

"He was adamant about getting men involved," J.D. said. "We began informing our clients about infant mortality in Jacksonville."



(1) Merceida Jordan. (2) Matt and Miranda Cox with their children, Brookelynn, Hayley and Juston. (3) Gwendolyn Mote and son, Casstian. (4) Ashley McLean. (5) J.D. Upson.

Julianna Forrest has lived in Jacksonville most of her life but, when she became pregnant with her first son Josiah, now five, she wanted advice from someone who had seen a lot. Her aunt ran a home for women in Georgia and she knew there would be lots of helpful hints. It was there that she first heard of Healthy Start.

“I had heard that you could take a class, and then you earned points toward stuff for your baby,” she said, adding that she soon came to really appreciate learning everything from how to breastfeed, to the different changes her body would go through.



Crystal Ward was referred to the Azalea Project by doctors at Shands Jacksonville even before her son Zuric was born. Immediately she knew she had found what she was looking for.

“I came back to Azalea every day,” Crystal said. “Ms. DuPont took me in. The whole staff did.”

The Azalea Project is a special Healthy Start initiative that provides outreach, education and support services to high-risk women of child-bearing age. It focuses on substance-involved families whose lifestyle increases their chances of experiencing a myriad of health and social risks.



(1) Crystal Ward. (2) Tania Velasquez and children; left to right: Cassandra, Megan, Alex and Timothy. (3) Julianna Forrest. (4) Rachel Sessions. (5) Kayla Campbell.

How did Healthy Start impact infant mortality?
www.nefhealthystart.org/20th

Kayla Campbell was only six months old when she joined the Healthy Start team. Her mom, Kim, had just returned to work as a MomCare advisor when the Coalition began planning a new Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) prevention campaign. Kayla became the Safe Sleep baby — appearing on bill boards, bus ads and brochures — sleeping peacefully on her back in her crib.

Now six years old, the shy kindergartener smiles when she sees that picture of herself as a baby. She is proud when she hears about her role in keeping other babies healthy. The brochures featuring Kayla are still used by Healthy Start to spread the word about the ABCs of safe sleep —alone, on the back, in a crib — to new parents in the region.

Mother Kim knows first-hand about the importance of prenatal care and support. She coped with the threat of pre-term labor during all of her pregnancies. A Coalition employee for more than eight years, Kim helps pregnant women understand their Medicaid benefits and assists them with finding a doctor and other services they need.

For the Campbells, Healthy Start is truly a family affair.

Today, thanks to the Healthy Start program, Tania Velasquez and Kevin Kaiser are the parents of four healthy children. Tania credits the Clay County Healthy Start program with giving her resources to not only help her through each pregnancy and what to expect the first year of her children’s lives, but to also get toys, food and clothing for her children. The program even helped Tania find a home. Trish Hoffman, Tania’s Healthy Start case worker mentioned the possibility a Clay County Habitat for Humanity home. In 2009, while pregnant with her last child, Tania was approved for the Habitat home.

Although the kids have gotten older and they are no longer in the Healthy Start program, Trish hasn’t stopped checking in on Tania and her family.

“We’ll get a phone call every once and a while,” said Kevin. “Just her calling, it’s a nice thing, it’s personable.”



Rachel Sessions was 21, unemployed, and living with her parents when she became pregnant more than 14 years ago. They were already struggling financially, so Rachel turned to the Magnolia Project, where her story of hope began with an open door and someone to talk to.

When her son Marquis was born, Rachel continued with the Healthy Start program because she knew she still needed help. But Rachel had goals. She took a job one month after giving birth and dedicated herself to achieving her goals.



(1) Keyara Zellars with LaRonda Howard. (2) Cheryl Wright Mayhew and daughter, Cheryl. (3) Erin Petrie. (4) Dr. Thomas Chiu.

It’s been two decades since Cheryl Wright Mayhew discovered a new program to help her during her pregnancy. Cheryl was in her early twenties when she walked through the doors of Healthy Start on the west side of Jacksonville, one of the first clients to participate in the new program focused on healthy pregnancies and babies. Pregnant with her second child, and alone, Cheryl didn’t know it then, but she had just taken the first step toward a brighter future.

“With Healthy Start, I started to see a doctor to check out my baby’s progress, taking measurements. Just making sure we were both okay.”



Juanita Marshall’s pregnancy came at a time in her life when she knew she was going to need some help. Help came to her in the form of Duval County Health Department Healthy Start case manager Tina Johnson.

“Tina just reached out to me and took me. Just like that, I went from being alone and hopeless, to having answers,” Juanita said. “Tina and Healthy Start gave me the confidence I didn’t have.”

After her daughter Joh’nya was born, Tina came by their home every week to check on the newborn and the new mother. If there was a doctor visit, Tina was there, providing a ride.

Find out more about our programs and services at:
www.nefhealthystart.org/20th

Keyara Zellars, 16, has big plans — finishing high school is her number one priority and she has dreams of becoming a pediatrician or enlisting in the Marines. One thing that hasn’t been part of her life since going through the 4Me Teen Health Project is getting in trouble.

Keyara participated in the program at Victory Pointe, a Jacksonville Housing Authority apartment complex, in November 2011. She went on to join the Teen Leadership Council, working with several other teen leaders from the complex to develop, write and perform a skit about safe sex, date rape and HIV/AIDS.

