



*Every baby deserves
a healthy start*

2023

Annual Report



TACKLING THE ROOT CAUSES AND STRUCTURAL ISSUES TO GIVE EVERY BABY A HEALTHY START

We have known for many years that infant mortality is an indicator of the health of a community. Infant mortality is a complex issue though -- there are no quick fixes to making sure our babies are born healthy and live to their first birthday and beyond.

We do know that mom's health before and during pregnancy, the cumulative weathering her body endures across the life course and the social determinants of health (where she lives, learns, works, plays and prays) are key factors that impact infant mortality. The Coalition's programs work with moms, babies and families each day to mitigate these factors, while our Maternal and Child Health Policy Research Center addresses the policy and systems changes needed to best support all families.

We are hardly alone in tackling a high infant mortality rate, but fortunately for us, we do have a community that's engaged and working on finding solutions. Our many partners and stakeholders have joined us in this critical work, engaging in discussion, providing funding and identifying strategies.

These are our babies, our most vulnerable citizens, that are counting on us to do the work. Every baby deserves a healthy start in life.

Every baby, every day.



FAYE JOHNSON
Chief Executive Officer,
Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition



INFANT MORTALITY IN NORTHEAST FLORIDA

In 2022, 119 babies in Northeast Florida died before their first birthday, according to data from the Florida Department of Health.

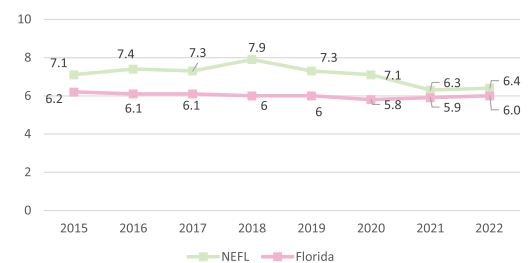
The regional infant mortality rate of 6.4 deaths per 1000 live births is higher than the state rate (6.0), but the gap is closing. The leading causes of death were prematurity, sudden unexpected infant deaths (sleep-related) and congenital anomalies. There were an additional 158 fetal deaths, or stillbirths.

More babies are celebrating their first birthday, as the infant mortality rate in Northeast Florida has decreased 20 percent since 2018. Despite the overall progress, this has not translated into a decrease in racial disparities.

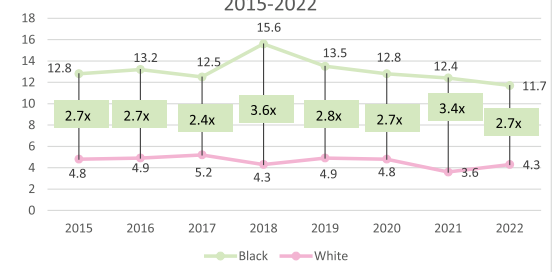
In 2022, the infant death rate for white babies was 4.3 deaths per 1000 live births, compared to 11.7 deaths for black babies.

Infant Mortality rates by county were Baker, 8.1 deaths; Clay, 5.2 deaths; Duval, 7.2 deaths; Nassau, 4.8 deaths; and St. Johns, 3.6 deaths.

Infant Mortality 2015-2022



Northeast Florida Infant Mortality by Race 2015-2022



ADDRESSING INFANT MORTALITY

ROOT CAUSES SUMMITS

The Coalition launched two educational Root Causes of Infant Mortality conferences in 2023 funded by the City of Jacksonville/Kids Hope Alliance.

A winter summit was held in January, focused on reducing toxic stress across the life course. There were 48 attendees at the half-day event. The full-day conference in September, National Infant Mortality Awareness Month, focused on Policy + Intent: A catalyst for change. There were 125 attendees, including a welcome from Mayor Donna Deegan and keynote by Dr. Monique Fountain Hanna, Chief Medical Officer, HRSA.

