



Annual Report

2019-2020



Healthy Start

Coalition of Orange County

Every baby deserves a healthy start



Linda Sutherland
Executive Director

Message from the Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County Executive Director

As we conclude another year of serving mothers and babies in Orange County, we acknowledge the radically different way the year ended from the way it began due to the impact of COVID-19. Our Healthy Start staff at the FL Department of Health-Orange successfully and professionally met these challenges as they adjusted to the “new reality” of a changed work environment and different way of delivering services. They have also gone above and beyond in meeting our clients’ increased needs brought on by effects of the pandemic. Some of these needs were met by the generous contributions of donors and members of our Board of Directors, and for those, we are very grateful.

As our new contract year unfolds, we remain committed to our work to reduce racial disparities in birth outcomes and to reduce infant mortality, low birth weight and prematurity. Our community partnerships are more important than ever to help us reach these goals, including our long-term and valuable partnership with DOH-Orange. Together, as one community, we can work to ensure every baby gets a healthy start!

Mission

The mission of the Orange County Healthy Start Coalition is to improve maternal and child health in Orange County through community partnerships.

Vision

The Orange County Healthy Start Coalition will be the leader in Maternal and Child Health to ensure all babies have a Healthy Start.



Linda Sutherland

Executive Director

Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County



Raul Pino , MD, MPH
County Health Officer/Director

Message from the Health Officer/Director

I want to congratulate the Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County on another successful year of improving birth outcomes and addressing health equity issues in our community. This is quite an achievement considering the limitations on programs and activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even during these challenging times, you were able to engage families in evidenced based interventions and provide services as well as foster community partnerships to address social determinates of health. It also speaks to the coalition's unwavering commitment to improving maternal and infant health.

The Florida Department of Health in Orange County values our longstanding relationship with the coalition. That relationship has strengthened the reach and capabilities of services to families that are in need. It has educated retailers on Safe Sleep environments. It has continued wrap around services for parenting, childbirth classes and baby showers. It has furthered the establishment of the Fetal Infant Mortality Review.

Lastly, I want to thank the coalition for their continued financial support. The coalition's \$3.6 million dollars of revenue has made a positive impact on lives through sustained coordinated Intake and Referral, Healthy Start Care Coordination, Safe Futures and Nurse-Family Partnership program services. By working together, the coalition and the department can achieve our shared mission of reducing infant mortality by ensuring pregnant moms have a healthy pregnancy and children have a healthy start in life, and more importantly, a brighter future.

Mission

To protect, promote, and improve the health of all people in Florida
through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Vision

To be the Healthiest State in the Nation



Raul Pino, MD, MPH
Health Officer/Director
Department of Health in Orange County



Message from the Program Manager

We submit here within the Healthy Start Annual Report for 2019-2020 fiscal year which ended June 30, 2020. Giving birth should be a parent's greatest achievement, not their greatest fear. Your contributions of time, advocacy and funds have allowed us to do exactly that for more than 5,000 pregnant women, infants and families this year. In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Healthy Start team members and clients resiliency helped them to quickly adapt and persevere telehealth provision of services to ensure their ongoing health and safety.

The Healthy Start system is the organization that supports and enhances the community's ability to promote optimal birth, health and developmental outcomes for all pregnant women and babies. Thank you for continuing to entrust the Department of Health to provide coordinated intake and referral,

and care coordination services to pregnant and parenting women, infants, and children up to age three. With transformations of the deliverables through the fidelity of evidenced based curricula, even greater potential exists to achieve measurable, lasting improvements in the health of women, babies and families across Orange County, Florida. At the same time, we know that funds are limited and we also know that a tremendous amount of complementary work is happening within our county. As we look to the future, we are committed to do what is right for the long-term interest of the families we serve, so more babies can celebrate first birthdays and beyond. We will continue to address health inequities and disparities, look for ways to maximize program funding sustainability, grow and enhance partnerships throughout the local community, and continue to provide result oriented provision of services.

Our success has included successfully engaging clients, and adapting to much needed changes. These achievements were not possible without the participation and support of the Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County, dedicated and passionate team members, partnering agencies/organizations and the families we served.

Sincerely,

Penny R. Smith





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County Overview

5.8

(per 1,000 live births
in 2019)

In 2019, the infant mortality rate for Orange County was 5.8 per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate for Orange County decreased gradually from 6.1 per 1,000 live births in 2018 to 5.8 per 1,000 live births in 2019. Poor pregnancy outcomes, including low birth weight, preterm births and infant mortality, are associated with late or no prenatal care, an unplanned pregnancy, cigarette smoking, alcohol and other drug use, being HIV positive, short interpregnancy spacing, chronic diseases, obesity, maternal age, poor nutrition and low socioeconomic status.

Preterm Birth Rate

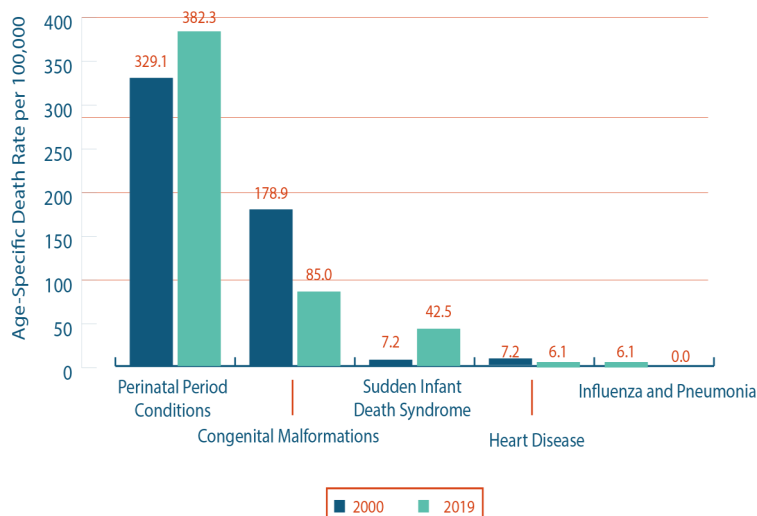
Grade

10.3 % C

2019, March of Dimes Report Card

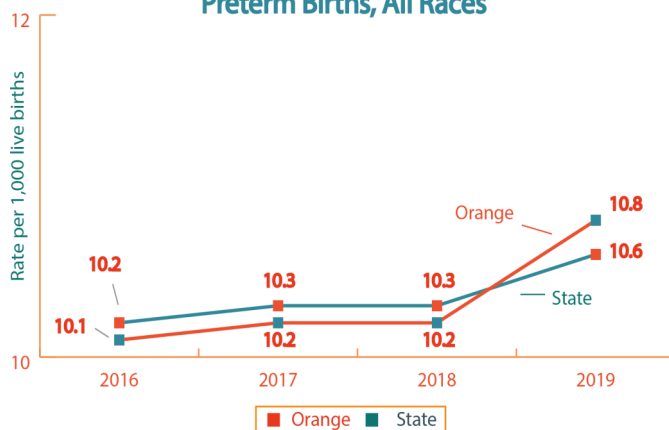
Leading Causes of Death per 100,000 Population

Orange County, 2000 and 2019, Under Age 1

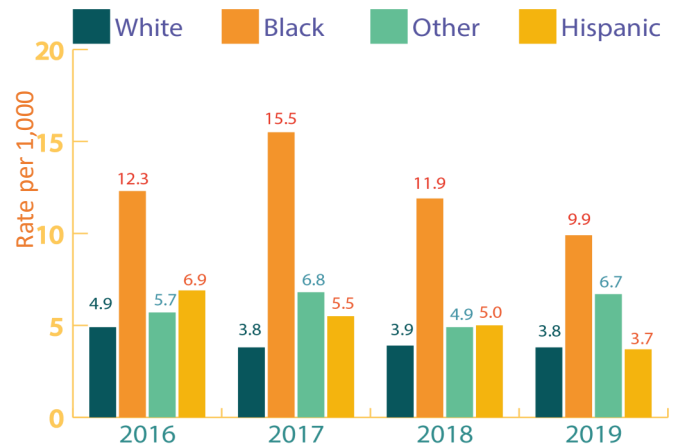


* Perinatal conditions and congenital malformations were leading causes of death among those less than 1 year of age.

