



Inaugural Summit Explores Root Causes of Infant Mortality

NEFHSC launches conference series to prompt community action for healthier birth outcomes

Jacksonville, Fla. (Jan. 30, 2023) – Certain areas of Jacksonville have higher infant mortality rates than many third world countries. What’s most troubling is we’re losing many of these babies and their mamas from mostly preventable causes.

That’s why the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition (NEFHSC) is launching its first educational Root Causes of Infant Mortality conference on Tuesday, Jan. 31, from 8 a.m. to noon – *Policy + Intent: Reducing Toxic Stress Across the Life Course* – one of a series of events to raise awareness about the root causes of infant mortality such as social determinants of health, the effects of toxic stress, and siloed medical and social services.

“Protecting the health and well being of our babies and their families is a critical measure of our community’s development,” said Faye Johnson, CEO of the NEFHSC. “Although there’s been a lot of significant work dedicated to decreasing our city’s infant mortality rate, we must come together as a community to better understand the drivers behind the numbers. Healthy, full-term pregnancies and deliveries happen when women are mentally and physically healthy prior to becoming pregnant.”

The conference will explore various perspectives about the effects of toxic stress on women’s lives, pregnancy and birth outcomes from local experts including Dr. Mark Hudak, chair of the Department of Pediatrics, and chief of the Division of Neonatology from the University of Florida College of Medicine; Dr. Kenyatta Lee, CEO of the Pareto Clinic; and Vicky Basra, president and CEO of the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center. Summit attendees also will have the opportunity to participate in discussion groups regarding early childhood development, adolescent health and pregnancy/postpartum.

“The increased adoption of value-based care contracting, and population health are ‘winds in the sail’ of communities committed to the adoption of the life course perspective as the standard of care,” said Dr. Lee, who is the keynote speaker. “This is the right time for the North Florida community, as we have the right stakeholders with a robust history of genuine commitment to reducing the disparities in prenatal care and infant mortality. I am truly excited to see what the next 10 years will bring.”


The event is being held at Nemours Children’s Health located at 10140 Centurion Parkway North in Jacksonville and is funded by the Kids Hope Alliance. For more information or to reserve a seat, please [click here](#). A second conference is being planned for September 2023.

About the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition

The NEFHSC leads the community effort to reduce infant death and improve the health of children, childbearing women, fathers and their families in Northeast Florida. For more information, view [our media kit](#) or contact Erin Addington at eaddington@nefhsc.org or 904.447.9853. Visit the [Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions](#) for statewide information or the [National Healthy Start Association](#) for national data.

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