



# 2021

Annual Report



*Every baby deserves a healthy start*

# 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

1991-2021

## Healthy Start

Every baby deserves a healthy start

The Healthy Start program and Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition are celebrating a special milestone: 30 years!

In 1991, faced with an alarmingly high infant mortality rate, then-Governor Lawton Chiles and First Lady Rhea Chiles convened a group of community leaders and challenged them to build local coalitions to improve birth outcomes. The result was the landmark Healthy Start program. Chiles signed Healthy Start into law on June 4, 1991, and the Northeast

# 30 years of saving babies, strengthening families

Gov. Lawton Chiles passes **Healthy Start** legislation to reduce infant mortality and improve birth outcomes. The law expands Medicaid coverage for pregnant women and funds education, risk-reduction services & community coalitions ...

Five county health department in NEFL receive funding to provide Healthy Start services.

**Help Them Thrive Birth to Five launches.** ...

Healthy Start & Healthy Families are integrated in high-need areas of Jacksonville.

Disparities in infant mortality examined using Perinatal Periods of Risk (PPOR). ...

**The Magnolia Project** opens to address preconception health.



Coalition becomes the organizational home for efforts to enroll uninsured kids in the **Florida KidCare** program.

**FIMR Community Action Team** targets local night clubs in special outreach and education effort.



**The Azalea Project** opens in a Springfield storefront, focusing on substance-involved pregnant and parenting women and young girls in their households.



Northeast Florida selected to test FIMR-HIV project.



National Health Corps establishes AmeriCorps site in North Florida to link at-risk populations with education and health care.

The C...  
inc...  
West...  
laun...  
Dua...  
in E...  
P...  
Child...  
beco...  
Boot...

Coalition completes first service delivery plan, identifying maternal, child health needs in Northeast Florida

1991 · 1992 · 1993 · 1994 · 1995 · 1996 · 1997 · 1998 · 1999 · 2000 · 2001 · 2002 · 2003 · 2004 · 2005 · 2006

**The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition** is created. The late Phil Gilbert, executive vice-president of Duval County Medical Society, serves as founding chairman.



**Project Impact**, a fetal and infant mortality review project, examines cases with the worst outcomes & makes recommendations for future improvements.

Healthy Start providers expand with the addition of Shands Jacksonville and Healthy Families. ...

Physicians and hospitals targeted in new outreach program to increase Healthy Start screening rates. ...

Gov. Chiles visits Jacksonville to kick off the new prenatal passport.



**MomCare** initiated as part of new Healthy Start Medicaid Waiver.



Local agencies take part in **Friendly Access**, attending the Disney Institute to increase customer service and satisfaction with health care to increase access and use during pregnancy.

The AME Ministers Alliance receives funding for **Body & Soul**, a faith-based healthy weight initiative.



First Infant Mo...  
launched in S...  
Coalition hosts first advocac...  
Coalition is found...  
new Nor...  
Breastfeedi...  
Coalition adopts...  
2009-2014 se...  
Safe Sleep Part...  
marketing and e...



Florida Healthy Start Coalition officially incorporated on November 18, 1991 to place control in the hands of the community, build systems of care and coordinate a diverse array of services on behalf of the highest-risk moms and babies.

In 2011, for our 20th anniversary, we shared the stories of 20 people impacted by Healthy Start, the Coalition and our variety of programs and services. [Read their stories here.](#)

One of our VERY FIRST Healthy Start babies, who is all grown up now, was featured on WJXT News 4 in November. [Hear her story here.](#)

# Stories & building communities



Coalition becomes an independent agency ...  
 ...  
 ... Wildflower Clinic ...  
 ...  
 ... St. Augustine. ...  
 ...  
 ... Duval County participates ...  
**Black Infant Health Practice Initiative** ...  
 ...  
 ... Children's Home Society ...  
 ...  
 ... becomes a Healthy Start provider ...  
**Camp for New Dads** starts up.

**Make a Noise! Make a Difference!** education, awareness campaign initiated  
  
**PhotoVoice** project implemented in New Town Success Zone ...  
 ...  
 ... Magnolia Project study published in Journal of Maternal & Child Health.

