



2019

ANNUAL REPORT



Every baby deserves a healthy start.

WHILE WE STILL HAVE WORK TO DO

to ensure all babies live to celebrate their first birthday, 2019 was a year of great strides. We go into 2020 with strong partnerships and strategies to improve birth outcomes in Northeast Florida, continuing to work hard toward our commitment to give every baby a healthy start, and grateful for the many families we have served.

Many partners have made infant mortality a priority, including the City of Jacksonville, Baptist Health, Florida Blue and UF Health Jacksonville. These and other collaborators will serve to enhance the quality of life by improving birth outcomes. Infant mortality is a community problem that takes a community to solve it, and we applaud the champions who stand up for every baby.

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Chief Executive Officer, Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition

MEGAN DENK

Chair, THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health, Wolfson Children's Hospital

Infant Mortality in Northeast Florida

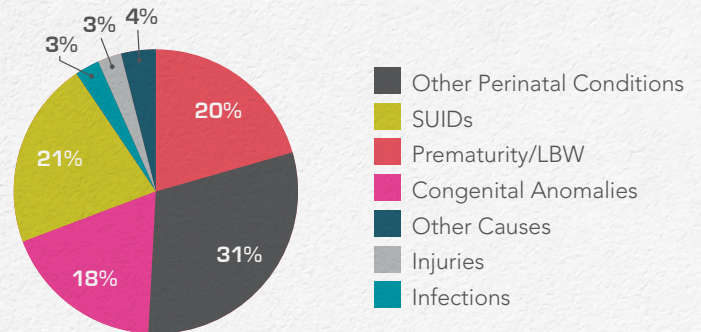
Infant mortality in Northeast Florida continues to be a major health issue affecting families. The rate increased from 7.3 to 7.9 deaths per 1000 live births in 2018. There were 147 babies who died before their first birthday during the year, the equivalent of eight classes of kindergarteners. The regional rate remains higher than the state (6 deaths) and nation (5.8 deaths).

The leading causes of death in 2018 were:

- Other perinatal conditions, including placenta complications, premature rupture of membranes, bacterial sepsis
- Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths (SUIDs), which were largely sleep-related
- Prematurity/Low Birth Weight

There were an additional 134 fetal deaths, or stillborns, in 2018, a rate of 7.2 fetal deaths per 1000 live births. Almost 13 percent of births were premature, while 10 percent were low birth weight. The significant disparities by race also continued -- black babies died at 3.5 times the rate of white babies. The black infant mortality rate was 15.6 deaths per 1000 live births, compared to a white infant mortality rate of 4.3 deaths per 1000 live births. The rate for other races (9.5 deaths) was similarly higher.

2018 INFANT CAUSES OF DEATH



FIMR Update 2019

The first complete analysis of all local infant deaths from a year was presented in October 2019 at "From Data to Action: A review of all 2018 infant deaths in Northeast Florida." This special Fetal & Infant Mortality Review project identified key areas of concern and provided recommendations for action.

A mother's health prior to pregnancy, the social determinants of health (housing, education, poverty), lack of family planning and siloed medical/social services were identified as trends across the 147 infant deaths reviewed. Recommendations included developing a medical one-stop shop for all services; utilizing the medical home model; improving access to, engagement and retention in home visiting programs; improving the universal prenatal risk screen rates; implementing evidence-based group health care like CenteringPregnancy, Parenting and Chronic Disease; and engaging all sectors of the community.

Since 1995, the Coalition has implemented a Fetal & Infant Mortality Review project with funding from the Florida Department of Health to reduce infant mortality by gathering and reviewing detailed information to gain a better understanding of fetal and infant deaths. In October 2018, Baptist Health/Wolfson Children's Hospital, UF Health Jacksonville and Florida Blue committed funding for a full review of why babies are dying before their first birthday in Northeast Florida.