“Most of us didn’t know what sex was,” she said of herself and her fellow classmates before going to 4Me. “We didn’t know about diseases.”

Dr. Thomas Chiu, a neonatologist and recently retired Healthy Start Coalition board member, has witnessed many changes in the area over the 35 years he has been part of the Jacksonville community — including the push for positive growth and awareness of women and children’s health.

“Women and children’s health in my opinion are very important,” said Dr. Chiu. “But I don’t think it has been ranked that high on the national priority list.”

Witnessing the lack of attention to women and children’s health throughout the years, Dr. Chiu realized it was important to voice his concerns. He was a pioneer in establishing a collaborative, citywide Neonatology program and several public health/academic partnership efforts.

His passion for the community’s future led to his participation as a founding member on the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition board, where he served for more than a decade.



Former AmeriCorps member Erin Petrie works everyday to help make a difference in the lives of disadvantaged teens in the region. Now a staff member, Erin oversees the Coalition’s teen health initiatives and supervises a federal grant that expands the 4Me Teen Health Project.

As one who has worked to help create a brighter future for families, Erin strongly believes in the care the Coalition provides to women.

“It’s a holistic view of the woman,” she said. “It’s not just focused on the medical issues when they are pregnant.”

TWENTY YEARS OF INNOVATION AND CARING

Gov. Lawton Chiles passes Healthy Start legislation expanding Medicaid coverage for pregnant women and funding for education, risk reduction services and community coalitions.

Health departments in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties receive funding to provide Healthy Start services.



The Magnolia Project opens.

Northeast Florida pilots a simplified Medicaid enrollment process for pregnant women using a one-page mail-in application.

Coalition receives planning grant from the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) to integrate substance abuse and HIV prevention with other services for at-risk women of childbearing age.



FIMR Community Action Team targets local nightclubs in a special outreach and education effort.

Northeast Florida selected to test the FIMR-HIV project.

North Florida Health Corps established as AmeriCorps site.



The Azalea Project opens.

Forum on uninsured children features guest speaker, Cindy Mann, JD, of the Georgetown Center for Healthy Policy.

Healthy Start clients participate in Jacksonville's Blueprint for Prosperity initiative.



Westside Wildflower Clinic launched in St. Augustine.

Life course focus adopted in new Service Delivery Plan.

Magnolia Project study in Journal of Maternal & Child Health.



Make a Noise! Make a Difference! Education and awareness campaign implemented.



Project Impact, a fetal and infant mortality review project, is launched.



Coalition becomes the organizational home for the efforts to enroll uninsured children in the new Florida KidCare program.

Disparities in infant mortality examined using Perinatal Periods of Risk (PPOR).

The Coalition completes its first Service Delivery Plan.

First Maternal & Child Health Data Report published by the Coalition.

Duval County participates in new Black Infant Health Practice Initiative.

The Coalition becomes an independent organization.

Safe Sleep Partnership organized.

Boot Camp for New Dads is launched.

Walk in My Shoes Event held.

Children's Home Society becomes a Healthy Start service provider.



PhotoVoice implemented in New Town Success Zone.

Undoing Racism workshop held.

Make a Difference! Leadership Academy graduates first class.

Students are trained as Preconception Peer Educators for the "A Healthy Baby Begins with You" campaign.

4ME Teen Health Project started.

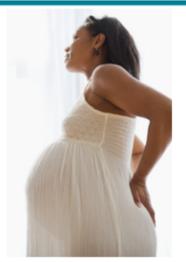
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1992 1994 1996 1998 2000 2002 2004 2006 2008 2010 2012

Help Them Thrive Birth to Five implemented by the Coalition.

Healthy Start and Healthy Families services are integrated into high need areas of Jacksonville.

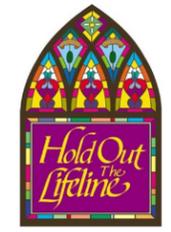
Healthy Start service providers expanded with funding of Shands Jacksonville and Healthy Families.



Gov. Chiles visits Jacksonville to kick-off the new Prenatal Passport.

Partnership with the Jacksonville Urban League's Head Start Program for a new fatherhood initiative.

MomCare initiated as part of new Healthy Start Medicaid waiver.



New faith-based initiative Hold Out the Lifeline is launched.

A new outreach program targets physicians and hospitals to increase Healthy Start screening rates.



Friendly Access program is implemented.

FIMR Community Action Team launches safe sleep campaign.



The AME Ministers Alliance receives federal funding for Body and Soul.



Coalition receives funding from Vitagrunt settlement.

St. Johns County Infant Mortality Task Force is formed.

Coalition hosts first regional Advocacy Summit.



Coalition hosts first Feed the Children distribution in Jacksonville.

Northeast Florida Breast-feeding Collaborative is founded.

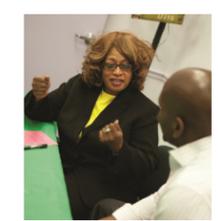
Healthy Start Dash Board created.

Teen Pregnancy Task Force is organized.



The Coalition holds the first Rounds at the Grounds: Baseball for Babies fundraiser.

Coalition re-designs website and joins Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and LinkedIn.



Magnolia Project celebrates 10th anniversary



March of Dimes funds the Camellia Project.

Nurse-Family Partnership program funded through federal home visiting grant.



4ME Teen Health Project receives grant to expand; BrdsNBz text message line launches.



The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition is created.