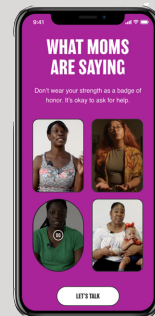
Both conferences raised awareness of the root causes of infant mortality such as the social determinants of health, the effects of toxic stress, housing, the ALICE threshold and siloed medical and social services. National, state and local experts highlighted data regarding factors contributing to infant mortality, the impact these issues have in our community and what we collectively can do to ensure every child has an equal and healthy start in life.



HEY, MAMA

The Hey, Mama campaign completed its third year, focused on increasing public awareness about infant mortality and health disparities by engaging and educating the community through social marketing. Launched by the Coalition in 2022 with funding from the City of Jacksonville, Kids Hope Alliance, Hey, Mama was a strategy developed as part of the Fetal & Infant Mortality Review of all infants death in one year (2018).

Hey, Mama focused on raising awareness with Black women & their family members, and influencers of above including policymakers, employers, providers. The campaign target area was ZIP Codes: 32209 & 32210 and 32208 & 32211 (added in 2023).



HEY, MAMA MOBILE PANTRY

The Hey, Mama Mobile Pantry began making appearances in May 2023 around Jacksonville to provide baby supplies, self-care products, health and nutrition education, and other items to families. Thanks to funding from the Jacksonville City Council, the Mobile Pantry – a bright pink nine-passenger van adorned with illustrations of a family and babies – hit the streets to meet residents where they are at. The van is equipped with diapers and wipes, formula, baby food, men's and women's toiletries and pregnancy tests. More than 500 community members have met with community health workers who provided baby, household, or self-care supplies along with postpartum depression screenings and provide referrals for community resources including housing, rental assistance, well-baby care and stress management. Interested families are also linked with home visiting programs.

551
women/families
provided
education and
resources

3
target zip codes
(32208, 09 & 10)

2,000+
additional women educated outside of target zip
codes



NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP



The NEFL Nurse-Family Partnership program has been recognized at the state, community and national level for outstanding performance, outcomes and implementation of the model. The program graduated 67 families in 2023.

Nurse-Family Partnership is supported by the Florida Maternal, Infant & Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program (6.5 nurses), the NFP National Service Office Incentive Fund (1 nurse) and NFP National Service Office through the Jim Moran Foundation (2 nurses).

ABOUT NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

An evidence-based home-visiting program that is implemented within in Baker and Duval counties. Services are provided by specially-trained nurses from UF Health Jacksonville for high-risk, first-time mothers until their children turn two.



65
graduates

9.5
nurse home visitors

25
families served per nurse

CONNECT: COORDINATED INTAKE & REFERRAL

The CONNECT program reaches new moms, infants and families throughout Northeast Florida through a variety of methods.

- Family Partners in each county reach out telephonically to families to enroll them in a home visiting program of their choice. They contact families received through the universal prenatal and infant risk screens, community referrals and self-referrals.
- Medical facility family partners work directly with families in a hospital, clinic or doctor's office,

ensuring a system of care is available to support families and reducing the silos between the medical and social services fields.

- The community liaison works with prenatal care providers and hospitals in the regions to ensure screening of pregnant women and infants.
- Community health workers conduct targeted outreach to identify pregnant women that are not enrolled in home visitations services through the CONNECT. The CHWs visit local businesses, canvass neighborhoods, coordinate with partner agencies and attend events.

ABOUT CONNECT

A coordinated intake & referral system that uses the state universal prenatal and postnatal screens to connect pregnant women, infants and families to a home visiting program of their choice. The goal is for families to receive the best services for their needs, minimize duplication of services and ensure effective use of local resources.



12,988
initial intakes completed in NEFL

6,252
clients referred to home visiting programs

4,792
homes canvassed by community health workers

16,050
screens distributed to prenatal offices by community liaison, county CI&R staff

THE DOULA COLLECTIVE OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA

The Northeast Florida Healthy Start G.R.O.W. Doula Network was established in 2023, operating under the name the Doula Collective of Northeast Florida. The program supports the local system of care to optimize the health of pregnant women, babies and the families Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties

Doula health care and education support services provide:

- Information to pregnant women to support the most positive pregnancy, labor and birth experience possible
- Local health care system navigation and health education support
- Comprehensive practice that is culturally sensitive, offering services in the family's native language, or with an interpreter, if needed
- Focuses on outcomes to reduce racial disparities in maternal and child health

On August 13, the first G.R.O.W. training was held. The Coalition's goal is to sponsor two G.R.O.W. Doula Training classes per year until 100+ doulas are certified and credentialed.



