



July 19, 2016  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HEALTHY START COALITION HIRES LONG-TIME STAFF AS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – After 25 years of serving the community and working to make sure every baby has a healthy start, the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition has hired a familiar face to lead the maternal and child health nonprofit into its next phase. The Coalition welcomed long-time staff member Faye Johnson as new Executive Director effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

“For more than two decades Ms. Johnson has demonstrated tireless dedication to Healthy Start’s mission of reducing infant mortality. The Board of Directors is elated Ms. Johnson will lead the Coalition into the future,” stated Healthy Start’s Chairman of the Board, Dr. Catherine Drew.

Since joining the Coalition in 2001, Ms. Johnson has led both the Azalea Project (2002-2012) and Magnolia Project (2012-2016), two special initiatives of the Coalition focused on mitigating the risks of the most vulnerable populations in Northeast Florida to improve health and reduce infant mortality. The Azalea Project works with substance-abusing pregnant and preconception women. The Magnolia Project, a federal Healthy Start initiative, works to improve the health and well-being of women in Jacksonville’s Health Zone 1 before, during and after pregnancy.

She has also served as special projects coordinator, established the local Fetal & Infant Mortality Review Community Action Team, coordinated a Substance Abuse/HIV Prevention Perinatal Planning Committee and implemented the life course model of service delivery into the Coalition’s programs, which focuses on the social determinants of health.

“After 15 years working at the Coalition, I’m looking forward to leading this next chapter of services and community engagement,” Ms. Johnson said. “We have achieved a lot over the past 25 years as an agency, but have more work to do to reduce infant mortality, eliminate disparities and allow our families to thrive.”

Ms. Johnson brings more than 25 years of leadership and management experience to the position. Immediately prior to joining the Coalition, she was a Quality Assurance Manager with Healthy Families Jacksonville. Ms. Johnson has devoted endless hours to underserved populations across the United States. Her job titles spanned from case manager of underserved youth in high schools to program director and manager of social services programs in Florida, Georgia and Texas.

She has been tapped as a national and state speaker on reproductive life planning, group delivery of the life course model and health inequities. She has also served as a task force member of the Jacksonville Blueprint for Prosperity and received past recognition as a National Accreditation Peer Reviewer for Child Abuse and Neglect America/Healthy Families America.

### **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. One of 32 community-

based maternal and child health groups in the state, the Coalition and the Healthy Start program are celebrating 25 years of service to the community in 2016. For more information, visit <http://nefhealthystart.org> or <http://www.facebook.com/nefhealthystart>.

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