Preterm Births, All Races



ORANGE COUNTY INFANT MORTALITY RATE



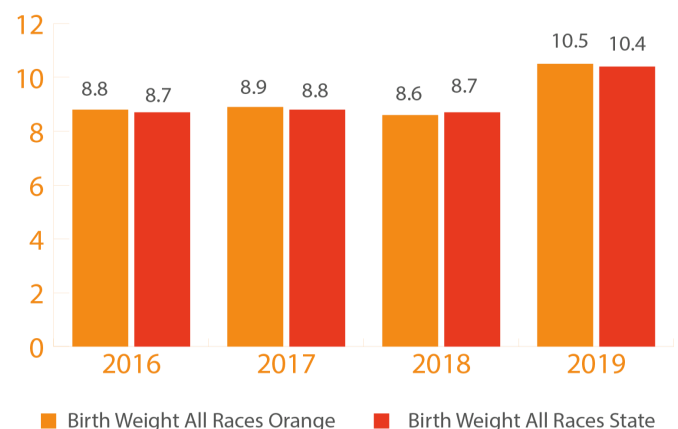
1st TRIMESTER ENTRY PNC, ALL RACES



1st Trimester Entry into PNC All Races State

1st Trimester Entry into PNC All Races Orange

Low Birth Weight All Races



Birth Weight All Races Orange Birth Weight All Races State

Healthy Start Services

Services Provided

- Home Visiting support and education
- Education consists of prenatal, inter-conception, parenting, breastfeeding, baby care, planning for future pregnancies, and nutrition
- Wraparound services and support include therapeutic intervention counseling, childbirth classes and Daddy Boot Camp.
- Evidenced based depression screening and referral.
- Infant developmental assessments utilizing the Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire SE-2
- Help to quit smoking
- Stress Reduction Techniques
- Connection to services needed for families
- Car Seat Class (Safe Ride 4 Babies)
- Keeping Incoming Infants Safe (KIIS)
- Pack- n - Play Initiative
- Interconceptual Care Education and Counseling (ICC)

Services are available to all Orange County pregnant women, women between pregnancies, and children up to three years old.

Healthy Start Services are FREE for participants and are paid for by the Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County.

GOAL

To ensure pregnant women have access to care and to improve maternal and infant health while reducing the number of preterm births, low birth weight babies, and infant mortality.

Evidenced Based Interventions

Partners for a Healthy Baby
Ages and Stages Questionnaires
Edinburgh Perinatal Depression Screening

Smoking Cessation and Reduction Intervention Program (SCRIPT)

Motivational Interviewing

Show Your Love

Intimate Partner Violence

Substance Use Screening

Relationship Assessment Tool (RAT)

Administrative Support

The backbone of the Healthy Start Program which provides the intake and the administrative support for all programs.

- Sort and distribute all incoming/ outgoing mail and screening forms
- Provide customer service and resource information to internal and external clients
- Conduct research and document birth outcome findings and Medicaid status
- Perform data entry of screening forms and other administrative documents
- Create and maintain administrative documents
- Safeguard all documentation and prepare documents for retention
- Review, research and re-submit denied payment claims
- Perform case assignments
- Monitor, maintain and update data logs
- Maintain calendars
- Coordinate and maintain inventory of supplies, equipment, and Healthy Start Mall incentives
- Provide ongoing general office support
- 5 Administrative functions performed by 5 staff members



Total Processed Forms

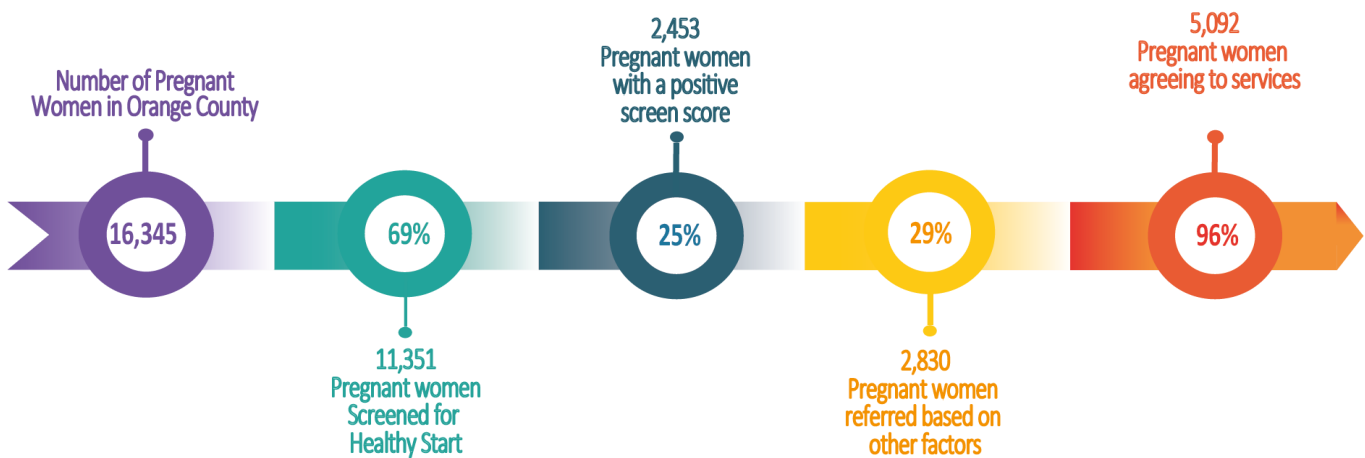
27,482

Orange County leads the State in our infant screening rates!

