

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Northeast Florida Health Start Coalition Launches Local Infant Mortality Awareness Campaign**

*The eight-month campaign will focus on increasing awareness in two high-risk zip codes by displaying and encouraging a healthy lifestyle and providing resources that will help address the root causes.*

*JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Every baby deserves a healthy start in life, but many babies in Jacksonville do not have the opportunity to celebrate their first birthday. The Healthy Start Coalition is launching a campaign April 1<sup>st</sup> in two city zip codes to increase awareness of infant death and the contributing factors.*

**Infant mortality – the death of a baby before his or her first birthday – is a sentinel indicator of health.** When communities experience high rates of infant death, it is a reflection of the overall health of a population. **Zip codes 32209 and 32210 have the highest rates of infant mortality in the city** but are also disproportionately impacted by high rates of poverty, crime, drug use and other social determinants of health. These challenges have shown direct positive correlations between maternal mortality, infant mortality and other poor birth outcomes like prematurity and stillbirth. Black babies are also dying at nearly three times the rate of white babies in these zip codes and citywide.

“I am pleased the city council assisted me in obtaining \$200,000 to assist in this effort of preventing babies from dying in their first year,” Ronald B. Salem, Pharm.D., Council Member At-Large, Group 2 said

The goal of the campaign is to increase the overall health of women before, during and after pregnancy to improve birth outcomes. The **Healthy Women Lead Healthy Families** campaign will empower generations of women in these zip codes to engage in healthy lifestyles and will activate the community to address the structural causes that lead to infant mortality.

“We must empower women to take the lead and be the change within the community through advocacy and understanding the root causes of babies dying before their birthday,” Faye Johnson Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition CEO said.

The Healthy Women Lead Healthy Families campaign will begin on April 1st. The campaign is funded by the City of Jacksonville, Kids Hope Alliance.

For Press related inquiries, contact Tabitha Higgs at [Tabitha@sautiplus.com](mailto:Tabitha@sautiplus.com).

**About the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition**

The Healthy Start Coalition leads the community effort to reduce infant death and improve the health of children, childbearing women, fathers and their families in Northeast Florida. For more information, [view our media kit](#) visit us at <http://nefhealthystart.org> or on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram @nefhealthystart.

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