

From Lorraine VanLede-Brown, Board President

On May 16, representatives of our member organizations of the Healthy Start Coalition came together for the Annual Meeting at the Bradenton Country Club. Board members and staff of Healthy Start presented a summary of another challenging, yet successful year.

We are proud to report that we have increased our screening rates and have continued with the successful implementation of our clinic-based, community-based and hospital-based care coordination services. Healthy Start, in partnership with Giangreco, Scarano and Taylor, launched the first face-to-face family nutrition program that has been very well received and is now in the process of being replicated at other pediatric practices as well as at obstetric practices. Under the leadership of Dr. Florentina Taylor, this program has blossomed and preliminary results were presented at the Third Governor's Conference on Women's Health on May 28th in Orlando.

Our Safe sleeping campaign continues with the successful outreach to moms and babies using our existing Moses bassinets and adding a new component through the Cribs for Kids Program that is now providing a "pack'n play" crib for infants in need, along with the education and support to promote safe sleeping practices and prevent accidental death.

This year, we focused on smoking cessation interventions and education. With the help of our community partners, we were able to educate, support and provide timely interventions for women who are either pregnant or of childbearing age and their families. Along with the wrap around services provided to pregnant women and infants, we offered psychosocial counseling services to address stressors related from pregnancy or childbirth. We expanded our Baby Blues Support Group (initially launched at the Lawton Chiles Family Health Care Center) to reach out to moms in the south part of the county in partnership with the Harllee Full Service Center.

At our Annual meeting, we had the opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of our board members who have served on the board for four years and must leave because of term limits: Dr. Florentina Taylor and Valerie Taylor who went above and beyond their duties, always keeping in mind the best interest of the moms and babies we serve at Healthy Start.

We had a special presentation for Nancy Pettit, our former Financial Director, who decided after 12 years to enjoy retirement with her husband Louis. We thank Nancy for her loyalty and talents and wish her the best as she enjoys this new chapter in her life.

Healthy Start is able to engage in innovative projects thanks to the support of our community partners. At this particular meeting, we presented a token of our gratitude to the following:

- C.J. Czaia and Kevin Gallagher for their continued support of our outreach programs
- Charles Clapsaddle of Manatee Educational Television, for allowing us to bring needed information and education to the families we serve through our Healthy Start Series
- The Episcopal Women's Church of the Church of the Annunciation in Holmes Beach for their continued support to our Project Moses
- Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Community for their support of our diaper and vitamin drives, our Christmas celebrations, our Project Moses and for sending their angels to volunteer at our many community events.

We also wanted to express our appreciation to Katie Powers who has been an active partner of Healthy Start from the very beginning and was unable to attend this meeting. Our sincere condolences go out to Katie and her family in the loss of her husband Jerome. We will have a special celebration for Katie in September when we resume our monthly General Membership Meetings.

Words are not enough to express my gratitude to all the Board Members for their generous work and selfless contributions. It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve with such devoted people. Finally, I welcome our new board members Mary Willis, Beth Trent and Jackie Kelsey and look forward to working with them in the coming year.



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Congratulations Fred

Congratulations to Fred Leonard, our Executive Director for reaching two very important milestones: his 60th birthday and 15 years leading the Healthy Start Coalition of Manatee County. Fred is recognized in the State of Florida for his knowledge and expertise of the Healthy Start Program. He is an innovator and a visionary and never hesitates to take the necessary steps to continue making a difference for the moms and babies we serve at Healthy Start.



We are proud that we are considered as pioneers in implementing community based programs, outreach, education and support to serve the needs of pregnant women and infants along with our community partners. We wish Fred much health, joy and success as he continues to take Healthy Start forward.

