



COALITION NEWS

DECEMBER 2009—JANUARY 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.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings,

Have you considered the long-term impact of investing in early childhood development? Have you wondered how this investment can assist not only underprivileged youth, but also society as a whole?

Nobel Prize winning University of Chicago Professor James Heckman insists that investing in early childhood development—from birth to age 5 yields tremendous gains. “The Heckman Equation” explains that through the investment, development, and sustainment of children, society gains more capable, productive, and valuable citizens that pay

dividends to America for generations to come.

Dr. Heckman’s studies link many of society’s major economic and social problems such as crime, teen pregnancy, high school drop out rates, and adverse health conditions to low levels of skill and social ability, such as attentiveness, persistence, and impulse control. Dr. Heckman has found evidence that these social skills are essential for success in life. Early nurturing of these skills combined with learning experiences and physical health from birth to the age of 5 has the greatest impact for societal success.

Furthermore, the investment in early childhood de-

velopment is much more cost efficient than intervention. With a societal investment in early childhood development, we can begin to relieve the burden of disadvantage among children, benefiting the entire society in future generations.

The Healthy Start Coalition is committed to ensuring healthy birth outcomes, which already contribute to healthy childhood development here in Martin County. Our children are our future, and the key to society’s social and economic health.

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**

**Toyota
of Stuart**

Thank you to Toyota of Stuart for your generous donation to our Beds 4 Babies program—providing safe sleeping cribs to infants at risk in Martin County!



Visit us on the web:

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

Every baby deserves a healthy start in life



Healthy Start Funders



Children's Services Council
OF MARTIN COUNTY



United Way
of Martin County



Allegany Franciscan Ministries, Inc.

NATIONAL BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION MONTH

January is the National Birth Defects Prevention Month, and January 9-15 is Folic Acid Awareness Week. Birth Defects affect approximately 12,000 infants born in the United States each year and are the leading cause of infant mortality and long-term disabilities.

The March of Dimes has determined that the majority of women in the US do not understand the importance of folic acid during a pregnancy. Consuming enough of the B vitamin Folic Acid every-day can help to prevent serious birth defects. Folic Acid should be taken before a woman becomes pregnant. Many women do not discover that they are pregnant until after the first few weeks—during which time vital brain and spinal

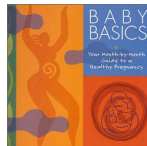


cord development is taking place. Neural tube defects (NTDs) can occur during the early weeks of a pregnancy.

400mcgs of Folic Acid is recommended daily. Folic Acid is found in enriched grain products, but can also be consumed through a daily supplement.

While not all birth defects can be prevented, following certain practices throughout a

pregnancy can help to prevent birth defects. Women should avoid any toxic substances during a pregnancy, refrain from smoking or consuming alcohol, get into prenatal care early, consume a well-balanced and healthy diet, exercise regularly, stay up to date on vaccinations, and of course, consume the recommended amount of folic acid daily.



The Baby Basics Program provides easy-to-read prenatal information, empowering women to use books for information, offering encouragement – and teaching women how to make healthy choices!

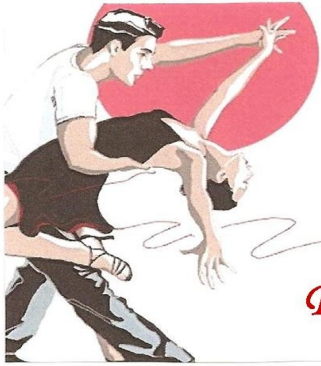
For more information, please contact Alexandria Velez at avelez@mchealthystart.org or by calling (772) 284-5700. Alexandria Velez habla español.

Interconception Education & Counseling

The Interconception Program provides free resources, counseling, and education on issues pertinent to your health between pregnancies. Topics range from exercise and nutrition to baby spacing and much more!



Meetings with the Interconception Counselor can be scheduled at your convenience, either at the Prenatal Outreach Center, at home, or during clinic visits. Call (772) 463-2141 for an appointment today!



Dancing for Babies



Ballroom Dance Instruction

1708 NW Federal Hwy.

Stuart, FL 34994

6:00pm-8:00pm

www.mchealthystart.org

Your donation provides you the opportunity to learn ballroom dance — from salsa to tango! Proceeds support the “Beds 4 Babies” program, which promotes Infant CPR and Safe Sleeping Practices for families in Martin County.

6:00-6:30 Meet and Greet & Hors d'oeuvres

6:30-7:15 Group Dance Instruction

7:15-8:00 Guided Partner Practice

<i>Dance Instruction Dates:</i>	<i>\$50 per couple</i>
<i>December 10th, 2009</i>	<i>\$25 per individual</i>
<i>January 14th, 2010</i>	<i>\$125 for all four lessons</i>
<i>February 11th, 2010</i>	
<i>March 11th, 2010</i>	

For more information or to purchase tickets online, visit:

www.mchealthystart.org

Or call: 772-463-2888

Mission Statement

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

A Dad's Guide to Potty Training *Courtesy of the National Fatherhood Initiative*

Keep in mind that the key word in potty training is *training*. Even as an adult, it takes time for you to process new information and you need to practice what you learn. The same goes for potty training. It is a new experience in behavior modification and practice makes perfect.

What you should know before getting started:

Signs your child is ready:

- Able to pull clothes off by himself/herself
- Verbally communicates other sensations such as hunger
- Understands simple requests such as "go get that cup"

Your child's schedule: Keep it consistent

- What time does your child eat meals? Target potty usage 15-20 minutes after meals (day care providers can provide this information daily)
- Cut off liquids 2-3 hours prior to bedtime

- Chart the times that your child has soiled or wet his/her diaper (day care providers can provide this information as well).

Tips for successful training:

Timing is everything. Place the child on the potty 5 minutes prior to the expected charted time.

Sing his/her praises. Making a big deal of successes helps him/her feel proud.

Dress for Success. During your potty training period dress girls in dresses and boys in elastic waist pants. Don't make things more difficult than they need to be!

Read together. Provide potty books that are special books only to be used during potty time.

Know what motivates your child and use an incentive. Be creative. Many parents place a few drops of red or blue food coloring in the toilet bowl and explain to their child that he/she has the magic to turn



the colors orange or green.

Other ideas include creating a special song for potty time or making a chart where your child can post a sticker each time he/she successfully uses the toilet. If they go a set number of days without an accident, they get a special reward.

Remember to remain patient. Every child is different and the approach you used for your oldest child may be different from the approach you will need to use for your youngest. This is one of many learning opportunities your child will experience in his or her life, so set a positive precedence for learning, growing, and achieving success!

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 November, 2009.



Featured Healthy Start baby entering screens!

Prenatal Screening Results for Martin County Residents

2009-2010

- Martin County Health Department— 202/214, 94%
- Women's Health Specialists— 89/103, 86%
- Physicians to Women— 99/119, 89%
- Women's Health Care of Pt. St. Lucie— 7/7, 100%
- FCHC (Ft. Pierce)— 7/7, 100%
- Palm Beach County— 33/53, 62%
- Broward County— 2/2, 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!