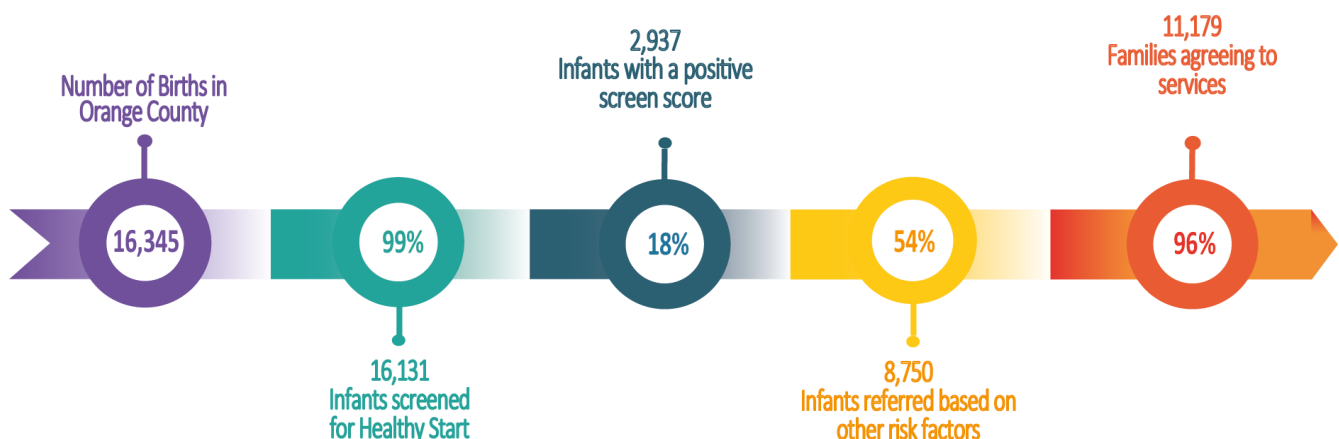
- 99% of infants were screened
 - 18% scored positive
- 54% were referred for reasons other than score
- 96% consented to program participation

Healthy Start Risk Screening is the collection of information on the designated prenatal and infant screening forms. The forms are scored to assess risk and identify those women and infants most vulnerable to experiencing adverse health outcomes. Screening differs from assessment in that screening only identifies those most likely to be at increased risk; an assessment is necessary to determine service needs.

PRENATAL SCREENING

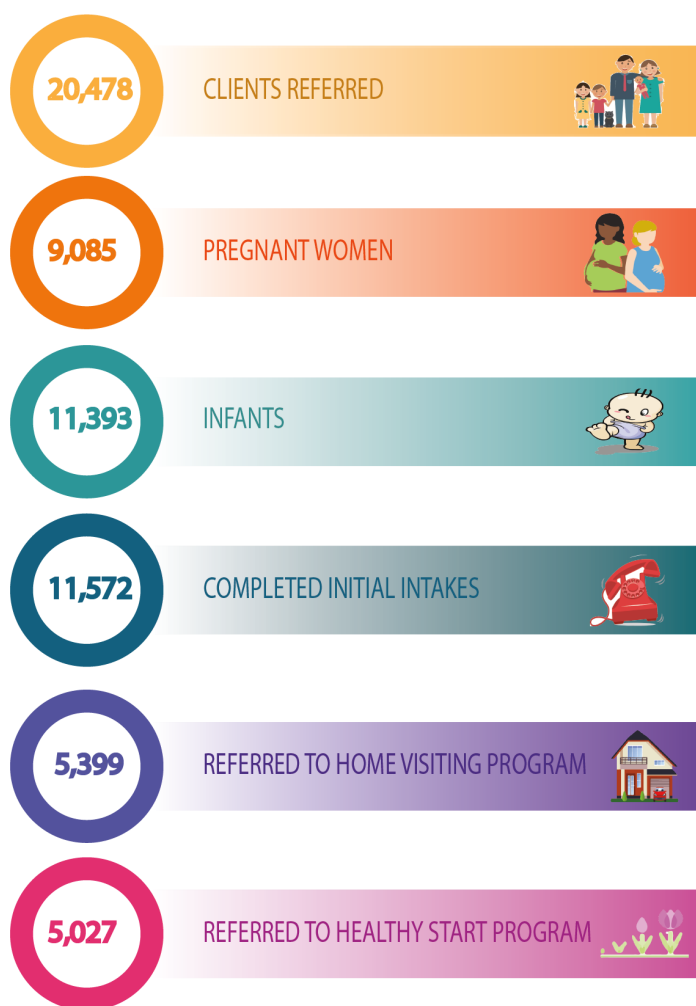


POSTNATAL SCREENING



Coordinated Intake & Referral

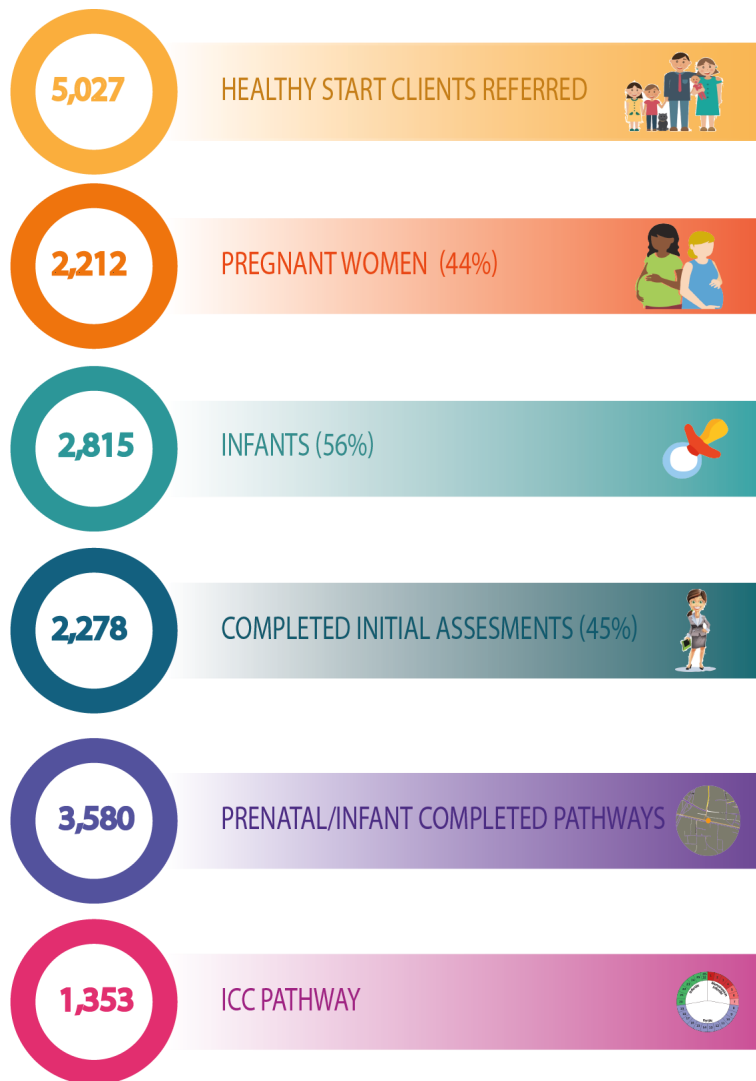
Through the Healthy Start universal screenings, Coordinated Intake and Referral (CI&R) identifies needs and connects families to a home visiting program that best meets their desires and needs. CI&R helps pregnant women, caregivers and families with young children by providing a one-stop entry point for needed services. The CI&R process ensures the best fit for families and streamlines access to services. At the same time, it improves program enrollment and retention rates, and reduces duplication of efforts. Collaborating home visiting programs include: Healthy Families, Early Head Start and Healthy Start, including Nurse-Family Partnership and Federal Healthy Start-Bellies, Babies, and Beyond.



The first 1,000 days between a woman's pregnancy and her child's 2nd birthday offer a unique window of opportunity to build healthier and more prosperous futures.

Healthy Start Care Coordination

Healthy Start is a voluntary and free service that supports Orange County women, infants and children (up to age three) to increase healthier pregnancies, births and child health.



