



Background Facts

What we do:

- The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Inc. was organized in 1991 as part of a statewide network of community-based organizations to reduce Florida's high infant mortality and improve the lives of pregnant women and their families.
- The Coalition leads the cooperative community effort to reduce infant mortality in Northeast Florida.
- The group is governed by a volunteer board which allocates state funding and provides oversight to local agencies that deliver services to pregnant women and families of newborns.
- The Coalition covers Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties.
- The Healthy Start Coalition is a recognized model and catalyst for community involvement, collaboration and innovative services.
- The Coalition provides direct and indirect services to women before, during and after pregnancy, in addition to infants, fathers and families through county health departments, community-based nonprofits and in-house initiatives and programs.
- The health and wellbeing of families has a direct impact on infant mortality and birth outcomes. We provide services to help parents provide safe and stable environments for their children; fathers connect with their children; and adolescents focus on reproductive health.
- The Coalition engages partners throughout the region to join in the effort to address the underlying societal & structural root causes of infant mortality and poor birth outcomes.

Infant Mortality & Birth Outcomes

- Every baby deserves an equal and healthy start in life, but too many babies die from preventable causes and lack of health services.
- Infant mortality is a sentinel indicator of health – when communities experience infant mortality, it is a reflection of the overall health of a population.
- The equivalent of eight classes of kindergarteners dies each year in Northeast Florida before their first birthday. This is a serious problem that has plagued the region for years.
- Prematurity is the leading cause of infant mortality. We need to make sure women are healthy before they get pregnant so that they can have a healthy pregnancy and birth outcome.
- One in five babies died from a sleep-related deaths. These deaths are largely preventable.
- There is a significant disparity in birth outcomes: black babies die at more than twice the rate of white babies.

Impact

- Each year approximately 15,000 families in Northeast Florida receive services from the Coalition.
- More babies are celebrating their first birthdays as a result of Healthy Start and the community coalitions.
- Since the Coalition was formed, infant mortality in the region has dropped more than 35 percent, and indicators like starting prenatal care early and smoking have significantly improved.
- Evidence-based programs like Healthy Families Jacksonville and Nurse-Family Partnership have proven outcomes