



September 6, 2016
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NORTHEAST FLORIDA HEALTHY START COALITION TO HOLD 2016 BABY GRADUATION

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Eighteen toddlers in the Class of 2016 will march down the aisle on September 17 to “Pomp & Circumstance,” donning caps and gowns and joining a special group of kids in Northeast Florida. The children and their mothers are graduates of the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition’s Nurse-Family Partnership initiative, an evidence-based home-visiting program that ensures local moms have the education and resources to have a healthy baby.

The graduation will take place September 17, 2016 at 11 a.m. in the Auditorium of the UF Health Learning Resource Center, on the corner of Jefferson and 8th streets in Jacksonville.

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program launched in Jacksonville in 2012 as part of the Florida Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program. NFP, which is integrated into the local Healthy Start program, provides intensive case management and home visiting by a nurse for first-time moms from pregnancy until the baby is two.

Services are provided to 100 high-risk, first-time mothers in several Jacksonville neighborhoods annually by specially-trained nurses from the Florida Department of Health Duval County and UF Health Jacksonville. The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition administers the program.

The NFP model has been identified as successfully impacting key outcomes in maternal and child health; child maltreatment; child development; school readiness; family socio-economic status; and injuries, crime and domestic violence. A long-term study recently published in the JAMA Pediatrics journal showed participants in the program are less likely to experience child and maternal mortality.

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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