



COALITION NEWS

APRIL 2010



2026 SE Ocean Blvd. Stuart, FL 34996 Phone: 772-463-2888 Fax: 772-463-2896

Reminders and News:

- Law Forum meets the first Tuesday of each month at the Father & Child Resource Center from 6:30-8:30pm. Free legal advice on issues affecting families and children. Call (772) 463-2888 to reserve your place.
- Baby Basics classes are available by appointment. Call (772) 284-5700 for more information.
- Interconception Counseling and Education services are provided at the Prenatal Outreach Center, at home, and/or at clinic visits. Please call (772) 463-2141 for more information.
- The next Coalition Meeting will be held on April 28th at the Prenatal Outreach Center at 3:00pm. For membership information, visit www.mchealthystart.org or call (772) 463-2888.
- This year's Annual Luncheon will be held on May 21st at the Monarch Country Club. RSVP today by calling (772) 463-2888.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings,

As we near the end of another successful fiscal year, it is time to celebrate the accomplishments of our community's maternal and child health arena at the 17th Annual Healthy Start Luncheon.

This year, we have invited Dr. Myra McPherson, a licensed mental health counselor specializing in therapeutic interventions for children ages 0-5, to speak to our community on "The Value of Our Chosen Profession." Advocating for young children, who are unable to advocate for themselves, is often a trying experience, but the end

reward is priceless. As we continue to serve Martin County's infants and children, we must take time to recognize our accomplishments and appreciate the value of our work. Between 2006 and 2008, early entry into prenatal care in Martin County increased from 56.8% to 66.8% - a 10% increase in only 2 years! During the same 2 years, late or no prenatal care rates decreased nearly in half—from 11.5% to 6.6%. Infant mortality was reduced from a rate of 8.4 per 1,000 births in 2007 to only 2.3 in 2008!

We look forward to celebrating these accomplishments and many others at this year's Annual Luncheon.

We owe a debt of gratitude for the hard work of our community agencies, Boards of Directors, staffs, volunteers, and concerned citizens. Because of that dedication, we continue to make powerful strides in the right direction.

This year's luncheon will be held at the Monarch Country Club on May 21st, from 11:30am-2:30pm. For more information on this year's Annual Luncheon, visit our website at www.mchealthystart.org or call us at (772) 463-2888. I look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,
Lisa Olds, Executive Director

Save the Date

*Martin County Healthy Start Coalition
Annual Luncheon*

**Friday, May 21st, 2010
11:30am-2:30pm
Monarch Country Club**

Guest Speaker Dr. Myra McPherson
"The Value of Our Chosen Profession"

PREVENTION OF ADULT HEALTH ISSUES BEGINS IN THE WOMB

Healthy Start Funders



Children's Services Council
OF MARTIN COUNTY



United Way
of Martin County



Allegany Franciscan Ministries, Inc.

A growing number of studies show that the best time to prevent health issues begins before birth—during the nine months of an infant's earliest development. The good choices a woman makes during her pregnancy—getting good prenatal care, making smart nutritional choices, and avoiding alcohol, tobacco, and drugs—may help her baby live long after birth. In fact, a healthy pregnancy can prevent the unborn child from developing cancer, heart disease, diabetes, or depression not only during their childhood, but well into their adult life as well.

Dr. Alexander Jones of University College of London Institute of Child Health says that the delicate interplay of genetics and environment, known as epigenetics, can determine how a baby will react for the rest of its life. Chemical contaminants can cause epigenetic changes to babies exposed in the womb. Additionally, infants carried by pregnant women exposed to high levels of stress, may develop chronic illnesses, such as



heart disease, due to the strain placed on the infant's nervous system.

A pregnant woman's diet tells a fetus a lot about its future environment as well. For example, an undernourished pregnant woman could be communicating to her fetus that food is sparse, thus causing the fetus to learn to hoard calories, packing on fat instead of muscle. This can lead to obesity or diabetes for the infant.