Legislation

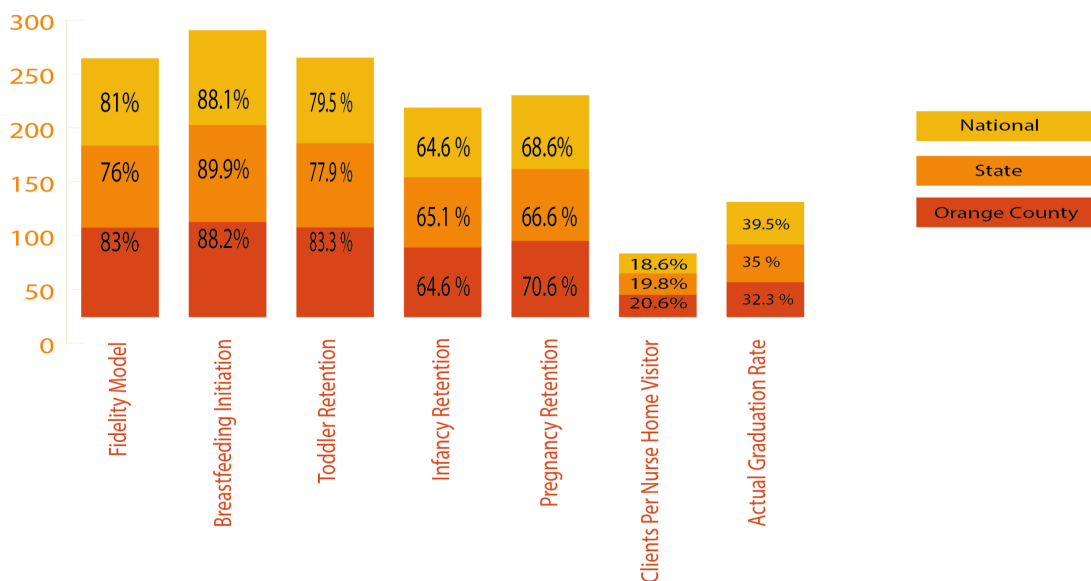
Requires that all pregnant women and infants be offered screening for risk factors that may affect their pregnancy, health, or development.



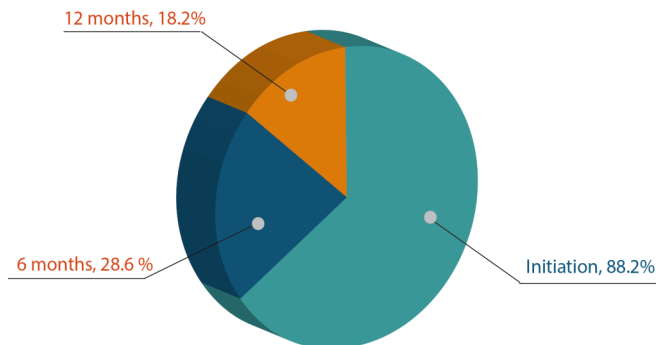
Nurse-Family Partnership

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is a free, voluntary home visiting program for first time mothers. Each mom that the NFP program serves, is partnered with a registered nurse early in her pregnancy and receives ongoing home visits that continue through the child's second birthday. The heart of NFP work is the relationship between the nurse and the mom. From the first moment a mother-to-be meets her nurse, both embark on a remarkable 2½ year commitment, meeting several times per month, developing a bond rooted in trust, consistency, and unconditional support. Combined with compassion and science, NFP clients are empowered to be the mom role model her child needs, while working with a medical professional who sees the life-changing results of a proven evidenced-based public health intervention. Women are encouraged to enroll as early as possible, but before the 28th week of pregnancy. Our focus is working with moms who have the most to gain from the intensive support of a public health professional-a committed and experienced nurse over a sustained period of time. During the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year our program was staffed with 3.5 nurses and a supervisor, with a total of 155 clients served. The following are outcomes of the program's measurements and fidelity:

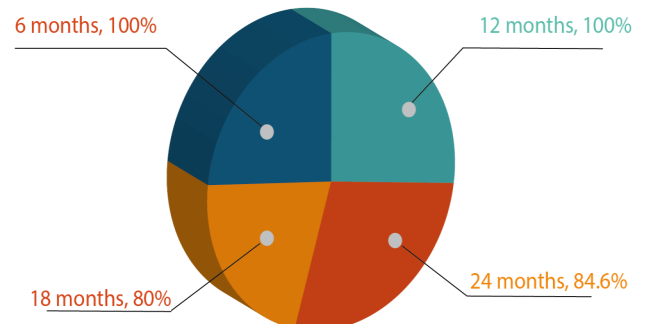
Current Enrollment: 155 **Pregnant Women: 49** **Infants: 59** **Toddlers: 47**



Breastfeeding n= 59



Immunizations n= 41





Caring for Mom's Health The Work of the Nurses



NFP nurtures Women as Moms, Empower Women as Individuals, and Support Kids to Thrive. Our nurses simply never give up on clients, and because of this hope, our nurses create plans to help them attain their dreams, step by step. They already have the strength and capacity they need inside of them. We just help moms bring them out and bring them forward. The results change lives.... "Ours and theirs." "It's about the cultivation of hope."

There is a magic window during pregnancy...it's a time when the desire to be a good mother and raise a healthy, happy child creates motivation to overcome incredible obstacles including poverty, instability or abuse with the help of a well-trained nurse."

**David Olds, Ph.D., Founder,
Nurse-Family Partnership**

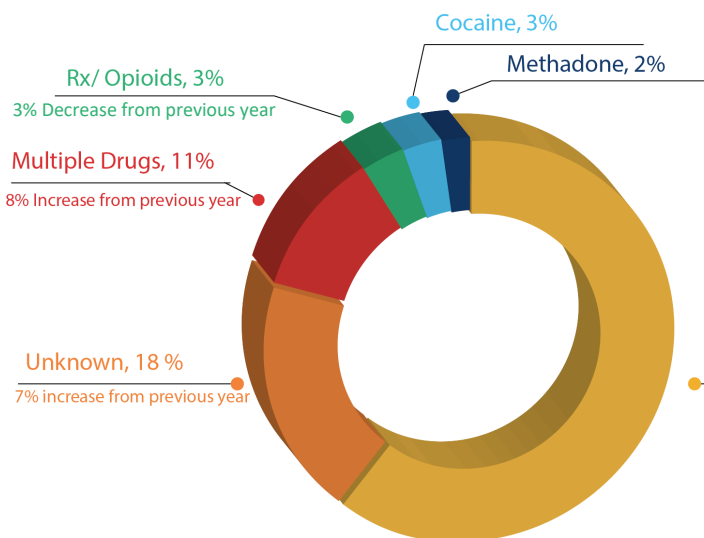


Preventative Public Health programs have never been more important, and the support of the Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County and West Orange Healthcare District, coupled with generous legislature dollars have been critical and instrumental in accelerating our work and bringing Nurse Family Partnership to even more families and communities. We could not support and transform our moms' lives and the lives of their children without our dedicated partners, donors, and advocates. Their support will result in a lasting, multigenerational impact toward a better future today, tomorrow and for years to come.