**4ME Teen Health Project** begins ...  
 ...  
 ... Undoing Racism workshop held ...  
 ...  
**Make a Difference! Leadership Academy** graduates first class ...  
 ...  
 ... Preconception Peer Educators trained as part of a "A Healthy Baby Begins with You" campaign

**Fatherhood PRIDE** funded to provide case management services for dads in NE Florida ...  
 ...  
 ... Fatherhood Task Force formed. ...  
 ...  
 ... Coalition partners with Duval County Public Schools on **Happy Birthday, Graduate!** program. ...  
 ...  
 ... Magnolia launches Yoga in the Street to address toxic stress; Mothers & Babies curriculum; Love. Latch breastfeeding room; preconception toolkit training.

**Nurse-Family Partnership** expands to additional counties ...  
 ...  
 ... Substance-exposed Newborn Task Force regroups, creates county work groups

Healthy Start program undergoes major redesign ...  
 ...  
 ... FIMR completes "From Data to Action: A review of all 2018 infant deaths in NEFL" and develops a multi-year action plan to address root causes of infant deaths

Make a Noise, Make a Difference social marketing campaign relaunches  
  
 ...  
**ROSE Project** serves women through certified peer recovery specialists  
  
 ...  
 ... System of care pilot colocates staff in OB offices

2007 · 2008 · 2009 · 2010 · 2011 · 2012 · 2013 · 2014 · 2015 · 2016 · 2017 · 2018 · 2019 · 2020 · 2021

... mortality Task Force ...  
 ...  
 ... St. Johns County. ...  
 ...  
 ... regional children's summit.

Coalition hosts first Feed the Children Distribution.  
  
 ...  
 ... Magnolia Project celebrates 10th anniversary. ...  
 ...  
 ... March of Dimes funds **Camellia Project** for moms with babies in the NICU. ...  
 ...  
 ... Teen Pregnancy Task Force formed.

Duval County **Nurse-Family Partnership** launches with MIECHV funding. ...  
 ...  
**BrdsNBz** text message line becomes available to local teens.  


First **Baby Buggy Walk in the Park** held.  
  
 ...  
 ... Coalition begins administering **National Health Corps Florida** program.  


**Coordinated Intake & Referral** initiative kicks off ...  
 ...  
 ... Magnolia OASIS opens in partnership with Agape to provide primary care  
  
 ...  
 ... Coalition receives four-year contract for Healthy Families Jax

Coalition partners with **Jacksonville University** to address maternal and infant mortality ...  
 ...  
**I am a Healthy Start Employer** recognizes maternal and child health-friendly businesses.

**WELLcome Home** universal nurse home visitor pilot launches with Baptist Health  
  
 ...  
 ... CAPTA Seeking Safety launches for moms with substance use ...  
  
 ...  
 ... Magnolia opens new clinic in Arlington, both sites expand to provide primary care, women's health through Agape Family Health.



## Celebrating more first birthdays

Healthy Start is celebrating 30 years of helping to provide our babies a positive path to a great future.

Since 1991, infant mortality – the death of a baby before their first birthday – has dropped significantly and indicators like starting early prenatal care, teen pregnancy rates and smoking during pregnancy have improved. Most important, communities are now engaged in understanding and addressing this important problem and its underlying causes.

Our commitment to collaboration and to addressing infant mortality within a broader community context provides the foundation for our efforts. The Coalition's work centers on three key areas: saving babies, strengthening families, and building communities.

The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition has served more than 200,000 families in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties since its formation – through Healthy Start and a myriad of programs and initiatives developed based on the diverse needs of the community. More than 90 percent of our funding is utilized to provide direct services to pregnant women, new mothers, infants, fathers and families.

But because infant mortality is a community problem, it takes a community to solve it. There are underlying societal & structural root causes of infant mortality that also must be addressed. Every baby deserves a healthy start!