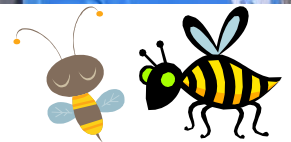
Jean McIntyre

We welcome Jean McIntyre, our new Financial Director. Jean is a native of Manatee County and graduated from the University of South Florida with a B.S. in Business with a Major in Accounting. She brings over 20 years of experience in the field and has rapidly embraced our mission and programs. She finds herself wearing multiple hats at Healthy Start. We are delighted to have Jean on our team.



Waleska "Wally" Acevedo

We welcome Waleska "Wally" Acevedo as our new Provider Liaison to the Healthy Start family. Wally graduated with a B.S. in Biology from the University of Central Florida. She has firsthand knowledge of wraparound services to pregnant women and infants as a former Healthy Start Care Coordinator. Wally is a great addition to our team as she brings commitment, hard work and a heartfelt enthusiasm. Those who are close to Wally know that she decorates her office with bee themes!



HIV Education

Our Community Health Workers were trained by Brenden Williams of Manatee County Health Department to provide HIV education and information to the families we serve. This initiative is funded by Gulf Coast South Area Health Education and provides an opportunity for Healthy Start and Manatee County Health Department to work together to educate families on HIV prevention, testing and referrals to local services.



"It's a Jungle Out There"

Thanks to the support of the Arts Council and Manatee Players our Healthy Start families were able to enjoy a unique experience this year.

Carole Swope lead a talented team of professionals including: Scott and Dorothy Blum, Helene Levin, Rick Kerby, Priscilla Crumel, and Leymus Bolanos-Wilmott prepare our children to perform in the Musical "It's a Jungle Out There". The parents were also very active helping their children learn the lyrics, the music, and driving back and forth for rehearsals. The magnificent performance was at the Manatee Players on June 14th.

It was a life changing experience for some of the families. It is so encouraging to see that a group of caring professionals can bring the best out of parents and children. We are grateful to everyone supporting this effort and particularly Glen and Carole Swope.



"It Takes Two To Tango"

February's General Membership Meeting featured a presentation by Carol Rosenbaum and Mike Williams from the You&Me.WE Team. "It Takes Two to Tango" was an informative and lively presentation highlighting the impact of relationship skills on parents and families. The You&Me.WE Team of Family Resource Center is committed to helping couples increase their awareness of the effect that some behaviors can have in the quality of their relationships and their family.

Carol and Mike emphasized the need to invest in relationship education and illustrated some examples with a lovely couple presently using the technique in their relationship. The program teaches skills to improve communication between partners, but these skills learned are applicable to all of life's relationships. They also mentioned during their presentation that studies suggest that absenteeism and low productivity are many times associated with stress related illness and relational related issues that could improve if employees were skilled in areas like communication, flexibility, closeness, personal compatibility and conflict resolution. Learning to relate and communicate with others is a skill that can serve us for the rest of our lives.



If you or anyone you know has an interest in developing healthy relationships, contact Carol Rosenbaum at (941) 741-3849 for current schedules and program information.

Celebrating Our Moms

Thanks to the generous support of Staywell and various community partners, we were able to provide healthy snacks, entertainment, games, pampering services, and gifts to the families. In addition, Mallie Shirk, our registered dietitian, was on site to provide education and information on healthy nutrition, healthy lifestyle, recycling practices, breastfeeding, and how to wear a baby as she demonstrated wearing her little boy Oakley. This attracted the interest of the pregnant women attending the event and resulted in a new initiative for Healthy Start. We will keep you updated on this new service.

All families attending the event received gift bags and useful information. Many of the pregnant women played musical chairs and participated in a dance contest winning gift certificates for spa treatments donated by the Florida College of Natural Science, a meal at Panera Bread, fruit smoothies at Jamba Juice, and gift cards.