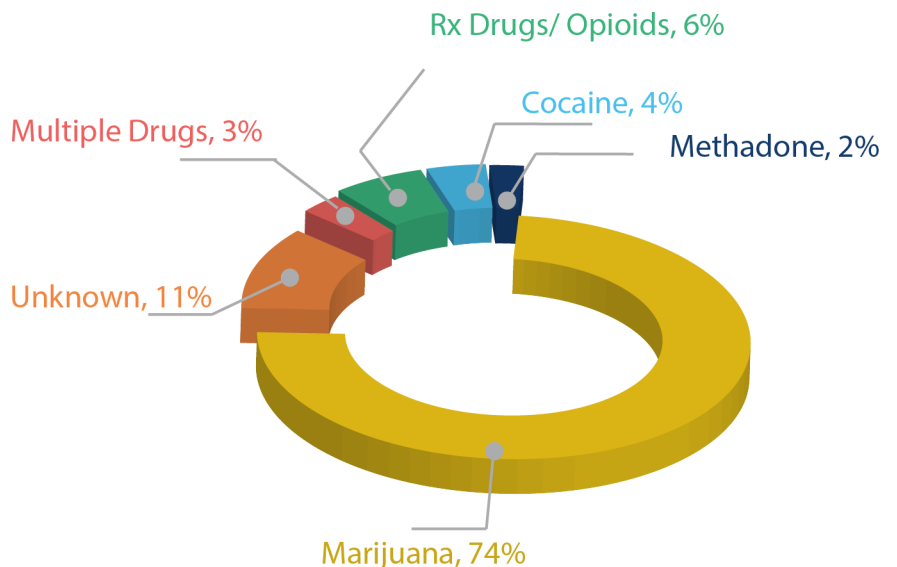
Substance Exposed Newborns (SEN's)

Illegal drugs consumed during pregnancy are not safe for an unborn baby or the mother. Studies have shown that consumption of illegal substances during a pregnancy can result in miscarriage, low birth weight, premature labor, placental abruption, fetal death, and even maternal death. Babies born to substance-abusing mothers may have short or long term effects. Short term withdrawal symptoms may consist of mild fussiness, tremors, extreme irritability, feeding problems, and diarrhea. Symptoms vary depending on the type of substances used. Long term impacts may result in learning delays as the child gets older. Services to those in this population with the most serious drug exposure are now provided through a new Healthy Start Initiative we call Safe Futures.

Substance Exposed Newborn
Reported Type of Drug Usage, n= 293
Year 2019-2020

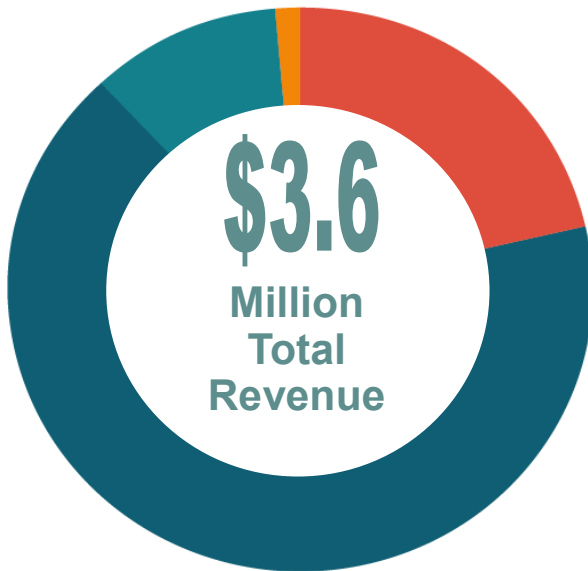


Comparison
Substance Exposed Newborn
Reported Type of Drug Usage, n=243
Last Fiscal Year 2018-2019



More Reported
Cases

Financial Highlights



CI&R

21%

HSCC

66%

NFP

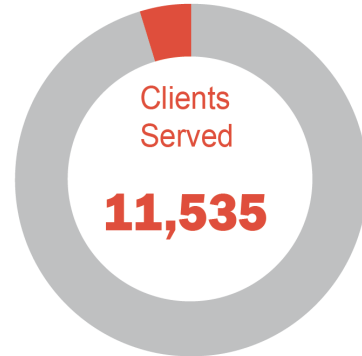
10%

**Safe
Futures**

3%

CI&R

\$766,130
Revenue



95.33%
Expenditure



HSCC

\$2,372,426
Revenue



94.52%
Expenditure



NFP

\$374,640
Revenue



95.83%
Expenditure



**Safe
Futures**

\$90,370
Revenue

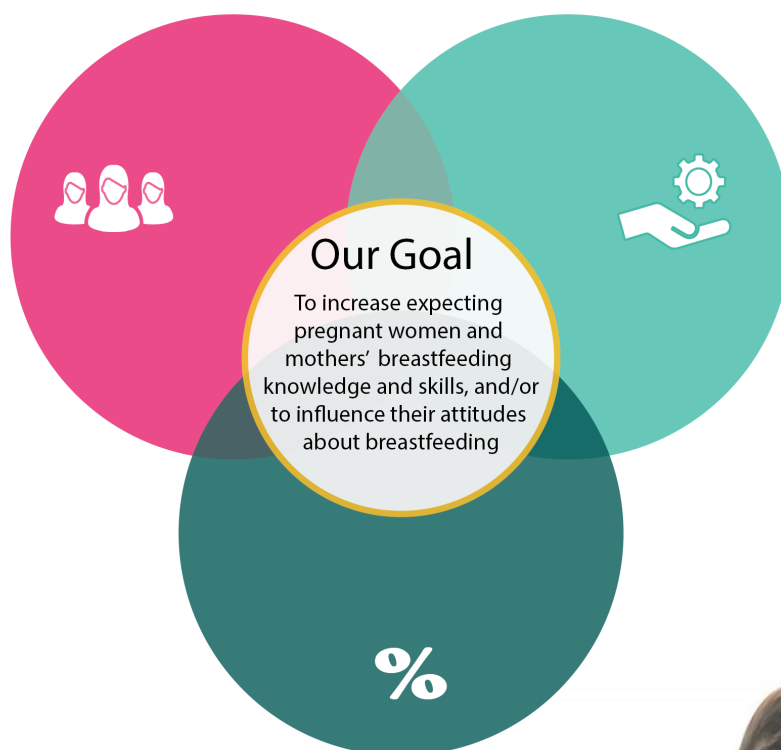


44.19%
Expenditure



Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding, with its many known health benefits for infants, children, and mothers, is a key strategy to improve public health. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that infants be exclusively breastfed for about the first 6 months with continued breastfeeding alongside introduction of complementary foods for at least one year.



Clients Served

1,045



Unit of Services Provided

5,888



Initiation Rate

86%

"Breastfeeding is empowering. It's an accomplishment that takes dedication I didn't realize I possessed!"



Parenting



Partners for a Healthy Baby

The curriculum is designed for home visitors: nurses, social workers and child development specialists assigned to assist teen mothers, at risk families and pregnant women or parenting families in need of support and guidance. The curriculum focuses on infants and toddlers, those early years when children and their health and safety are most vulnerable.

In the curriculum home visitors will find a list of goals for each visit. It takes a holistic approach, also touching upon healthy body weight for parents and children, finding humor in difficult situations for those toddler years especially and getting dads and grandparents involved in childrearing.

Women & Infant Support Education

The purpose of the Women, Infant Support Education (WISE) class is to raise awareness and educate the community of the importance of Maternal Health for all parents with infants and toddlers. WISE is a 6-week seminar, which includes a weekly informational class focused on specific topics. Class topics include Maternal/Reproductive Health, Child Development, Breastfeeding, Safe Sleep/Shaken Baby Syndrome, Car Seat Safety, Baby Care Basics, Positive Parenting and Infant CPR. Upon completion of the 6-week class, participants are able to identify pregnancy complications and risk factors for pregnant and new mothers as well as demonstrate both proper breastfeeding techniques for infants and proper car seat installations; they also have the opportunity to purchase a brand-new car seat after completion of the class.

