



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**REPORT ON STATUS OF FETAL & INFANT DEATHS IN NORTHEAST FLORIDA TO BE RELEASED**

*Prematurity, sleep-related deaths responsible for the majority of infant deaths*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. Eight classes of kindergarteners will not start school in five years because 143 babies died before their first birthday in 2014, leaving the infant mortality rate stagnant. An additional 149 babies were stillborn – one of the highest numbers in recent years. Too many babies are dying each year because of factors like premature birth and unsafe sleep practices.

The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition will address the state of maternal and child health in the region and ways to make sure all babies have a healthy start at the Annual Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) Community Meeting on Thursday, October 15, 2015 from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. at the Early Learning Coalition of Duval County, 8301 Cypress Plaza Drive, Jacksonville, FL.

The meeting will inform local residents and leaders about the persistent issues plaguing our community and how to reduce these deaths – like improving a mother’s health prior to pregnancy and ensuring babies are sleeping alone, on their back and in a crib.

The FIMR project will release the annual 2014-15 Project *Impact* report. The goal of the project, an initiative of the Coalition, is to reduce infant mortality by gathering and reviewing detailed information to gain a better understanding of fetal and infant deaths happening in our area. Project *Impact*, which began in 1995, is funded by the Florida Department of Health.

The Community Action Team, which implements FIMR’s recommendations, will also report on their progress.

**About the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition**

The Healthy Start Coalition leads a cooperative community effort to reduce infant mortality and improve the health of children, childbearing women and their families in Northeast Florida. For more information, visit <http://nefhealthystart.org> or <http://www.facebook.com/nefhealthystart>.

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