We extend a special thank you to all the wonderful volunteers that gave up a Saturday to make this a special event. We thank Donna Keith, Sharon Carlson and Jan Chulock from the Manatee County Health Department for providing health screenings, information and education on child safety and breast cancer awareness. Thanks to Ximena Granada from Tidewell, who despite her wrist injury, came to support our event with wonderful prizes for the moms; to Lorraine Dey and Barbara McBath from the Pilot Club who took the time to put together toothbrush kits for the children and goodie bags for the moms; to MariCruz Michelle of Mary Kay for the wonderful facials and door prizes; to Ingrid Dorion for raffling her beautiful painting; to Ana Robledo and Meri Swyze for the chair massages; to Sandy Hoy and the Staywell team for their sponsorship; to the many teenagers for helping us at the celebration by wearing many hats, including the great manicures for the moms; and to Jose Ordonez for doing a great job as our DJ. We hope to continue this fun tradition next year.



Child Development and Parenting Education Training

This special training was conducted for our service providers by Susan Owens, educator and author of P.E.A.R.L., a program designed for at-risk Learners; and Shaun Hoyle, a parenting educator and consultant on Redirecting Children's Behavior. This workshop was informative, thought provoking, stimulating, and filled with useful tools for the work we provide to the Healthy Start mothers, infants and their families.



Tobacco Cessation Interventions

At our April General Membership Meeting, Jessica Balos, Tobacco Cessation Specialist with the Gulf Coast South Area Health Education Center, provided us with wonderful tips to encourage the families we serve to quit smoking.

Jessica and her peers, through The Quit Team, are offering free smoking cessation services to medically underserved community members in Manatee and Sarasota counties. Jessica mentioned that tobacco is considered the single greatest preventable cause of disease and premature death in America today. She also highlighted the importance of smoking cessation for the protection of an individual's health. Her presentation included information regarding the addiction, nicotine and other dangerous chemicals in tobacco, the effects of nicotine on blood pressure, heart rate and blood flow, withdrawal symptoms, treatment medications available to some, planning steps for quitting, how to deal with triggers and overcoming cravings, and strategies for relapse prevention.

Thanks to our existing partnership with Gulf Coast South Area Health Education Center, our Community Health Workers were trained by Jessica Balos and they are now providing smoking cessation education and information to families in Manatee County and Arcadia.

The Community Health Workers participated in the educational forum sponsored by the Latino Community Network, Healthy Start Manatee, Manatee County Health Department, Staywell, Gulf Coast Legal Services, Jobs Etc., Manatee County Sheriff's Office, American Cancer Society, and Manatee County Government. This event was held at the Midway Flea Market in Palmetto. Over 400 families were informed on the effects of smoking and were provided with important information and resources to access help.

Our Community Health Workers also went to local businesses, migrant camps, local churches and neighborhoods to reach families of migrant workers and educate them on the dangers of smoking and tobacco addiction. Their efforts are very well received as families agreed to follow-up education and support after learning about the hidden dangers of tobacco use, particularly of second hand smoke and the risks to their children.

Our Healthy Start Series with Manatee Educational Television (METV) is currently broadcasting a program in English with the participation of Dr. Dwight L. Fitch and Jessica Balos about smoking cessation and a program in Spanish with the participation of our Healthy Start team to educate and inform families about this highly preventable killer.

For services and more information on the program, call toll-free: 866-534-7909



Florida Law Related to HIV & STD Testing in Pregnancy

By Hilda Leon, B.S., R.N.C.

Since 1995, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended that all pregnant women be tested for HIV using the opt-out approach and if found to be infected, offered treatment for themselves and to prevent passing HIV to their infants. In October 1996, Florida responded to this recommendation by mandating (Florida Statutes 384.31) that health care providers counsel and offer HIV testing to all pregnant women at the initial prenatal care visit and again at 28 to 32 weeks. A review of Florida women from 2003-2004 indicated that 20% reach the third trimester without a documented HIV test. To capture these missed opportunities to prevent infected infants, the Florida law was reviewed and revised resulting in changes. Florida moved from opt-in to opt-out HIV/STD testing in pregnancy.