1,387

Parenting
Clients



13,351

Units of
Services
Provided



Women and Infant Support Education (W.I.S.E.)

3

Class
Series



26

Participants

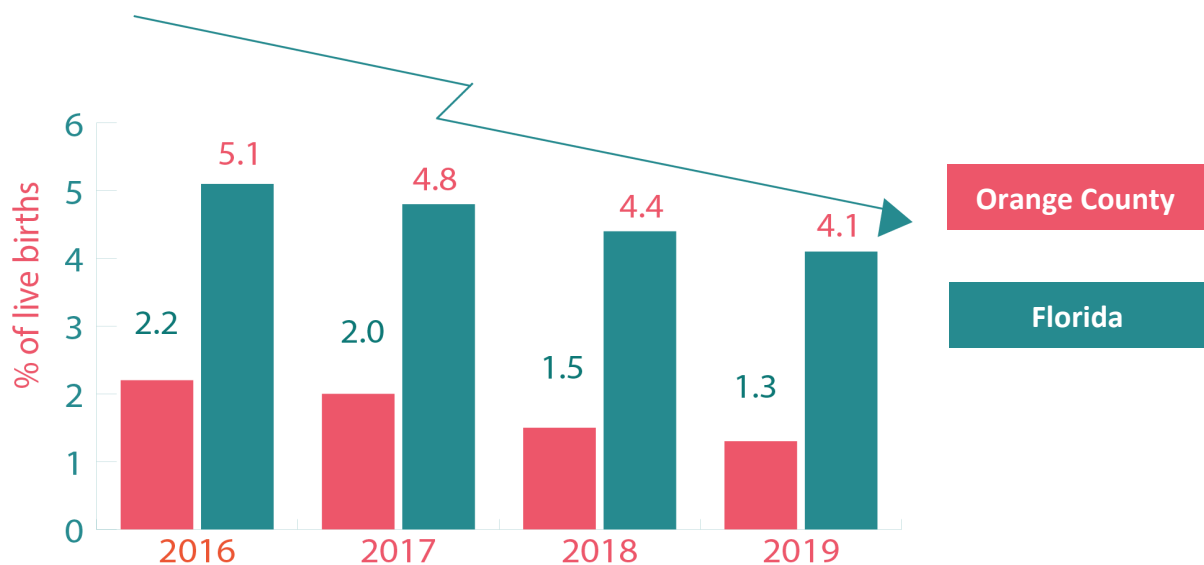


Smoking Cessation



Smoking during pregnancy is the leading cause of preterm delivery and complications. Women who smoke are more likely to have a baby born too early or too small, have a miscarriage, or lose a baby to a sleep related death. Once a baby is born, continued exposure to smoke also known as second hand smoke, increases the baby's chance of asthma and respiratory problems as well as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Mothers Who Smoke During Pregnancy
(resident live births, n= 216)



The tool used to implement smoking cessation counseling with Healthy Start participants and their family members is Smoking Cessation and Reduction in Pregnancy Treatment (SCRIPT), an evidenced based model used to educate and aid in smoking cessation. SCRIPT utilizes the 5A's: Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist, and Arrange along with an interactive workbook "Commit to Quit". Participants are also referred to the Quit Line.

Psychosocial Counseling

Pregnancy creates many feelings, emotions, and experiences; many of them joyful, welcome, and wonderful. However, there are also pregnant and/or parenting women who are struggling emotionally or are experiencing a debilitating level of anxiety about their pregnancy due to recent pregnancy loss or the pregnancy being unplanned. For these reasons, psychosocial counseling is provided to Healthy Start participants to address emotional, situational or developmental stressors as well as the baby blues, postpartum depression and toxic trauma. Counseling is provided through Healthy Starts' Therapeutic Intervention Program (*TIP*) with professional counselors from Aspire Health Partners who visit participants in their home setting for the purpose of improving well-being, alleviating stress, and enhancing coping skills.



Clients received
psychosocial
counseling

55

OUR
GOAL

To reduce identified
risk factors to achieve
positive pregnancy outcomes
and optimal infant/child
health and development

1,677

Edinburgh
Assesments
Completed

2,083

Units of
Service
Provided

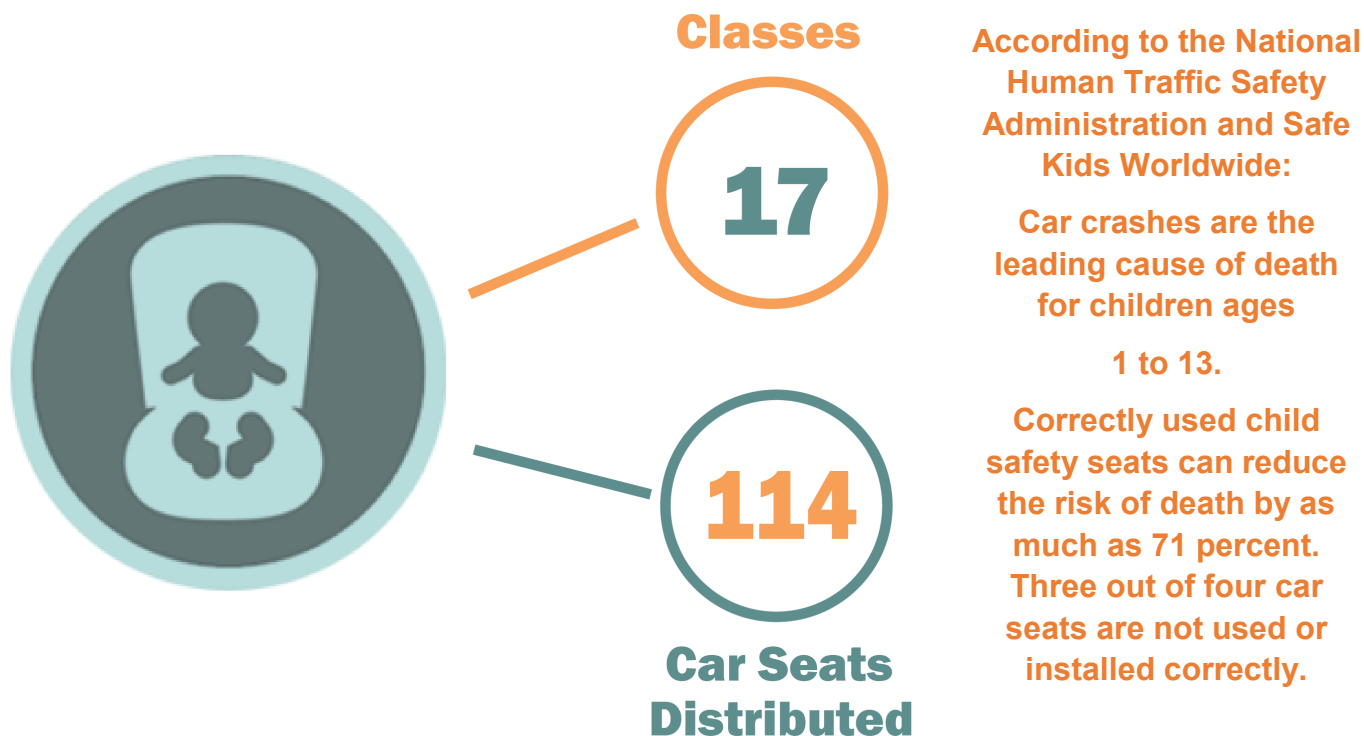
Safe Ride 4 Babies



Safe Ride 4 Babies”, is a cost sharing child safety seat incentive program designed to educate parents and caregivers about the importance of car seats and how to properly use and install them (i.e. infant, convertible, and booster seats). This program provides the opportunity for parents and caregivers to share the cost for a convertible child safety seat in exchange for a minimum donation.