21

Doulas currently certified

100

goal # of doulas to be certified

FETAL & INFANT MORTALITY REVIEW (FIMR)



The Fetal and Infant Mortality Review examines cases with the worst outcomes to identify gaps in maternal and infant services and promote future improvements. The 2023 recommendations adopted through FIMR are to improve participation in preconception and prenatal care; improve awareness and utilization of community programs for pregnant women and families; and address the root causes of infant mortality and poor birth outcomes.

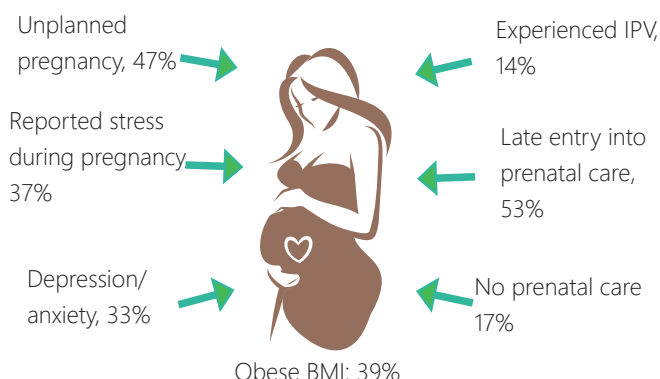
Several community groups operate under the FIMR umbrella, reviewing cases and working towards goals:

- The Case Review Team is a multi-disciplinary group

that meets monthly to review FIMR cases and develop annual recommendations.

- The Community Action Group is a group of community partners and members that implements the annual CRT recommendations.
- The Zero Preventable Infant Deaths Leadership Council brings together community leaders to address infant mortality by monitoring the Coalition's FIMR Action Plan progress and guiding plan implementation. The group also provides guidance to the Northeast Florida Maternal and Child Health Policy and Research Center.

MATERNAL FACTORS IN WOMEN REVIEWED WITH PREMATURE BIRTH



86

deaths reviewed from 2020-22

55%

prematurity cause of death

4

key chronic conditions impacted outcomes (obesity, hypertension, diabetes and asthma)

ABOUT FIMR

The Fetal & Infant Mortality Review is an evidence-based program that looks at cases with the worst outcomes to identify gaps in services and promote future improvement. Each year, 52 fetal and infant death cases are reviewed. The Coalition began the initiative in 1995 and carries it out with funding from the Florida Department of Health.

THE MAGNOLIA PROJECT



The Magnolia Project continues to empower communities to address social determinants of health, toxic stress, poverty and social inequity with family, community, health/medical and social support.

A voice for consumers:

Magnolia Project participant Jessica Griffin and her children attended the Consumer Convening Conference in Chicago Illinois May 24-26, 2023 along with Project Director Marsha Davis. The Consumer Convening assembled federal Healthy Start consumers, staff and partners from around the nation to lift Healthy Start consumer voices, activate consumer agency and build a shared vision for a national Healthy Start consumer platform. Additionally, Ms. Griffin is a part of the Magnolia Project's Community Action Network (CAN) and was referred to the Make a Difference Leadership Academy, which she graduated from in December.



628

participants served in case management

887

clinic patients served in target zip codes

200

families served at the annual Community Baby Shower sponsored by Sen. Tracie Davis

ABOUT THE MAGNOLIA PROJECT

A federal Healthy Start initiative that works to improve the health and well-being of women during their childbearing years in Jacksonville zip codes with high infant mortality (32208, 32209, 32211 & 32277). Magnolia provides individual-, group- and community-level interventions for women before, during and after pregnancy and fathers, in addition to two community clinics. The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources & Services Administration.