All health care providers attending pregnant women must include HIV, Chlamydia, hepatitis B, gonorrhea and syphilis screening as a routine part of prenatal care. Women must be informed that these tests will be conducted and that they have the right to refuse any or all of them. Unlike the testing guidelines using the opt-in approach, pre-test counseling and a signed consent to test is not required. In both the in and out-patient setting, the standard consent to treat is considered consent to test.

Hospitals and providers conducting routine HIV and STD are required to test all women who appear at delivery or within 30 days postpartum without a record of testing after 27 weeks gestation. Coupled with the CDC's long standing recommendation that all hospitals adopt a policy of routine rapid testing for women who appear at delivery without a documented HIV status and the availability of multiple, low cost rapid tests that provide accurate and timely results, rapid testing in labor and delivery units will allow these women immediate access to treatment, further reducing the risk of transmission.

Women who are treated in the emergency department and are more than 12 weeks pregnant who have not been tested for HIV/STD must be referred in writing to a county health department for testing. The emergency department is required to send a copy of the referral to the health department.

Since 2004, the USF Center for HIV Education and Research Perinatal HIV Prevention Project has participated in the Florida Department of Health Rapid Testing Initiative. This project, in collaboration with the Florida/Caribbean AIDS Education and Training Center (F/CAETC) and the CDC, has focused on providing education and training to all delivering hospitals in Florida on implementing rapid testing in the labor and delivery units. Reducing HIV Transmission with Sub-optimal Regimens, we know that it is never too late to treat an HIV positive pregnant woman to prevent transmission.

To date, over two-thirds of Florida's delivering hospitals have implemented rapid testing in labor and delivery. The rapid testing initiative continues with the support of CDC funding through the F/CAETC targeting hospitals in Florida, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Most recently, Sarasota Memorial Hospital Maternal Child Health conducted mandatory staff training on rapid testing in labor and delivery in conjunction with the department's annual competency training.

Reducing mother-to-child transmission is one of the most significant HIV prevention success stories. The first infected babies in Florida were identified in 1978; by 1993, approximately 30% of all babies born to HIV infected women were positive. Even though the transmission rate is now less than 2%, we continue to see new infant infections.

Florida law is specific on HIV/STD Testing in Pregnancy making the goal of educating, identifying and treating all HIV positive women early in pregnancy attainable. With rapid testing, we have the knowledge and the tools to identify women with limited or no prenatal care before it is too late. The Perinatal Transmission Prevention Project has patient and provider education materials, sample policy and procedures, and staff education tools to facilitate the process. Hospitals and healthcare providers are encouraged to participate in reaching this goal.

Hilda Leon, recently presented on the topic at our June General Membership Meeting. If you require additional information please contact Hilda Leon, B.S., R.N.C., Perinatal Project Coordinator and Clinical Educator, at the USF Center for HIV Education and Research, (813) 974-3773 or by email at hleon@fmhi.usf.edu to arrange training and technical assistance for your staff. You can also visit their website at www.USFCenter.org/Perinatal



Hilda Leon, B.S., R.N.C.

Accidental Infant Death Prevention

Major Connie Shingledecker, Investigative Bureau Chief of Manatee Sheriff's Office provided a very important community training at our April General Membership Meeting. The focus of this training was to address unsafe sleeping practices in Florida and accidental infant death, particularly due to suffocation.

Major Shingledecker is a valuable partner of Healthy Start in our efforts to promote safe sleeping practices. She reminded all our partner agencies that attended this training that educating the community and families about safe sleeping practices can prevent many infant deaths that occur to children while sleeping.



She pointed out that the Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Investigation process has determined that many SIDS cases may have occurred because of under-investigated causes such as: asphyxia or suffocation, re-breathing, overlay, metabolic error and injury or trauma. Efforts throughout the state are being made to perform thorough investigations on infant deaths to have a better understanding of preventable occurrences and to educate the public on the safety measures to reduce the number of infant deaths in our communities.

