Every baby deserves a healthy start.

2020 ANNUAL REPORT
Infant mortality declines in 2019, disparities persist

While the regional infant mortality declined in 2019 in Northeast Florida, it continues to be a major health issue affecting families – particularly black families. The rate decreased from 7.9 to 7.3 deaths per 1000 live births, but black babies are still dying at nearly three times the rate of white babies.

The infant death rate for white babies was 4.9 deaths per 1000 live births, compared to 13.5 deaths for black babies. Despite gains in infant mortality over the past few decades, the racial disparities are persistent. Racial equity in birth outcomes is a key focus of the Coalition.

There were 136 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 (5.6 deaths).

Approximately $400,000 in funding was secured to implement strategies identified in the 2018 FIMR review, the first complete analysis of all local infant deaths from a year. This special Fetal & Infant Mortality Review project identified key areas of concern and provided recommendations for action. Florida Blue, Baptist Health and the City of Jacksonville each contributed funding towards making the changes necessary to give every baby a healthy start in life!

The Magnolia Project East clinic opened in February 2020 to serve the Arlington neighborhood with prenatal and primary care. Agape Community Health Center provides the clinical services on-site. The clinic is part of a shift for Magnolia, which opened in 1999 to serve Health Zone 1, to a new service area. The project still serves 32208 and 32209 on the Northside but has expanded to 32211 and 32277 in Arlington (Magnolia East), a longtime tipping point neighborhood that now has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the city. The clinic will also focus on reducing maternal mortality but addressing primary care and managing chronic conditions.

More than 1000 families received much-needed baby supplies, personal protection equipment and health education at two drive-through events for Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. Hundreds of cars lined up in the Pearl Plaza parking lot to receive diapers, wipes, mask, gloves and other donated items. More than 8,000 packs of diapers and 6,000 packs of wipes were distributed thanks to funding from the First Coast Relief Fund and a match from the Weaver family.

Representative Tracie Davis sponsored the Magnolia Project and Healthy Start annual Community Baby Shower during Infant Mortality Awareness Month, held at the new Magnolia East clinic in Arlington. This year, due to COVID, the event was drive-through only and also featured a food give-a-way. More than 250 bags with baby items and items for moms and dads were prepared and distributed. The PGA TOUR’s THE PLAYERS Championship and North Florida Birth Alliance also donated items for the shower.

The WELLcome Home Universal Nurse Home Visitor program launched in May 2020 through a partnership with Baptist Health. The program, which was started in an effort to reduce the rate of sleep related deaths in Northeast Florida, offers a universal visit shortly after discharge to women who deliver at Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville. The WELLcome Home visit includes focused assessments for mom and baby, education and screenings for helpful resources.

The Coalition expanded its reach to substance-using pregnant women through CAPTA funding from the Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions. The funding allowed for the addition of a Nurse-Family Partnership position and two Seeking Safety Nurse Home Visitors. Seeking Safety utilizes a holistic approach developed through dialogue with and feedback from client to ensure client readiness for life situations. The program directs clients in developing problem solving skills and strategies early and on a continuum, by enlightening them with an enhanced awareness of the need to nourish themselves first. Clients are able to see the bigger picture and discover ways to conquer the challenges ahead when their needs are met.

The leading causes of death in 2019 were:
- Other perinatal conditions, including premature rupture of membranes, bacterial sepsis and chorioamnionitis (32 percent)
- Prematurity/Low Birth Weight (21 percent)
- Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths (SUIDs), which were largely sleep-related (17 percent)

Other notable birth outcomes from 2019 include 132 fetal deaths, or stillborns (7 fetal deaths per 1000 live births), and almost 13 percent of births were premature.

There were nine maternal deaths in Northeast Florida in 2019. Baker, Clay, Duval and St. Johns each had at least one death. All four counties had rates exceeding the Florida maternal death rate (28.6).

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

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Adapting to COVID

Our employees and the thousands of families we serve each year were the priority of the Coalition during the unprecedented COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak in 2020. We shifted our direct service staff to telephone and virtual home visits as permitted by our funders and following HIPAA regulations. All services and operations shifted to allow staff to limit their exposure and families to still receive the important support and education to help them have healthy pregnancies, positive birth outcomes and babies that celebrate their first birthdays.

Our programs not only adapted, but went above and beyond to meet the challenges brought on by a global pandemic:

MAGNOLIA PROJECT: Each month during the pandemic, the Magnolia Project provided gift bags to the ladies enrolled in the program utilizing donations received from local partners. Some of the items include: diapers, wipes, hand sanitizer, baby lotion, baby wash, masks, gloves and books to read to the babies/children. The case managers placed the items outside of the home, then moms came out to pick up their bags to keep safe social distancing. The participants expressed gratitude to receive the items, but were much more grateful for the opportunity to “see” their case managers again.

NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP: The Northeast Florida NFP team in partnership with the NFP National Service office was able to provide cell phones to participants who were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and pay for their service until January 2021. Due to the generosity of “Up Together” and its partnership with NFP, 144 participants received a $500.00 needs based gift.

FATHERHOOD PRIDE: All program staff received training to assist individuals to complete paperwork and file for unemployment benefits during the pandemic. Program leadership obtained the required documents and filing procedures from the local employment agencies and provided completion and filing assistance only. Individuals needing more help were referred to the employment office. Staff provided over the phone, in-person, and on-line assistant to 181 program and community individuals.