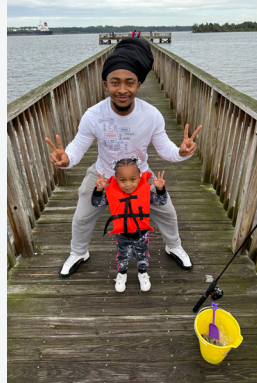
FATHERHOOD PRIDE



Fatherhood PRIDE services expanded in 2023, with the launch of several new initiatives under the program umbrella. In addition to serving fathers in Duval County through funding from the Jim Moran Foundation, the following also launched:

TEAM Dad, through funding from the Florida Department of Health. TEAM dad is one-on-one fatherhood education for fathers and father figures in Northeast Florida, focused on families enrolled in Healthy Start or not enrolled in any other home visiting program.

The Fathers First initiative, funded by the Florida Department of Children and Families, includes two grants in Northeast Florida: The Comprehensive Needs for Fathers grant and Responsible Fatherhood Education program. Fathers in the region can access case management services, child support system navigation, co-parenting classes, employment assistance, financial education/coaching, job and trade skills training, and parenting classes.



135

fathers enrolled in case management

2,336

fathers received education through group classes

ABOUT FATHERHOOD PRIDE

Education and support for fathers and father figures through case management, group education and one-on-one support. The program addresses the comprehensive needs of fathers and improves their relationship with their children by increasing financial self-efficacy, fatherhood responsibility, job-driven workforce development and reducing domestic violence and recidivism rates.

AZALEA ROSE PROJECT

The Azalea Rose Project was rebranded in 2023, combining two initiatives serving women with current or a history of substance use (The Azalea Project and The ROSE Project). The project is located in Azalea's long-time home in the Springfield neighborhood, where residents in need can access baby items, condoms and more from a storefront location.

Services include:

- Outreach
- Linkage to home visiting programs
- Referrals
- Peer recovery services
- Linkage to treatment
- Group classes and education, including women's empowerment

Services are available to preconception, prenatal and parenting women who are actively using substances or in recovery.

92

women served

2

certified peer recovery specialists



ABOUT THE AZALEA ROSE PROJECT

A special initiative that provides outreach, education and support services for women with current or a history of substance use. The goal of the project is to break the cycle of substance use and prevent substance-exposed newborns across the lifespan using strategies to ensure that all babies have healthy birth outcomes and live to see their first birthday.

CAPTA SEEKING SAFETY



The Seeking Safety program focuses on mothers who have experienced substance use. Moms enrolled in the program receive one-on-one home visits from a registered nurse that help improve the overall quality of life for both mother and child. The home visitors also connect families to resources.

In 2023, the nurse home visitors also collaborated with Gateway Community Services and River Region Human Services to provide on-site parenting classes and face-to-face home visiting services for clients. Seeking Safety staff also collaborated with programs like Azalea Rose, linking clients with a peer recovery specialist to assist with their recovery, and the Magnolia Project.

The nurse home visitors also had the opportunity to attend the state Opioid Summit in Orlando and regional Rx Illicit Drug Summit in Atlanta.



106

families served

3

nurse home visitors

ABOUT SEEKING SAFETY

A nurse home visiting program for substance-using pregnant women and mothers in Duval County with children up to age one. The program provides case management and resource assistance. Seeking Safety is funded by a CAPTA grant from the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families through the Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions.

HEALTHY START



In Northeast Florida, Healthy Start services are provided by six subcontractors: Children's Home Society, Florida Department of Health Baker, Florida Department of Health Duval, Florida Department of Health Nassau, Inspire to Rise and UF Health Jacksonville. The program continued to have strong birth outcomes and meet contract performance measures.

373
prenatal women served

1,699
infants served

741
postpartum women served



ABOUT HEALTHY START

A free, voluntary program that provides referral information and support services for pregnant women and infants up to age 3 and their families. Services are tailored based on individual needs and include childbirth education; parenting information; smoking cessation; and breastfeeding support. It is funded by the Florida Department of Health and Florida Agency for Health Care Administration.