The detailed analysis included abstraction of medical and vital statistics records; analysis of fetal and infant deaths (overall and by race) using the Perinatal Periods of Risk to create a population-based framework and identify disparities in birth outcomes; and integration of information abstracted from patient records to determine the impact of specific medical and social risks, gaps and opportunities for intervention. The review utilized Doctor of Nursing Practice students from Jacksonville University to assist with data abstraction and maternal interviews.

With the review complete, the Coalition and community partners are now focusing on implementing the recommendations. Together, we can make the changes necessary to give every baby a healthy start in life!

Healthy Start 2019



The Healthy Start program provides education, support and proven interventions to expecting and new families who are at-risk of a poor birth outcome or delay in development. The program focuses on common issues or conditions that occur during pregnancy or in infancy. Healthy Start is voluntary and available statewide to all eligible families regardless of their insurance coverage or citizenship.



After 28 years, Healthy Start has a new look! The home visiting program went through a redesign in partnership with the Florida Department of Health to strengthen and refine the program. Healthy Start's remodel, which went into effect March 1, capitalizes on its assets while shifting focus to creating links to the local system of care through Connect and strengthening women and family empowerment.

The Coalition contracts with six agencies to provide services across the five counties, including several new and expanded partners in 2019: Children's Home Society began providing services in St. Johns County, the Florida Department of Health Baker County began providing services in Clay County, UF Health Jacksonville expanded services in Duval County and Inspire to Rise began providing Azalea Project services. Several providers also implemented projects to address health equity in their communities.

The Healthy Start program also worked closely with the Department of Children & Families and Family Support Services of North Florida to develop protocols and training around the Plans of Safe Care for families with substance-exposed newborns. The partnership will help identify families at the critical prenatal period.



Healthy Start recognized new Healthy Start Heroes, OB/GYN providers with high prenatal risk screening rates. Dr. William Cody and Dr. Daina Greene and their office at North Florida OB/GYN -- Riverside at St. Vincent's were recognized during National Infant Mortality Awareness Month in September.

By the Numbers:

903 visits to prenatal care providers

3500+ clients served in Healthy Start from January-November

43,995 Healthy Start services provided from January-November

25 Healthy Start home visitors trained in safe sleep by THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health

Community Connect: Coordinated Intake & Referral



Community Connect uses Florida's universal prenatal and infant screenings to identify needs and links families to the programs that best serve them. This coordinated intake and referral process ensures the best fit for families and streamlines access to services. Connect helps pregnant women, caregivers and families with young children by providing a one-stop entry point for needed services.



Connect collaborates with programs managers from Healthy Families, state Healthy Start, federal Healthy Start, Nurse-Family Partnership and Early Head Start in all five counties through a collaborative Home Visiting Advisory Committee. The Committee held a symposium in September to give the home visitors across Northeast Florida a much-deserved insight of caring for themselves before taking care of others.

By the Numbers:

16,483 Referrals to Connect

10,282 Successful Initial Intakes


5,809 Referrals made to HV Services




Kathy Allen provides Connect services at Florida Department of Health Nassau Healthy Start. Kathy began at FDOH Nassau as a Healthy Start care coordinator. Once FDOH began implementing Connect, Kathy was eager to fill the position because of her extensive

knowledge of Nassau home visitation programs and community agencies and her passion for assisting clients in choosing the best home visiting program for their needs. Kathy has also been instrumental in continuing a strong relationship with Baptist Nassau Labor & Delivery, where Healthy Start completes daily initial intakes.

Nurse-Family Partnership 2019

 Nurse-Family Partnership is an evidence-based, home-visiting model for pregnant women that is implemented in Baker, Duval and Clay counties. Services are provided to 200 high-risk, first-time mothers in several high-risk neighborhoods annually by specially-trained nurses from UF Health Jacksonville.

 The Northeast Florida Nurse-Family Partnership Program participated in a national Home Visiting Collaborative Improvement & Innovation Networks (CoilN) Collaborative, aimed at promoting breastfeeding and lactation support for participants who were preparing to deliver or who recently delivered. While in this 90-day rapid testing cycle, the team developed protocols and tools to encourage mothers to breastfeed and established partnerships with external service providers such as WIC and La Leche League of Jacksonville.