“Safe Ride 4 Babies” is an effective way for parents/caregivers to not only obtain a needed safety seat but also

ensures its correct use by parents/caregivers. According to the Children’s Safety Network, child safety seat distribution programs such as “Safe Rides 4 Babies” for children ages 0-4, yield an estimated savings of \$2,400 for a cost of only \$57 per seat provided. The return on the investment for the “Safe Ride 4 Babies” equates to more than \$698,420.



Community Engagement

EVENTS

- DOH WIC: Big Latch On event
- Walk a Mile with a Child
- Central Florida Diaper Bank Baby Shower
- Baby Basics Diaper Giveaway
- Caribbean Health Summit
- Relax and Recharge Seminar
- Apostolic Worship Center Health Fair
- Resource Center Health Fair
- Restoring Hope Summit
- Rosen Medical Center Health Fair
- Universal Orlando Resort Baby EXPO
- Bellies, Babies and Brunch Community Baby Shower
- Public Awareness Campaign to Promote Safe Sleep Environment
- Greater Orlando Pregnancy Centers Coalition



Special Initiatives



The Orange County Healthy Start Program is currently responsible for providing maternal child health educational classes and care coordination services to the pregnant women at the **Orange County Female Detention Center**. The women attend an educational session once a week to discuss prenatal care, positive parenting, self-care and many other pertinent topics of benefit to their maternal health and/or inter-conceptual care. The women receive an individual initial intake and assessment to assess and discuss the risk factors associated with their pregnancy and healthcare. Once the women are released from the Detention

Center they receive ongoing care coordination services which include, but are not limited to, home visits and linkage to community resources. Prior to release, the care coordinator will work with the women on their transition plan, including information on how to access prenatal care.

21

Sessions



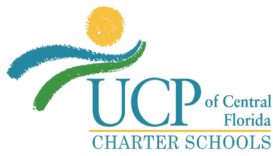
58

Pregnant Women
received services
while incarcerated



Diapers are essential to infants and toddlers daily care, and yet many families cannot afford them. A typical infant uses 10 to 12 diapers a day, adding up to about \$100 to \$120 per month. This cost is not usually covered by a financial assistance program. Like hunger, a lack of diapers has a profound impact on a baby and the family. Without enough diapers, parents are sometimes forced to reuse wet diapers or change their babies less frequently. This places their infants at high risk for painful diaper rash, infection, illness and other complications. Studies show that a child who cries frequently-and children with diaper rash and infections generally do cry more-are more likely to suffer abuse.

Central Florida Diaper Bank has a passion to assist families in the Central Florida Community by providing diapers and other essential baby items to parents that are in need. The mission of the Central Florida Diaper Bank is to ensure that all children (newborn to age 3) receive quality care and have their basic needs met. In 2019, the Healthy Start program established a partnership with the goal of protecting, promoting and improving the health of participating Healthy Start moms, babies and families through the provision of diapers, parenting education and other available baby items. This partnership allowed the Healthy Start program to become an emergency diaper site to meet families urgent needs. As a result of this partnership, we have distributed 96 packs of diapers to needy families and educated more than 50 pregnant women attending the Central Florida Diaper Banks' Annual Baby Shower.



Working in partnership with **UCP/BETA** the Healthy Start program provides care coordination services to the pregnant and/or parenting teens at the UCP/BETA Center. The teens attend an educational class on a weekly basis to discuss prenatal care, parenting, self-care and many other pertinent topics of benefit to their maternal health and/or inter-conceptual care. The pregnant and parenting teens receive an individual initial intake and assessment to assess and discuss the risk factors associated with their pregnancy and their infant. The infants also receive ASQ Developmental Assessments on site. The teens and their infants receive ongoing care coordination services outside of the UCP/BETA school that include home visits and linkage to additional community resources. Twenty-eight (28) teens were served.



Covenant House of Florida serves runaway, homeless, and at-risk youth 18 to 20 years old, including their babies. Healthy Start has partnered with Covenant House of Florida to provide bi-weekly educational workshops to expecting and new parents. Many homeless youth have multiple overlapping problems including medical, substance abuse and emotional or mental health concerns. Comprehensive and targeted care coordination is required to address both immediate and long-term needs of this special population. Careful attention to the strengths of homeless youth, their deficits, is a critical component in the engagement and assessment processes. Twelve (12) Classes were held at this location for a total of twenty-seven (27) participants.

In August 2017, Healthy Start Orange and **Rosen Medical Center** established a partnership with the goal of helping ensure healthy birth outcomes for its employees and to increase their team members' knowledge regarding the services provided by the Healthy Start Program. A team consisting of both Nurses and Social Service Counselors was identified to work directly with the Rosen Medical Center patients to build rapport, establish continuity of care and keep patients involved in ongoing case management services. As a result of this partnership, we have also attended the Rosen annual employee Health Fairs where we have had the opportunity to interact with more than 500 of its employees and other community agencies/organizations.



Prosperitas Leadership Academy is an Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) non-profit charter school that works with at-risk populations. 'At risk population' is defined as students who may have dropped out of school or are on the verge of dropping out due to poor academic performance or attendance, and/or never attended school in the US including non-English speaking students (large population of Creole speaking students). Healthy Start Teens in School Program initiative provides a personal Healthy Start Care Coordinator on site to educate and support the teens on issues related to pregnancy, parenting, and inter-conceptual care. Nine (9) Clients were served.

Inter-conceptual Care



Inter-conceptual care (ICC) is provided to women of reproductive age between pregnancies using Show Your Love Assessment, Steps for a Healthier Me and Steps for a Healthier Baby and Me.

Inter-conceptual care addresses risk factors that may have contributed to a previous poor pregnancy outcome and ensures that conditions and behaviors which may have caused a poor pregnancy outcome be identified and managed before the next pregnancy.

