



COALITION NEWS

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2009



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 Basic Moms Club Meetings are every Wednesday from 1-4pm at the Prenatal Outreach Center. Baby Basics Health Educator is available at the Martin County Health Department on Tuesdays from 8:00am-12:00pm and Thursdays from 1:00pm-5:00pm. Call (772) 284-5700 for more information.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings,

As our Congressmen work towards a reformed Health Care System, we must ensure that the needs of women and children are met.

In 2007, 11.4 million women in America were uninsured. The same year, 23.6% of women giving birth in Martin County were uninsured.

Consistent access to health care throughout a women's child bearing years leads to healthier pregnancies and healthier babies. Additionally, women have a major influence over the

health care of their families—from decisions about preventative care and nutrition to long term care. Policies that provide affordable coverage for women of childbearing age are essential to the health of our women, children, and their families.

I encourage you to take action by contacting members of Congress and attending town hall meetings to ensure affordable coverage for our women and children.

To contact a Member of Congress by telephone: call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121.

To contact a Member of the House via the Internet,

visit: <https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>

To contact a Senator via the Internet, visit: http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

As we continue to utilize our local resources to provide access to care for Martin County's women and children, we must raise our voices to ensure a Healthy Start for all women and children in the future.

Sincerely,

Lisa Olds, Executive Director

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
772-463-2141

Visit us on the web:

<http://www.mchealthystart.org/>

Martin County Healthy Start Coalition



Every baby deserves a healthy start in life

Healthy Start Funders



Children's Services Council
OF MARTIN COUNTY



Community Foundation
For Palm Beach and
Martin Counties



United Way
of Martin County



MARTIN COUNTY HEALTHY START'S NEW INTERCONCEPTION EDUCATION PROGRAM

Healthy Start's newest program—the Interconception Education Program increases post pregnancy access to health care and provides education and counseling on the benefits of spacing pregnancies 24 months apart. Education and counseling services are provided at the Prenatal Outreach Center, at home, and/or at clinic visits. Education and counseling services are delivered using the Florida Department of Health's statewide best practice comprehensive curriculum, which is culturally sensitive. The curriculum content has a prevention based focus designed to reduce factors that are associated with poor birth outcomes of any subsequent pregnancies. The sessions include education and counseling on:

- access to post pregnancy health care
- baby spacing/family planning



- nutrition
- physical activity
- maternal infections
- chronic health problems
- substance abuse
- smoking
- mental health
- and environmental risk factors

The goals of the program are

- to improve the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of

men and women related to preconception health

- to assure that all women of childbearing age receive interconception care services (i.e., evidence-based risk screening, health promotion, and interventions) that will enable them to enter pregnancy in optimal health
- to reduce risks indicated by a previous adverse pregnancy outcome through interventions during the interconception period, which can prevent or minimize health problems for a mother and her future children
- and to reduce the disparities in adverse pregnancy outcomes

For more information, contact Natalie Peraza at (772) 463-2141 or

nperaza@mhealthystart.org.

New H1N1 Guidelines Released for Pregnant Women and Infants

Since the onset of the H1N1 virus outbreak in April of 2009, severe illnesses among pregnant women and infants have been reported. Although the spectrum of illness in pregnant women and infants is not fully understood at this time, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has released new guidelines for pregnant women and infants in relation to the H1N1 virus.

The CDC guidelines state that pregnant women should be provided access to care in a setting where they can be separated from those potentially infected

with the H1N1 virus. For pregnant women who have been exposed to H1N1, post exposure antiviral chemoprophylaxis can be taken.

Caution should be taken with ill mothers and the CDC recommendation calls for isolation and close observation. Antiviral treatment should be taken as soon as possible, and the mother is advised to wear a mask during labor and delivery to prevent exposure to the newborn. It is recommended that the mother be isolated after delivery, but encouraged to assist in the care for the newborn by providing breast milk, which is not found to be a source of transmission for the H1N1

virus. Newborns to ill mothers should also be treated with caution and should be considered potentially infected if delivered within 2 to 7 days after illness onset of mother. Treatment with anti-influenza medications should be considered, however chemoprophylaxis is not typically recommended for infants under the age of 3 months.

Breastfeeding should be encouraged during this time, as breast milk provides protection from respiratory infection for newborns. The infant should be fed the mother's expressed milk by another person who is well.

Visitors to mother and child should be limited during this time.

LOCAL ATTORNEYS DONATE LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO FATHERS-IN-NEED



Pictured at the Healthy Start luncheon are Eula Clarke and Debra Klein, attorneys who have volunteered with the Father & Child Resource Center for over eight years. Portia Scott was unable to attend.