At the conclusion of the cycle, the program was recognized at the national level for the development of protocols as well as the implementation of follow-up procedures for external service providers. NEF NFP Monitoring and Evaluations Manager Dante' D. Buckson and former NEF NFP Nurse Home Visitor Amanda Nicholas were both recognized for their commitment and dedication to CoilN Collaborative.

By the Numbers:

3,867 Home visits completed

8 Nurse Home Visitors

81 babies born

35 graduates of the program

15 fathers awarded for their engagement in the NFP program

2 participants graduated from college while in the NFP program

9 participants graduated from high school or obtained their GED while in the program



Lizabeth was a 17-year-old first-time mom when she enrolled in NFP in December 2017 at 26 weeks pregnant. She had recently dropped out of high





school and was living with her family. At enrollment, she informed the nurse that she wanted to learn about her pregnancy, caring for the baby and how to be the best mom for her baby. As Lizabeth participated in NFP program, her interest grew, and her engagement increased. She received prenatal care as scheduled, enjoyed the information she was learning and was interested in breastfeeding.

Lizabeth delivered her son, Nico, on March 30, 2018. She initiated breastfeeding at birth and continued past one year. She never missed an appointment and continued to learn from the nurse about child care and self-care, received postpartum care and ensured pediatric care for Nico. She received Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive (LARC) and Nico's immunizations were kept up-to-date.

The nurse encouraged Lizabeth in setting personal goals. Lizabeth aspired to become an interior designer and planned to return to school. Her family and the father of baby continue to support her. In September 2018, Lizabeth enrolled in GED program at Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ) and graduated from the program in June 2019.

National Health Corps Florida

 National Health Corps Florida is an AmeriCorps program that provides service opportunities to help meet unmet health care and health education needs in the region. It is under the umbrella of the National Health Corps, an AmeriCorps National Direct program whose mission is to foster healthy communities by connecting those who need it most with health and wellness education, benefits and services, while developing tomorrow's compassionate health leaders.

 The National Health Corps Florida program received funding in 2019 to continue services for an additional three years. The program is one of six sites through the National Health Corps, an initiative of the Health Federation of Philadelphia. The National Health Corps sites focus services around nutrition, obesity prevention, the opioid crisis and senior services as part of the new funding cycle.

The National Health Corps Florida expanded the number of AmeriCorps positions to 26, which will allow the program to serve more organizations and clients in Northeast Florida.

The program also welcomed several new host sites in 2019, including the Tiger Academy YMCA, Jacksonville Health and Transition Services at UF Shands Pediatric Hospital and Gateway Community Services.

By the Numbers:


21 members completed the 2018-19 service term

101,461 units of service provided by 2018-19 service members

26 members in the 2019-20 service term


9,000 units of service provided between September-December by 2019-20 members




 Gateway Community Services joined the National Health Corps Florida program as a new host site.

Two member positions were created to teach life skills education to clients in residential housing and detox at Gateway. The topics include nutrition, sex education, coping skills, addiction and mental health. The members also provide in depth knowledge to clients on how to access services at Gateway, which is an important gap to fill for clients in recovery. Lastly, the members help clients acquire housing and jobs, which is essential to addressing the social determinants of health. The members are making a big difference there!

Healthy Families Jacksonville

 Healthy Families is a nationally-accredited family support and coaching program that helps parents provide the safe and stable environments children need for healthy growth and development. The evidence-based program is voluntary, and participants receive services in their home by specially-trained support workers.

 Healthy Families Jacksonville celebrated 25 graduates from the program in 2019. The program holds a graduation each September, in honor of Infant Mortality Awareness Month, to celebrate the families that completed the program, participating between three and five years with their family support worker.