Topics Covered

- Access to Healthcare
- Baby spacing
- Nutrition
- Physical activity
- Healthy relationships
- Maternal infections
- Chronic health conditions
- Mental and emotional health
- Environmental risk factors
 - Smoking (Cigarettes, Vapor, e-cigarettes and Hookahs).
 - Alcohol
 - Substance use and prescription drugs

980

Clients Educated



Healthy Start Mall

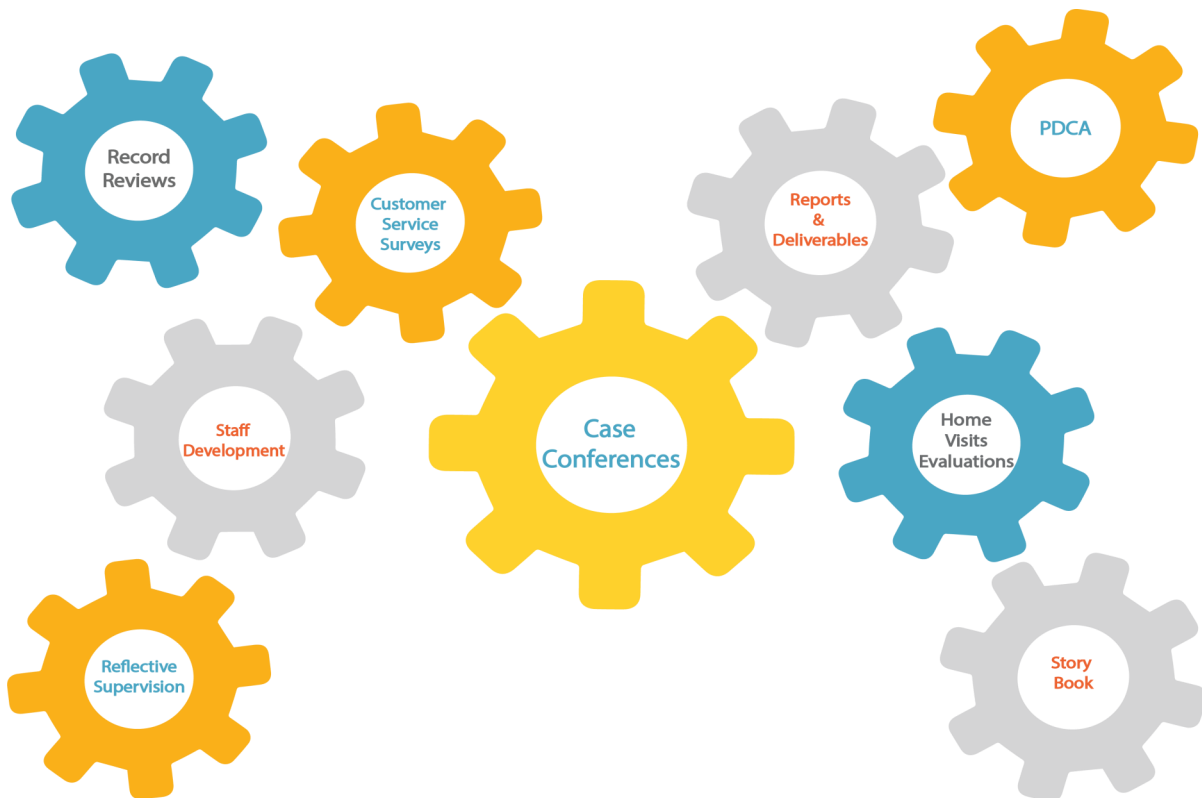
The Healthy Start Mall, is a client incentive program created to recognize pregnant women and families for the completion of activities to give their baby a Healthy Start in life. Clients are awarded points for prenatal care appointments, keeping their home visit appointments, participating in educational workshops and more. The Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County purchases and receives donations of popular items to provide ongoing support of the program. This program has been instrumental in increasing client participation in workshops, and knowledge about various maternal child health topics (i.e. childbirth, SIDS, child home safety, and how to care for a crying baby).



**Clients Served
at the Healthy Start Mall**

Quality Assurance

Continuous quality assurance is a systematic approach to continuously assess and improve the overall quality of a program or service by identifying positive and negative program processes, services, and outcomes. The quality assurance is facilitated through measurement and analysis of performance measures and contract deliverables, and includes active customer and staff participation. Periodic measurement and evaluation of program outcomes provides assurance that our program practices are consistent with established Healthy Start standards, guidelines and fidelity of evidence-based curricula. Ongoing monitoring of services, outcomes and processes impacting service delivery are key factors for achieving and maintaining quality.



HEALTHY START CORE TRAININGS



Client Satisfaction

100%
Overall
Satisfaction



100%

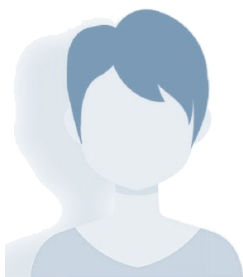
100%

My Healthy Start Worker was well informed, helpful and able to answer all of my questions

I received clear and understandable information and/or service



**I heard about
the Healthy Start Program from...**



My Healthy Start Worker was friendly

100% 

273 Responses

149

Doctor/Clinic



43

Other



42

Hospital



24

Outreach



8

Friend/ Relative



4

Brochure



3

Health Fair



Testimonials

Healthy Start help

Fabienne Jeanpierre found out she was pregnant when she was nine weeks along. It was a big surprise because after years of trying, doctors had told her that she couldn't have a baby.

But there she was: divorced, pregnant and uninsured.

She went to the Department of Health in Orange County and applied for Medicaid. And not long after, she got a call from Healthy Start.

"I didn't know anything about babies and they helped me a lot," said Jeanpierre, sitting next to her Healthy Start social services counselor Nicole Notice, who was watching Adaaisha, born in May, pull herself up by holding on to the living room table and balance herself on her two feet. "She's my star baby!" Notice cheered.

Although Healthy Start is available to all pregnant moms, it especially benefits first-time moms who have limited resources.

Counselors like Notice teach new and pregnant mothers about tummy time, breastfeeding and the importance of drinking water. They check the baby's sleeping arrangement to make sure it's safe.

"She told me how to take care of myself, how to eat and how to take care of the baby," said Jeanpierre talking about Notice.

While Jeanpierre is an example of how programs like Healthy Start can help women have successful pregnancies, some still fall through the cracks.

Fabienne Jeanpierre, mother of 6-month-old Adaaisha, with Healthy Start social service counselor Nicole Notice. Excerpt from Thursday, November 22, 2019. (Sarah Espedido / Orlando Sentinel)



As a first-time mom living in Florida without family and few close friends nearby, the Healthy Start Program was a fantastic support system. From the first time I met her, Lemille made me feel right at home as if she were a friend I had known for years. She took time to answer all of my questions and provided some resources I didn't even know existed. I always looked forward to our appointments. I felt I could bring my questions to her and she would always have answers or find out an answer for me. It was also nice knowing there was someone else who genuinely cared about the health and safety of my baby.

Not only has the information she shared benefited my family and I, but it will continue to benefit the employees I manage at work in the future. It's great to know there are programs like Healthy Start out there to help individuals feel more comfortable about knowing what to expect and how to prepare for a healthy baby both pre and post pregnancy. The resources Lemille gave both my husband and I helped us prepare for how we would take care of our new baby. Some tools encouraged us to continue working together as a couple and communicating further about our roles as parents. This helped us see how we could best work together so we could be the best parents for my daughter. ALL of the classes we took were great – the childbirth class, seatbelt class, and the class for Dads gave us such a great foundation to build upon.

I wish more people knew this program was out there. I will always be grateful for that phone call I received early on in my pregnancy telling me about Healthy Start and all it has to offer! – The Butkus Family (Orlando, FL)



Community Partnerships



HOSPITALS

Orlando Health and Advent Health Hospitals



SCHOOLS

Prosperitas Leadership Academy, UCP/BETA



OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Orange County Female Detention Center, Healthy Families Orange, Early Head Start, Central Florida Diaper Bank, Covenant House and Rosen Medical Center



HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

DOH-Orange Family Planning and Prenatal Health; Pine Hills and Apopka Community Health Centers and WellCare Health Plans



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

ASPIRE Health Partners





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