HEALTHY START: In addition to moving to all telephonic and virtual visits, several Healthy Start subcontractors faced additional challenges because of the nature of their organizations on the frontlines of the pandemic. UF Health Jacksonville staff worked in the stress of the hospital environment, while staff at the health departments sometimes have to perform double duty and assist with COVID-related duties. Internally, Healthy Start and the Community Programs Office offered support to subcontractor agencies and the community. Masks were distributed to providers in each county, case managers accessed supplies for families and community members were able to receive diapers, wipes, baby supplies, pregnancy tests, referrals, COVID education and more.
## BY THE NUMBERS

### National Health Corps Florida
- **44807.30** hours of service in the NEFHSC service area
- **4405** units of service related to opioid prevention and response
- **50,000** meals served

### Healthy Start
- **2189** Prenatal & Infant-Child Services
- **758** interconception care services for postpartum women
- **1250** ASQ developmental questionnaires completed
- **6** subcontractors provide direct services to moms & babies

### Magnolia Project
- **4** zip codes served (32208, 09, 11 and 77)
- **200** residents tested for COIV-19 at Magnolia East through a partnership with Agape Community Health Center
- **2131** clinic clients

### Nurse-Family Partnership
- **4215** visits with participants
- **235** active participants
- **37** graduates from the program
- **11** Nurse Home Visitors

### Seeking Safety
- **2** Nurse Home Visitors providing services to pregnant and parenting women with substance use
- **447** virtual/telephone home visiting services provided by Seeking Safety since the program inception in spring 2020.
**Azalea Project**

- 92 medical and health care providers were trained on the SBIRT screening tool for substance use.
- 158 individuals received NAS prevention education for a total of 742 over 3 years.
- 26 participants completed 40-hour Peer Recovery Specialist training for a total of 73 over 3 years.

**Coordinated Intake & Referral**

- 14520 prenatal and infant referrals processed in Northeast Florida.
- 75% of referred clients completed initial intakes.
- 5215 clients that completed initial intakes referred to home visiting services.

**WELLcome Home**

- 70+ moms received a home visit.
- 58 moms scheduled for follow up appointments with medical doctor.
- 16 moms with unsafe sleep practices addressed.
- 70+ moms referred to community resources.

**Fatherhood**

- 183 dads provided with case management services.
Jamesha Moment is the Florida Department of Health Nassau County’s new Coordinated Intake & Referral worker. Jamesha is no stranger to Healthy Start though -- a former client, she joined the FDOH Nassau staff in 2018. Through her time in the program, she can speak from experience about the benefits of home visitation for new parents. She is very gifted in case management and is able to explain the application process for Medicaid/SNAP benefits and can often answer questions and provide referrals quickly for clients during their intake. Clients truly appreciate Jamesha!

Ian Fitzpatrick provides Coordinated Intake & Referral services at UF Health Jacksonville. Although Connect refers clients to home visiting programs, the clients are not always connected with those programs or services are sometimes delayed. Because UF Health is a hospital/clinic-based, after the Initial Intake, staff are very likely to see the client again. Ian recently helped two clients over the course of several visits get connected with the resources they needed until they were enrolled in the home visiting program they chose.

Latoya Brown is the Coordinated Intake & Referral Family Partner Team Lead at the Coalition. She joined the Coalition in 2016 and was promoted to Team Lead in March 2020. Latoya has exceptional organizational skills; she works hard and tends to be a great source of motivation for the Family Partners. She is an excellent trainer and educator. Latoya says she was led to the field of social work by always helping people and listening to their issues and concerns. She finds it very rewarding to help people connect to tools that can influence their lives and well-being.
Katie George is responsible for coordinating all of the current AmeriCorps group to make the YMCA’s New American Welcome Center a success for the refugee community in Northeast Florida. The New American Welcome Center is a new host site located at the duPont Family YMCA that helps immigrants fully integrate into American society and prepares receiving communities around the First Coast to be welcoming and inclusive. They provide food, diaper, baby formula, and resources for mothers/families on a drop in and delivery basis. Katie also runs a citizenship and English tutoring course where she has helped hundreds of people acclimate to American society. Most of her clients are from Syria, the Middle East or South America. Many are mothers who are looking for resources for their children and Katie is getting things done with the mission of the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition in mind. Katie is a Maine native and Peace Corps alumnus who served in Malawi providing health education.

Healthy Start is launching a pilot to place care coordinators in prenatal care clinics to provide a system of care by reducing the siloes between medical care and social services. The care coordinators will be housed on site at the provider office/hospital, and integrated into the provider office as an integral part of the team. Services may include screening, health start services, home visitation (post COVID19), identify areas of need to address the social determinants of health and assist participants in maintaining their medical appointments. St. Vincent’s Family Medicine Center and the Florida Department of Health Duval Center for Women and Children will be the first two pilot sites.

The Coalition received a $100,000 grant from the PGA TOUR’s flagship event, THE PLAYERS Championship, to address the area’s high rate of infant mortality. The Coalition will utilize the two-year funding to expand services in the Arlington area, a community with growing infant mortality rates, by engaging fathers and families. Fathers will be offered fatherhood services to complement services that mom is receiving through the Magnolia Project program, including encouraging healthy pregnancies through early and consistent prenatal care, education and emotional support. Fathers will receive additional virtual training to assist him with providing important support and care for mom and baby, such as safe sleep education and the importance of prenatal care.

The Coalition will expand and develop the “Make a Noise Make a Difference” messaging campaign, creative and media marketing tools/materials aimed at increasing awareness of infant mortality and contributing root causes in Jacksonville, Florida. The campaign, funded by the City of Jacksonville, Kids Hope Alliance, will promote positive behavior change based on qualitative and quantitative research. The primary target audiences for this campaign are African Americans, particularly women, who reside in areas with the highest infant mortality rates and health disparities. The campaign is a recommendation of the 2018 FIMR review.
WHO WE ARE

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KaTori Roussel, Project Coordinator

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Seeking Safety
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WELLcome home
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