FAYE JOHNSON  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition



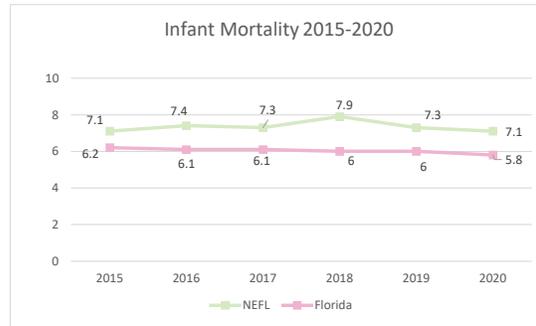
## Adapting to COVID-19

As COVID-19 continued to impact the Northeast Florida community and nation, the Coalition ensured programs adapted to the pandemic and that families received the support and education they needed.

- The Coalition hosted a workshop in September, "COVID-19, Pregnancy & Vaccination: Prenatal Vaccination Information for NEFL Home Visitors" with Kathryn S. Villano, MD, FACOG, an OB with Regional Obstetric Consultants, a division of Mednax, Inc. More than 60 home visitors from Northeast Florida attended.
- Participants were able to participate in virtual and socially-distanced drive-through events, including the Magnolia Project/Healthy Start Community Baby Shower sponsored by Rep. Tracie Davis; Black Maternal Health week diaper and food give-a-ways; National Women's Health Week; and the Nurse-Family Partnership graduation.

## Regional infant mortality rate drops for second year

Since 1991, more babies are living to celebrate their first birthdays as infant mortality has dropped more than 35 percent in the region and state. The regional infant mortality rate declined for the second year in a row in 2021, though it continues to trend higher than state and national rates. The rate decreased from 7.3 to 7.1 deaths per 1000 live births, according to data from the Florida Department of Health, compared to 5.8 deaths per 1000 live births at the state level, and 5.6 deaths nationally.



There were 128 babies who died before their first birthday during the year, the equivalent of eight classes of kindergarteners.

Racial disparities also persist: The infant death rate for white babies was 4.8 deaths per 1000 live births, compared to 12.8 deaths for black babies. Racial equity in birth outcomes is a key focus of the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition.

## Ongoing Data to Action Work Plan

The Coalition conducted a complete review of all infant deaths in 2018, coupled with an analysis of fetal and infant deaths using the Perinatal Periods of Risk. With support from Florida Blue, Baptist Health and UF Health Jacksonville, the Coalition examined key medical, system, social and environmental risk factors contributing to these deaths and linked them to actionable strategies. A multi-year plan based on the results was developed with objectives focused on policy, an infant mortality awareness campaign, engaging grassroots leaders, a medical home pilot, increasing quality of care, colocating outreach staff in prenatal care offices and addressing provider bias. Activities to meet the objectives include:

- Identifying a Fetal & Infant Mortality Review Action Plan Director to focus on plan implementation.
- Training 25 Make a Noise, Make a Difference Community Advocates to provide Infant Mortality education in zip codes 32208, 32209, and 32210.
- System of care pilot placed an outreach staff in one prenatal care office beginning in May 2021 to address the social determinants of health, screen clients and link them to home visiting programs.
- Infant Mortality Article published and [posted on the Duval Medical Society's website](#).

## Our supporters

Thanks you to the following agencies and individuals who have made the work of the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition possible in 2021!

Leslie Allen  
Hans Alvarez  
Baptist Health  
Peggy Boord  
Carol Brady  
City of Jacksonville, Kids Hope Alliance  
CompassMSP  
Megan Denk  
The Dorothy Wilson Mabry Family  
Pauline Drake  
Florida Agency for Health Care Administration  
Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions  
Florida MIECHV  
Florida Blue  
Florida Department of Health  
George Koury & Associates  
Harvey's Community Bag Program  
Janice Hawkins  
Health Federation of Philadelphia  
Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida  
Healthy Start MomCare Network  
Mark Hudak  
Humana  
Jack and Jill of America  
Jacksonville Port Authority  
Jim Moran Foundation  
Carol Neil  
Javacia Owens  
PGA Tour/THE PLAYERS Championship  
Regions Bank  
Sunshine Health  
TECO Energy  
Unitarian Universalist Church  
U. S. Department of Health & Human Services  
Walmart  
Wolfson Children's Hospital

## Connect: A success story

Rosana was a single, Spanish-speaking pregnant woman who lived in a hazardous, open-roof trailer with her teenage son and her uncle. She was concerned about raising her newborn in this trailer since it had poor ventilation, water leaked in and critters would enter.