The benefits of maintaining a healthy pregnancy—from eating right and keeping fit, to avoiding environmental risks—are evident. Delivering a healthy, full term infant is the end goal for most women seeking a healthy

pregnancy. However, this new research redefines our idea of the "end goal." These studies reveal that a mother's choices during her pregnancy don't just determine her child's quality of health at birth, but can affect her child's health on his or hers 40th birthday. Refraining from smoking or drinking while pregnant can positively influence the child's ability to learn arithmetic in grade school. Meeting the nutritional needs of mother and child during a pregnancy can prevent a child from being diagnosed with diabetes.

The importance of healthy prenatal care is undeniable—and impacts the infant at birth, throughout childhood, and well into adult life.

Pregnant? Get Prenatal Care—call 772-463-2141

The Prenatal Outreach Center
can help you find:

- Medicaid Health Insurance
- A Doctor
- A Maternity Care Advisor
- Referrals to WIC
- Referrals to Healthy Start
- Educational Materials

Prenatal Outreach Center
3257 SE Salerno Road
Stuart, FL 34997

Meet Our Staff Carlos Velez, Fatherhood Educator

Please welcome our new fatherhood educator, Carlos Velez who will be providing individual and group instruction for fathers in English and Spanish. Born in Boston and raised in Puerto Rico, Carlos has a background as an EMT, has worked in construction and building maintenance and has acted as a youth counselor through his church.



vices through their church. They live in Port St. Lucie and have two daughters. Carlos enjoys being a father and is eager to share his passion for fatherhood with other dads.

Carlos will be responsible for educating individual fathers and assisting them in meeting their responsibilities as fathers, with a special responsibility for Spanish-speaking fathers. He will also be making group presentations to fathers at many of our partner agencies such as Head Start as well as taking over the weekly fatherhood class at the Martin County Jail.

Carlos and his wife, Alexandria, who is our Healthy Start Community Health Educator, have provided marriage counseling ser-

Fatherhood Quote of the Month

“The most important thing that a father can do for his children is to love their mother.”

- Theodore M. Hesburgh



Pregnant?

A New Mom?

There's a new FREE service to help you out! Text4baby provides totally free text messages 3 times a week with info to help you through your pregnancy and baby's first year.

www.text4baby.org

**Text BABY
(BEBE para Español)
to 511411
to sign up!**



Mission Statement

To ensure that all babies in Martin County are born healthy.

Did You Know?

In January, 2010—81.9% of mothers enrolled in WIC breastfed their infant in Martin County

67.6% of mothers of Black infants enrolled in WIC breastfed in Martin County.

Studies show that children who are breastfed have fewer ear infections, lower respiratory infections, and urinary tract infections than children who receive infant formula. Breastfed babies are also less likely to develop childhood obesity, which is a growing epidemic in the United States and can lead to diabetes.

Support the Healthy Start Coalition!

Your gift can provide:

- \$30:** *Infant CPR class for 1 participant*
- \$60:** *Crib for an infant*
- \$100:** *Materials for Health Education and Literacy Classes*
- \$250:** *Prenatal Care Assistance for mothers-to-be in need*
- Other:** \$ _____ *Support for the continued operation of the Prenatal Outreach Center*

*Please make checks payable to:
Martin County Healthy Start Coalition*

Return this form with your donation to:

Martin County Healthy Start Coalition
2026 SE Ocean Blvd.
Stuart, FL 34996

Or donate online at: www.mchealthystart.org

Thank you for your support of Martin County Healthy Start Coalition

HEALTHY START SCREENING RATES

Prenatal and Infant Screening Rates are crucial to the success of the Healthy Start Program. Each obstetrical provider serving Martin County residents is tracked on the number of clients who accept Healthy Start services and consent to the Healthy Start screen. Each practice has developed its own way to promote the crucial Healthy Start Program. The following screening rates are for this fiscal year, from July, 2009 through February, 2010.



Featured Healthy Start baby entering screens!

Prenatal Screening Results for Martin County Residents

2009-2010

- Martin County Health Department— 319/339, 94%
- Women's Health Specialists— 141/164, 86%
- Physicians to Women— 159/201, 79%
- Women's Health Care of Pt. St. Lucie— 11/11, 100%
- FCHC (Ft. Pierce)— 9/9 100%
- Palm Beach County— 48/93, 52%
- Broward County—3/3, 100%

Thank you

Thank you to all of our providers and those who administer screens for your continued attention to consent rates! You are truly helping every baby have a healthy start!