NATIONAL HEALTH CORPS FLORIDA



Finding New Ways to Bring Resources and Healthcare to the Homeless Community of Jacksonville. Mason Gold served during the 2022-2023 service term.

In my position, I helped enroll patients who sought medical services at Sulzbacher Beaches Clinic by assisting them with the medical eligibility process. The patients who would come into the office fell into many different categories. Some had insurance while others did not. Some of the patients were homeless, while others had a home and job. Because many of the patients we served had lower levels of health literacy, they required additional assistance with understanding the requirements and submitting the required information to our office. I would meet with individuals when they came into our clinic and break down each step of the eligibility process more easily. This also required many times the use of a translator for patients who did not speak English proficiently. By meeting with individuals, many of whom were from vulnerable populations, I was able to help ensure they were receiving timely medical services while navigating the barriers of health literacy and, in particular to the homeless clients,

access to care, transportation, and resources.

My favorite part of my AmeriCorps service was working with the homeless outreach team at our office. I would ride with the homeless outreach coordinator and we would seek out homeless individuals near the Jacksonville Beaches area. I would assist in educating these individuals on all of the medical services that Sulzbacher offered and help them to fill out the eligibility paperwork. This process directly overstepped the barriers that homeless individuals face when trying to get connected with health care services, as I was immediately available to help educate them and they also did not have to worry about transportation to our clinic to receive the paperwork. Throughout the year, we were able to help many homeless individuals get access to healthcare and shelter at the main Sulzbacher center.



ABOUT NATIONAL HEALTH CORPS FLORIDA

An AmeriCorps program that provides service opportunities to help meet unmet health care and health education needs in the region. Members are placed each year at non-profits and government sites.



17
members served

10,423
hours of services (22-23 members)

1780
hours of service (23-24 members)

CATALYST FOR INFANT HEALTH EQUITY

ABOUT THE CATALYST FOR INFANT HEALTH EQUITY

A federal initiative through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), to improve maternal and infant health. The Coalition is one of nine organizations awarded funding as part of the multimillion, five-year effort aimed to help reduce disparities in maternal and birth outcomes and other significant issues.



The priority population focus is non-Hispanic Black pregnant women and infants. Concentrated geographical areas include the zip codes of 32208, 32209 and 32210.

Northeast Florida Maternal and Child Health Policy Research Center

The Maternal and Child Health Policy Research Center is a grant-supported health initiative founded by the Coalition in 2022. The policy center's goal is to move beyond individual-level direct service to holistic systems change with the intent to alter the social, physical and economic environment that shapes health behaviors and outcomes.

Research affirms that upstream policy efforts are necessitated to combat targeting factors which have historically suppressed families, communities and institutions which contribute to infant health inequities.

STRESS & THE LIFE COURSE SERIES

Throughout 2023, the Coalition provided an ongoing series of presentations on toxic stress and how it impacts infant mortality. The sessions were led by Dr. Roberta Christopher, assistant professor of nursing at Jacksonville University's Keigwin School of Nursing and Catalyst for Infant Health Equity evaluation partner.

During the hour-long discussion, Dr. Christopher shared research about how birth outcomes are impacted by toxic stress, the life course perspective and the solutions and upstream approaches needed to reduce the high infant mortality rate in Northeast Florida.

Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition Education Series



Community Advocacy & Leadership

Three cohorts of the Make a Difference Leadership Academy completed the curriculum and graduated from the program in 2023. The Academy supports the efforts of local residents to make changes in neighborhood factors that contribute to disparities in health and birth outcomes through learning to be community advocates. It aims to change the trajectory of a community through the individuals trained and assisted in the development of a Community Action Plan. This plan outlines a specific project to move a community to action. The Winter Graduation included special recognition by City

Councilmembers Ju'Coby Pittman and Rahman Johnson.

Staff; current and previous Leadership Academy graduates; and other community advocates participated in a variety of grassroots activities throughout the year, including the Jacksonville University Mayoral Debate, the Black Family Wellness Conference, Pinwheels for Prevention, City Council Inauguration and the Jax Chamber Longest Table event.