AmeriCorps member Sabrina Lee, serving with the CONNECT Coordinated Intake & Referral program, received Rosana's case and helped Rosana acquire housing assistance by taking on the role as her liaison between the Jacksonville and Puerto Rico housing authorities and being in constant contact with her landlord, supervisor from JHA, her employer and the manager of Oaks of Durkeeville apartments.

After Sabrina endlessly advocated for her and guided her throughout the whole process, she finally stood by Rosana as she put her keys into the lock of her new home.

Rosana was in awe at how beautiful the place was and exclaimed "For me this is a palace," as she entered the home she was dreaming of: an affordable, safe and stable place to raise her family.



### National Health Corps AmeriCorps

**35,689.55**

hours of services provided



**18,530**

units of service provided

**41**

members served

### Healthy Start

**3,299**

prenatal HS services

**5,866**

infant HS services

**2,946**

interconception care HS services



### Nurse-Family Partnership

**51**

graduates from the program



**\$29,392.16**

in American Rescue Plan funds distributed to families in need

### The Rose Project

**3**

certified recovery peer specialists provide support to women



**45**

women served in program

### Seeking Safety

**1,139**

home visits provided

**149**

clients served

**104**

plans of safe care completed



### CI&R: Connect



**6,471**

clients that completed Initial Intakes referred to home visiting services

**64.1%**

referred clients completing initial intakes

### WELcome Home



**242**  
moms received a visit  
post-discharge from Baptist Health

**213**  
moms referred to community resources

**34**  
moms had unsafe sleep situations  
addressed

### Fatherhood PRIDE



**25**  
fathers served in case  
management

**216**  
dads received fatherhood education  
and parenting information

### Magnolia Project



**597**  
case management clients

**1607**  
clinic clients from zip codes 32208, 09,  
11 and 77

### System of Care Pilot



**1**  
Prenatal care clinic with a  
co-located CI&R staff

**50+**  
women at clinic had social determinants  
of health issues addressed

### Make a Noise, Make a Difference



**360,000**  
reached through social media campaign

**25**  
infant mortality advocates trained

## Magnolia Project Ambassador: Renisha Stewart

I joined the Magnolia Project at the age of 13. After completing high school and beginning college, I was able to still receive clinic services and participate in weekly meetings due to the assistance from my case manager.



I graduated from the 16-week Leadership Academy training class, nominated by my case manager who also helped me to accomplish my goals. I had the honor to advocate for funding in Washington D.C. and in Tallahassee, FL. with then board member Rev. Tommy Rogers, then Magnolia Project Director Faye Johnson (now CEO) and then Executive Director Jennifer Gornto. The experience was priceless.

During that time, I volunteered for many years for the March of Dimes, participated in several of the fundraising walks, and National Women's Health Week, sharing my story with Congresswoman Corrine Brown and State Rep. Mia Jones.

Growing up in a high teen pregnancy zip code, the women of the Magnolia Project TRIED THEIR BEST to keep me active in positive activities and because of this, I'm currently employed at UF



Health Jacksonville as a Respiratory Technician. I am also excited to give back and help the Magnolia Project by leading their community council!

## *Make a Noise! Make a Difference!* *social marketing campaign relaunches*

The Make a Noise! Make a Difference! social marketing campaign, first launched in 2008, was revived in 2021 to increase awareness of infant mortality and contributing factors. The new phase of the campaign is funded by the Kids Hope Alliance/City of Jacksonville and utilizes a diverse approach of media and community engagement.

During National Infant Mortality Awareness Month in September, 25 trained infant mortality advocates spread across the Jacksonville zip codes with the highest infant death rates to provide education and facilitate conversations about how to improve birth outcomes. Throughout the month, approximately 7,000 flyers, 5,000 rack cards and 300 posters on preventing infant mortality were distributed to businesses and individuals in zip codes 32208, 32209 and 32210. The advocates were trained in the "Make a Noise! Make a Difference! Prevent Infant Mortality" curriculum, which was designed for community residents who want to know the facts about infant mortality and share the information with their community.