The mission of the Father & Child Resource Center is to involve fathers in their children's lives, whatever the family circumstances. Sadly, when parents split up, the relationship between a father and his child often suffers as well. Navigating the legal system that comes into play is hugely daunting and many fathers cannot afford the services of a lawyer. Fortunately the Center was able to recruit three volunteer attorneys in its first year and these three stalwarts – Eula Clarke, Debra Klein and Portia Scott – have continued to serve on the Family Law Forum that meets each month to help fathers address legal issues that threaten their involvement with their children. Between them they have provided legal assistance valued at over \$60,000 and assisted more than 400 fathers. The real value of what they do, however, is best expressed by the comments made by clients – “a great caring group of people”, “I would be lost without your help”; “I am a step ahead in getting to see and know my son”. Thank you, ladies!

Did You Know?

37.2% of women giving birth in Martin County in 2007 had an inter-pregnancy interval of less than 18 months.

The ideal inter-pregnancy interval is 24 months or greater.

Proper baby spacing is healthier for the mother and the baby, and can prevent poor birth outcomes such as low birth weight and prematurity.

Hurricane Preparation Tips for Pregnant Women

- Make a list of all the medications and prenatal vitamins you are taking, and put the list in a sealable plastic bag with your hurricane emergency kit.
- Whenever evacuating or staying at an emergency shelter, bring 2 weeks worth of medications and vitamins.
- When possible, bring original prescription containers with you, which will allow pharmacists to fill your prescriptions during an emergency.
- Communicate with your health care provider's office to let them know where you will be staying during the hurricane.
- Ensure that your health care provider has a phone number where you can be reached.
- If you are having complications with your pregnancy, discuss safe options for evacuation during a hurricane, and whether it would be better for you to stay at the hospital during the storm.
- Tell your Healthy Start Care Coordinator where you plan to go during the hurricane.
- For more information, call the Family Health Line: 1-800-451-2229

Mission Statement

To establish a system in Martin County that ensures that all families have access to prenatal care and that ALL infants and children up to the age of three have access to services that promote healthy growth and development.

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 2008 through June 2009.



Featured Healthy Start baby entering screens!

Prenatal Screening Results for Martin County Residents

2008-2009

- Martin County Health Department— 547/562, 97%
- Women's Health Specialists— 181/221, 82%
- Physicians to Women— 199/261, 76%
- St. Lucie Women & Children— 9/10, 90%
- Coastal OBGYN— 10/10, 100%
- Women's Health Care of Pt. St. Lucie— 11/12, 92%
- FCHC (Ft. Pierce)— 3/3, 100%
- Grace Women's Health Specialists— 1/1, 100%
- Palm Beach County— 77/113, 68%
- Indian River County—1/1, 100%

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!

MEET OUR STAFF

NATALIE PERAZA, INTERCONCEPTION HEALTH EDUCATOR

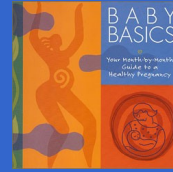
Natalie Peraza is the newest addition to the Healthy Start Staff. She joined us in July, 2009 as the Interconception Health Educator.

Natalie Peraza was born in Manhattan and raised in The Bronx, New York. After marrying Jesse, her husband of 15 years, they moved to Long Island, New York. In 2007, Natalie and her family moved to Port St. Lucie, Florida. Natalie has three children: Nicholas, Natasha, and Rebekah.

Natalie attended college at City College in New York, where she earned her Bachelors of Science degree in Psychology. Natalie has over 15 years of experience working with children and families in the social work field. She has worked in youth development and as a case worker

for the foster care system. Most recently, Natalie was a Whole Child Advisor for Whole Child Connection.

As Interconception Health Educator, Natalie will educate new Martin County mothers on proper interconception care. Women will be educated on access to proper post-pregnancy care, baby spacing/family planning, nutrition, physical activity, maternal infections, chronic health problems, substance abuse, smoking, mental health, and other environmental risk factors. Natalie's work as the Interconception Health Educator will be a key factor in improving birth outcomes for Martin County women and children in the 2009-2010 fiscal year.



Martin County Healthy Start Presents:

Baby Basics Moms Clubs *Club Hola Bebe (En Espanol)*

A Prenatal Health Education and Health Literacy Program

Baby Basics Mom's ONE-ON-ONE Class now being offered!

When: Every Wednesday
Time: 1:00pm -4:00pm

Place: Prenatal Outreach Center,
3257 SE Salerno Rd., Stuart Fl
34997

Call today for an appointment with your friendly Health Educator at 772-284-5700.

"MEET&GREET" hours also available at the Martin County Health Department Lobby Area

Meet your Health Educator on the following days to ask questions, schedule appointments or to pick up your **free** copy of your Baby Basics pregnancy guide and planner.

When: Tuesday's 8:00am – 12:00pm and Thursday's 1:00pm - 5:00pm

Place: 3441 SE Willoughby Blvd., Stuart Fl 34994

Ask about our incentive program!