In view of the rising popularity of the "family bed" promoting co-sleeping among parents and children, it is vital that we educate our families about the dangers to their infants and to make safe sleeping education a priority. She also urged service providers to work in collaboration and always keep an extra eye on those families that are at higher risk such as: young parents, parents that hold multiple jobs, parents without support systems in place and in general, to convey the message that it takes only one single moment of exhaustion to accidentally suffocate a baby.

Major Shingledecker encourages mothers to breastfeed in a comfortable and safe position, to lay the babies to sleep on their backs, to make sure they sleep on a firm mattress without accessories that may be hazardous to the baby, not to overdress babies and to ask for help when feeling overwhelmed or unsure.

"We will never know the lives we save; only the ones we don't. We must learn the lessons that their deaths can teach us. Through preventing future deaths we honor these little victims and know that their suffering was not in vain."
Major Connie Shingledecker.

Entre Nous Supporting Our Safe Sleeping Campaign

Thanks to the generous support of Entre Nous, we are able to enhance our safe sleeping campaign by providing a pack n'play crib for babies in need of a safe place to sleep. Our existing Project Moses provides baby bassinets assembled by our volunteers for babies under 3 months of age. We are able to obtain the pack n' play cribs at a very reduced price through Cribs for Kids of Pennsylvania.



We are grateful to Entre Nous for partnering with us to keep our babies safe.



Sarita Montalvo of Entre Nous presenting a check to Luz Corcuera, our Program Director.

SIDS Education and Safe Sleeping Campaign

Thanks to the generous support of the March of Dimes, Healthy Start Manatee has increased efforts to provide SIDS and Safe Sleeping Education to the moms and babies of Manatee County. Along with the baby bassinets of our current Project Moses, we are also providing pack n' play cribs to prevent infant accidental death due to suffocation, bed-sharing, overheating and other unsafe practices.

Our Community Health Workers have been very active reaching out to new moms and their families to educate them on SIDS risk factors and to support their safe sleeping practices. At our last Mother's Day Celebration, some of these families shared what they had learned with the community and encouraged them to disseminate the information to friends and relatives.



Fiorella and Shane Garcia proud parents of baby Justin are one of the young families who made a commitment to share their learning about SIDS and safe sleeping practices with other families.



Episcopal Church Women, Church of the Annunciation major contributors to our Project Moses and safe Sleeping Campaign



Madeline Rivera from Univision with our Healthy Start team. This segment on our Safe Sleeping Campaign was broadcast in the Who is Who section on Univision Channel 15 during the month of June 2008.



Super Moms: Fighting Obesity and Malnutrition For Their Families

Under this creative title, the Healthy Start Team was invited to present at the Third Governor's Conference on Women's Health. Dr. Florentina Taylor, a member of the Healthy Start Board, shared the successful results of our innovative Face-to-Face Family Nutrition Program based in her pediatric practice. Mallie Shirk, a registered dietitian, provided statistical information and spoke about the risk factors on malnutrition and obesity and the impact on the whole family. Luz Corcuera, our Program Director, and our Community Health Workers Martha Ramirez and Ana Robledo shared with the audience the results of the community campaign to help moms achieve healthy nutrition and healthy lifestyles. Dr. Taylor designed and implemented this program with the support of Giangreco, Scarano and Taylor Pediatrics. Funding was provided by an interconceptional care grant provided by the Florida Department of Health. It has been over a year since the start of this program and we are currently in the process of replicating this service at the Whole Child Pediatrics Clinic with Dr. Xavier Sevilla and in conversations to expand the nutrition program at obstetric practices.



Luz Corcuera, Ana Robledo, Dr. Florentina Taylor, Martha Ramirez and Mallie Shirk presented at the Third Governor's Conference on Women's Health in Orlando.



Dr. Florentina Taylor, Luz Corcuera, Dr. Ana M. Viamonte-Ross, State Surgeon General