## *ROSE Project begins peer recovery services for families in home visiting*

The Coalition now offers peer recovery services to moms enrolled in home visiting programs. The ROSE Project launched in June 2021, through funding from the Florida Department of Health and the Overdose Data to Action grant, and allows the Coalition to pair a peer specialist with moms to complement the services they are already receiving and assist with the recovery process.

ROSE stands for Recovery Obtained Through Strength and Empowerment and offers support and advocacy for women seeking recovery through resilience and ongoing wellness, while ensuring they have the skills needed to nurture and care for their children. Services include:

- One-on-one support from a Certified Recovery Peer Specialist
- Support groups and life skills courses
- Goal planning
- Recovery wellness plan for long-term care

ROSE services are available to pregnant and postpartum mothers who reside in Duval County and are actively using substances or in recovery.

## *Safe sleep trainings educate community during awareness month*

During Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month in October, the Coalition and community partners trained more than 100 people on safe sleep through the the Community Action Group Safe Sleep Subcommittee. The trainings ensured professionals and community members in the region had important information on how to prevent sleep-related deaths.



A total of 173 people across 19 agencies were trained. The trainings were held for apartment complexes, Florida Department of Health employees, home visiting agencies, Healthy Start providers, day cares, WIC providers & community members.

The Fetal & Infant Mortality Review Case Review Team makes annual recommendations based on death reviews conducted. The Community Action Group is a group of volunteers and partner agencies that takes those recommendations and develops and implements street-level outreach activities through several subcommittees.



## System of care pilot addresses medical siloes, social determinants of health

The Coalition launched a new system of care/medical office pilot to address the social determinants of health that impact birth outcomes and break down the barriers between the medical and social service fields. The pilot, funded by Baptist Health, places a Coordinated Intake & Referral staff person at Ascension St. Vincent's Family Medicine Center to screen clients, enroll them in services and help them navigate challenges.

The pilot was developed as a recommendation from the 2018 Fetal & Infant Mortality Review process. A key finding was that health and social services are fragmented and uncoordinated, along with the funding that supports them. Expanding the pilot to additional prenatal care offices is a key focus of the Coalition. Three more OB partners have been identified and will join the pilot in 2022.

## Board early literacy initiative

The Coalition Board of Directors collected books throughout the year to distribute to parents in home visiting programs to encourage reading and family bonding. The books were distributed to families with information and education on the importance of early literacy.



## Early Childhood Health Equity Landscape Project brief

The Coalition was one of eight initiatives featured in a brief entitled "[Embedding Equity in Early Childhood Initiatives.](#)" As part of the larger Early Childhood Health Equity Landscape Project, the brief highlights how the initiatives have set equitable goals and outcomes, the supports that they and their communities received, the barriers they faced in maintaining a focus on equity and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and racism on their work. The brief, released in April 2021, is a joint publication of Child Trends and the National Institute for Children's Health Quality (NICHQ) and was supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Coalition CEO Faye Johnson shared information on the agency's initiatives, how we embed health equity in our projects and the role that addressing the structural and root causes of infant mortality plays in our work.

## Magnolia Project expands partnership with Agape Family Health

The Magnolia Project expanded its partnership with Agape Family Health Services to provide a full array of prenatal, well-woman and primary care services at its two community-based locations. Agape, the local federally qualified health center, joined the new Magnolia East location (6024 Merrill Rd) as the clinical provider in April 2020, and began services at Magnolia West (5300 N. Pearl St.) in May 2021.

The Magnolia Project is a special federally-funded Healthy Start initiative to improve the health and well-being of women during their childbearing years in Jacksonville zip codes with high rates of infant mortality and racial disparities (32208, 32209, 32211 and 32277).



## WELLcome Home program enters second year

The WELLcome Home program, a universal nurse home visiting initiative in collaboration with Baptist Health and Wolfson Children's Hospital, entered its second year of providing new moms with a home visit immediately after hospital discharge to provide critical post-delivery health education and referrals.