3
national conference presentations
(CityMatCH, AMCHP & NICHQ)

26
Leadership Academy graduates

OUR SUPPORTERS

Thanks you to the following agencies and individuals who have made the work of the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition possible in 2023!

Baptist Health
Carol Brady
Charities Aid Foundation America
City of Jacksonville, Kids Hope Alliance
CompassMSP
CVS Health
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 Children & Families
Florida Department of Health
Health Federation of Philadelphia
Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida
Healthy Start MomCare Network
Jacksonville Port Authority
JM Family Enterprises, Inc.
Jim Moran Foundation
JM Family Enterprises
Kathleen Mankinen
Morgan Stanley
Nurse Family Partnership National Service Office
Pittman Law Group
Simply Healthcare
Sunshine Health
TECO Energy
United Healthcare
U. S. Department of Health & Human Services
Walgreens/Giv.io Charitable
Walmart

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Pauline Drake, Esq.
Linda Forde, Treasurer
Jason Roth
Judge R. Anthony Salem
Kortney Wesley
Tyree Williams

*A special thank you to our
dedicated volunteer
Board of Directors!*



WHO WE ARE

ADMINISTRATION

Faye Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
Erin Addington, Chief Operating Officer
Hannah Graham, Special Projects Coordinator
Ellena Kalber, Executive Assistant
Shelby Salter, Doula Coordinator

AZALEA ROSE PROJECT

Sandra Gates, Program Manager
Brianna Marxmiller, Recovery Peer Specialist

CONNECT: COORDINATED INTAKE & REFERRAL

Beverly Butler, Program Director
Nia Alexis, Family Partner
Ebony Hamilton, Family Partner Team Lead
Lisa Miller, Family Partner

CONNECT: COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

Rodnae Johnson, Community Health Worker Supervisor
Shakela Curtis, Community Health Worker
Phyllis Mattox, Community Health Worker
Roslyn Parker, Community Health Worker

FATHERHOOD PRIDE

Jack Johnson, Project Director
Daniel Hewitt, Program Supervisor
LaShawn Coleman, Case Manager
Nikolas Duke, Case Manager
Derrick Emminger, Fatherhood Coach
Aaron Gill, Program Facilitator
Iven Gillespie, Fatherhood Coach
Freddie Green, Fatherhood Coach
Karen Jones, Program Assistant
Elmis Navarro, Case Manager
Selah Ross, Fatherhood Coach

HEALTHY START

Tiffany Knight, Program Director

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH POLICY & RESEARCH CENTER

Graham Watts, Research Associate
Cathy Dupont, Community Advocacy & Leadership Director

MAGNOLIA PROJECT

Marsha Davis, Project Director
Lacrecia Anderson, Women's Intervention Specialist
Eddie Bush, CAN Coordinator
Michelle Clark, Team Leader/Supervisor
Kenneth Davison, Case Manager
Earnestine Jackson, Case Manager
Kim Nurse, Office & Front Desk Assistant
Nina Odom, Outreach Specialist
Terry Samuels, Community Health Worker/Case Manager
Annie Thomas, Case Manager
Tiffany Wilson, Front Desk Coordinator

NATIONAL HEALTH CORPS FLORIDA

KaTori Roussel, Program Director
Cierra Brooks, Program Coordinator

SEEKING SAFETY

Pamela Vicars, Nurse Supervisor
Abigail Cranston, Nurse Home Visitor
Cendel Thompson, Nurse Home Visitor

CONSULTANTS & CONTRACTORS

Samantha Brewer, Graphic Designer
Roberta Christopher, Jacksonville University, Evaluation
Tracy Claveau, FIMR Coordinator
Janet Jones Dukes, FIMR Action Plan Coordinator
Cynthia Nixon, Accounting Services
Lisa Pelle, Quality Improvement
Cheryl Wright, Make a Noise, Make a Difference intervention
DCSI, HR Consulting
James Moore & Company, Accounting Services
Life Tree Women Care
Ruckus, 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





Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition
751 Oak St., Suite 610
Jacksonville, FL 32204

904.723.5422
nefhealthystart.org



@nefhealthystart