By the Numbers:

12 of 16 outcomes met April-June 2019

25 families graduated in September 2019


546 of families served in 2019

557 # of participants


476 # of target children


599 # of non-target children



 Janelyz Nunez enrolled in Healthy Families Jacksonville when her son was born in March 2017. As a teen mom, Healthy Families helped her learn how to take care of a newborn and provided a mentor to help her along the way. Her Family Support Worker Pamela is like an aunt to her son, and has been there every step of the way making sure he is on the right track and that Janelyz doesn't lose her vision and focus on what life has to offer. Janelyz participated in the Pathways to Your Career pilot program, which was created to help moms grow professionally, gain personal confidence and self-advocacy to provide for themselves and their families. Through the program she was able to continue her education at no cost, picked up a trade and obtained seven certificates. "Healthy Families has been a great choice for me," Janelyz said. "I have learned a lot through a program that treats me like family."

Fatherhood PRIDE 2019

 Fatherhood P.R.I.D.E. (Parental Responsibility Inspiring Dads Everywhere) strengthens and expands fatherhood, employment, housing, health care, mentoring and recidivism reduction services through case management, referrals and group classes.

 Fatherhood PRIDE entered year five of their grant cycle in 2019 and continued to work to improve the program and experience for fathers. In May 2019, the program was recognized with a "Father Engagement Certificate" from the National Fatherhood Initiative for their training in five core competencies for effective father engagement.

The program also built new partnerships with organizations that helped expand their reach to different areas of town

and different populations. Classes expanded from the Springfield area to the Westside through a partnership with Inspire to Rise and the beaches area through partnerships with BEAM and Carver Recreation Center. Fatherhood PRIDE also partnered with the City Rescue Mission.

By the Numbers:

270 fathers served

275 mothers completed co-parenting requirements

77.3% of community participants perceived the program "helped them a lot" + **18.2%** stated that it "helped them some"

76.7% of the incarcerated participants responded that the program "helped them a lot", while **20.0%** stated that it "helped them some"



The Fatherhood PRIDE program staff worked hard to understand the root problems and work together not only to improve each other's physical/mental growth but to improve the participants' experiences and the overall operation of the fatherhood program. In 2019, this resulted in highly motivated participants committed to completing the program requirements, refocusing family obligations, establishing positive relationships and an increasing number of fathers understanding their roles in preventing infant mortality, SUIDs and other child deaths. Staff motivation and commitment to program strategies, implementing care/services, data input and process outcomes are evident at both the local and the federal evaluation levels that Fatherhood P.R.I.D.E. is well on its way to the successful completion of its five-year Healthy Marriage & Responsible Fatherhood (HMRP) grant cycle. The team was recognized by their funder for increasing their outcomes and continuous quality improvement efforts.

Magnolia Project 2019



The Magnolia Project is a special federally-funded Healthy Start initiative to improve the health and well-being of women during their childbearing years

in two high-risk Jacksonville neighborhoods. The project works with women before, during and after pregnancy to address risk factors (pregnancy intervals, nutrition issues, substance/alcohol abuse, psychosocial problems, family planning and other issues) that impact their health and may affect a future pregnancy.



The Magnolia Project received a new five-year grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s Healthy Start Initiative:

Eliminating Disparities in Perinatal Health to continue providing services in Jacksonville. While the Project has served only Health Zone 1 for the past 20 years, it will shift its focus to the city's zip codes with the current highest infant mortality rates: 32208, 32209 on the Northside (Magnolia West) and 32211, 32277 in Arlington (Magnolia East). During the grant period, Magnolia will focus on serving African American women of childbearing age, their children up to 18 months old and their spouses/partners. The expansion to the Arlington zip codes will also include new clinical services provided in the two zip codes through a partnership with Jacksonville University's Keigwin School of Nursing and the Florida Department of Health. Currently, there are no prenatal care providers in the area.

The Magnolia Project is also partnering with JU on a stress reduction research project around the cortisol levels of African American women as it relates to birth outcomes. Yoga in the Streets will also be expanded.