Mothers who deliver at Baptist Downtown receive a complimentary follow-up phone call after discharge, and are then offered a voluntary home visit with a registered nurse. During the home visit — which have been virtual visits during the COVID-19 pandemic — the WELLcome Home nurse home visitor provides information on infant and maternal care; breastfeeding and nutrition; safe sleep and other infant safety topics. The nurse home visitor also assists with follow-up medical appointments, additional lactation support and providing community referrals for any family needs.

# Who We Are

## ADMINISTRATION

Faye Johnson, *Chief Executive Officer*  
Erin Addington, *Chief Operating Officer*  
Cynthia Ball Nixon, *Chief Financial Officer*  
Jim Allen, *Senior Accountant*  
Elizabeth Golden, *Office Assistant*  
Kristin Toliver, *Staff Accountant*  
Cheryl Ware, *HR + Operations Manager*

## AZALEA PROJECT

Tiffany Knight, *Project Director & Director of Program Performance*

## CONNECT: COORDINATED INTAKE & REFERRAL

Beverly Butler, *Program Director*  
Latoya Brown, *Family Partner Team Lead*  
Lisa Cunningham, *Family Partner*  
Pamela Griffin, *Family Partner*  
Rodnae Johnson, *Community Liaison*  
Ebony Mayham, *Family Partner*  
Lisa Miller, *Family Partner*  
Kara Ramesar, *Family Partner*

## FATHERHOOD PRIDE

Jack Johnson, *Project Director*  
Nikolas Duke, *Case Manager*  
Mitchell Miles, *Case Manager*  
Heather Rollinson, *Community Liaison*

## HEALTHY START

Cathy Dupont, *Program Director*

## MAGNOLIA PROJECT

Marsha Davis, *Project Director*  
Lacrecia Anderson, *Data Entry Clerk/Community Health Worker*  
Michelle Clark, *Team Leader/Supervisor*  
Karen Cohen, *Case Manager*  
Takaih Davis, *Front Desk Coordinator*  
Earnestine Jackson, *Case Manager*  
Antionette Martin, *Women's Intervention Specialist*  
Nina Odom, *Outreach Specialist*

Juarlyn Smith, *CAN Coordinator*  
Annie Thomas, *Case Manager*

## NATIONAL HEALTH CORPS FLORIDA

KaTori Roussel, *Program Director*  
Camille Saunders, *Program Coordinator*

## NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

Trina Reed, *Program Manager*

## SEEKING SAFETY

Beverly Legree, *Nurse Home Visitor*  
Pamela Vicars, *Nurse Home Visitor*

## ROSE PROJECT

Sandra Gates, *Recovery Peer Specialist*  
Carly Poole, *Recovery Peer Specialist*  
Jermaine Williams, *Recovery Peer Specialist*

## WELLCOME HOME

Susan Douglas, *Nurse Home Visitor*

## CONSULTANTS

Samantha Brewer, *Graphic Designer*  
Roberta Christopher, *Nurse Supervision*  
Tracy Claveau, *FIMR Coordinator*  
Tina Johnson, *FIMR Maternal Interviewer*  
Lisa Pelle, *Quality Improvement*  
Angela Peterson, *FIMR Maternal Interviewer*  
Cheryl Wright, *Make a Noise, Make a Difference intervention*  
Eighth & Whitner Group, *Infant Mortality Project*  
Sauti Plus, *Make a Noise! Make a Difference social marketing*  
ruckus, *Make a Noise, Make a Difference social marketing*

## DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS

Children's Home Society  
Florida Department of Health Baker  
Florida Department of Health Duval  
Florida Department of Health Nassau  
Inspire to Rise  
UF Health Jacksonville

## 2021 Coalition Membership

Nicole Alexander, MD  
Leslie Allen  
Stephen Baker, PhD  
Peggy Boord, *Treasurer*  
Meaghan Crowley  
John Davis, MD  
Megan Denk  
Pauline Drake, Esq., *Chair*  
Janice Hawkins

Mark Hudak, MD, *Vice Chair*  
George Maxey  
Carol Neil, PhD  
Jeannie Potthast  
Teleuba Revels  
Rev. Tom Rodgers  
Jason Roth  
Judge R. Anthony Salem  
Tiffanie Williams, PhD, *Secretary*



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[nefhealthystart.org](http://nefhealthystart.org)

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