



October 17, 2016
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Erin Addington
904.723.5422 x 113
eaddington@nefhsc.org

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

Sleep-related death, substance abuse impact infant deaths

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. After remaining stagnant for two years, the Northeast Florida infant mortality rate – the death of a baby before his or her birthday – declined in 2015. The fetal mortality/stillbirth rate also declined for the same period. Still, too many of our babies die from preventable causes like bedsharing, parental/caregiver substance use and being born too small and too soon.

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 20, 2016 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; reducing substance use during pregnancy and while caring for infants; and ensuring babies are sleeping alone, on their back and in a crib. Black moms are also more than two as likely to experience a poor birth outcome as white moms.

The FIMR project will release the annual 2015-16 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. A multi-disciplinary Case Review Team examines the cases and makes recommendations, while a Community Action Team implements those recommendations.

Project *Impact*, which began in 1995, is funded by the Florida Department of Health.

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. More 25 years, the Coalition has worked every day to make sure every baby has a healthy start. For more information, visit <http://nefhealthystart.org> or @nefhealthystart on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

###