By the Numbers:

600+ prenatal women, non-pregnant women, infants/children served

98 percent of participants had an annual well-woman visit

100 percent of participants received perinatal depression screening and referrals

0 infant mortality rate among participants from April-December



The Magnolia Project expanded its partnerships to address critical needs of its participants. New partners include Helping WIN, Inc. to assist clients in need of fund to cover utility bills; Jacksonville Area Legal Aid to assist Magnolia clients with Family Legal Services; and Farm Share to address the food desert in the project community.

Azalea Project 2019



The Azalea Project works to break the cycle of substance use and prevent substance-exposed newborns across the lifespan using primary, secondary

and tertiary prevention strategies to ensure that all babies have healthy birth outcomes and live to see their first birthday.



The Azalea Project Healthy Start program welcomed a new provider in 2019. Inspire to Rise, Inc. will provide Healthy Start services to pregnant women with current or a history of substance use. Inspire to Rise is a nonprofit that works to address a family or individual's diminished protective capacities by providing fully engaging, intensive, family-centered, strength-based, evidence-based, and solution-focused treatment through an array of available services at the ITR campus, at home, in jail, and/or in the community.

The Azalea Project Prevention program developed a public service announcement as part of a strategy developed by the Regional Substance-exposed Newborn Task Force. Two Azalea Project families shared their story about their history with substance use and how the Azalea Healthy Start program helped them during their pregnancy and postpartum, providing education, support and resources to ensure their babies were born healthy and thriving. The PSA will serve as encouragement for families to seek services if they are using or abusing substances.

By the Numbers:

- 164** Azalea Healthy Start participants served
- 951** consumers provided opioid education workshops



The Azalea Project built partnerships with several donors to help provide support to the new Azalea Store that gives mothers the opportunity to shop weekly using Azalea Bucks earned through program participation. Liam Lives Foundation held a diaper drive for Azalea and donated more than 17 packs of diapers, 4 boxes of wipes, and numerous new baby clothes and items. Once Upon a Time in Regency donated hundreds of new and gently-used baby and children's' clothes, including shoes and accessories. UNF's Black Student Union held a drive on campus and collected 7 boxes of diapers, 12 packs of wipes, 14 cans of baby formula, 2 boxes of children and baby clothing, along with various baby toys, cups, and teething rings.



National Infant Mortality Awareness Month

The Coalition recognized National Infant Mortality Awareness Month in September with a with a special Baby Shoes Memorial at Jacksonville

City Hall. The memorial commemorated each of the 147 babies that died before their first birthday in 2018. The visual display served as a catalyst for discussion and calls to action.

Organizational Restructure

The Coalition completed a leadership staff restructure in early 2019 that aligned the team to better support organizational efforts and prepare for future growth. The restructure included the integration of positions to focus on day-to-day operations, professional development, quality assurance, collaboration and impact. In late 2019, a Chief Financial Officer position was also added.

Administrative highlights include:

Development of the agency's internal Quality Improvement Committee, which will convene quarterly amongst Coalition program leadership to examine key programmatic indicators and performance measurements.

Development of the agency's Staff Training and Professional Development Academy, which will enhance the pre-existing training and onboarding of all staff, partners, and providers under the Healthy Start umbrella.

The Safe Sleep Task Force continued work in 2019 to address the growing number of sleep-related deaths. The task force launched a social media campaign; created a regional website in April; provided community-wide safe sleep education developed and delivered including hospital modeling, training all law enforcement officers (JSO) and churches; and distributed Safe Sleep Sunday education bags, among other activities.

The development of a new universal nurse home visiting pilot project for new mothers. Baptist Health will fund the one-year pilot, which will begin reaching Duval County moms who deliver at Baptist Downtown in January 2020. The WELLcome Home Visiting program will provide support and education through a home visit shortly following discharge.

WHO WE ARE

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Julia Gray, *Administrative Assistant*
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AZALEA PROJECT

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