



Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition Baby Blog

Service Delivery Planning Process Underway

Providers, care coordinators, local professionals and consumers joined Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition on August 23rd in Leon County and on October 11th in Wakulla County to begin the Coalition's service delivery planning process. A completely revised Service Delivery Plan with updated data and needs assessment is due to the Florida Department of Health every five years. CAHSC's next Service Delivery Plan is due in October 2015. These were the organizational meetings for developing the 2015-2020 plan. The planning meetings included:

- Discussions of 2011 infant mortality data findings and other data issues
- An analysis of the findings of the Local Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) Project
- A final report on the Leon County Campaign for Healthy Babies Closing the Gap

Recurring issues are health education, which includes comprehensive health education in the schools and accessible care/provider awareness. Committee members are being recruited for these working group topics:

- **Provider Working Group:** Accessible care and provider awareness is an issue CAHSC is focusing on within the community. The Provider Working Group was formed as a result, and is teaming up with local providers to increase the awareness among health care professionals. This group wants to work with all provider offices to ensure pre/inter conception health is taught and re-evaluate the screening and referral process for women with repeat poor pregnancy outcomes.
- **Schools Working Group:** Age appropriate health education in schools is vital to a healthy community. A Schools Working Group was formed in collaboration with the Leon County Schools to review the health education curriculum in elementary, middle and high schools. The Schools Working Group recently met with school officials and provided Healthy Start's health education curriculum for review. Meetings have already been held with school guidance counselors and social workers. Plans are underway to meet with high school principals. Local physicians have offered to make presentations they are currently making to high school students in surrounding counties. The Schools Working Group would also like to meet with PTA/PTO Presidents for their input, and have a member of the Schools Working Group appointed to the Leon County School Health Advisory Committee.
- **Health Education Working Group:** Funding for health educators at CAHSC has been eliminated. A Health Education Working Group is being created to recruit volunteers to provide health education in the community.
- **The Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Case Review Team** is another ongoing committee needing more community members.



The progress and activities of the working groups organized at this Service Delivery Planning meeting will be discussed at Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition's Annual Meeting in June 2013.

For more information or to join a committee, contact Kristina Abernathy at 488-0288 extension 102.

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Autumn Leaves are Falling: Change is in the Air

Capital Area Healthy Start rarely has staff turnover. This fall is different. Joan Leggitt, our wonderful Director of Operations for seven years, has semi-retired to spend more quality time with her family. We are delighted she will continue to do operations consulting work for us.

Administrative Assistant Chelsea Gold has been promoted to the newly created Office Manager position. She is learning the ins and outs of her new office environment and is happy to be on the Healthy Start Team making a difference in the lives of moms and babies. Yes, change is in the air here and it's exciting!



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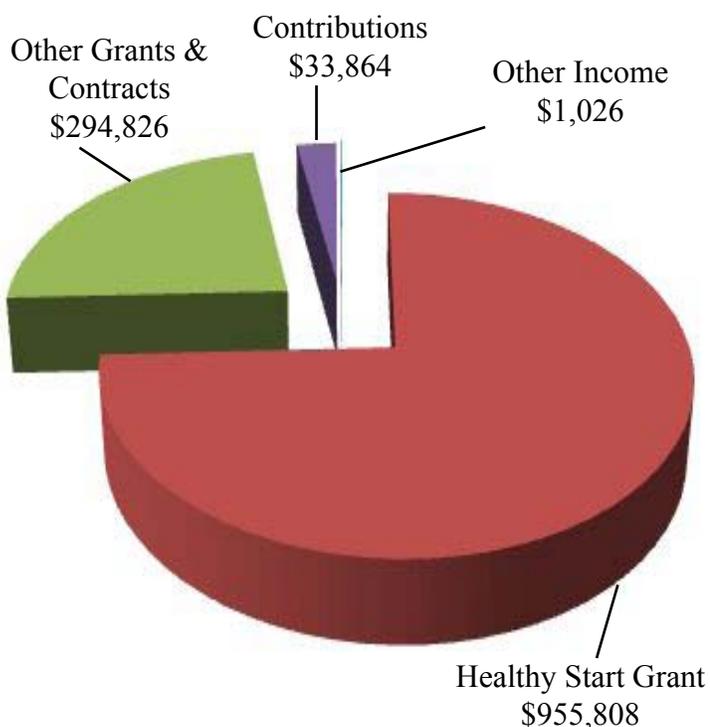
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Annual Report: 2011-2012 Program Highlights

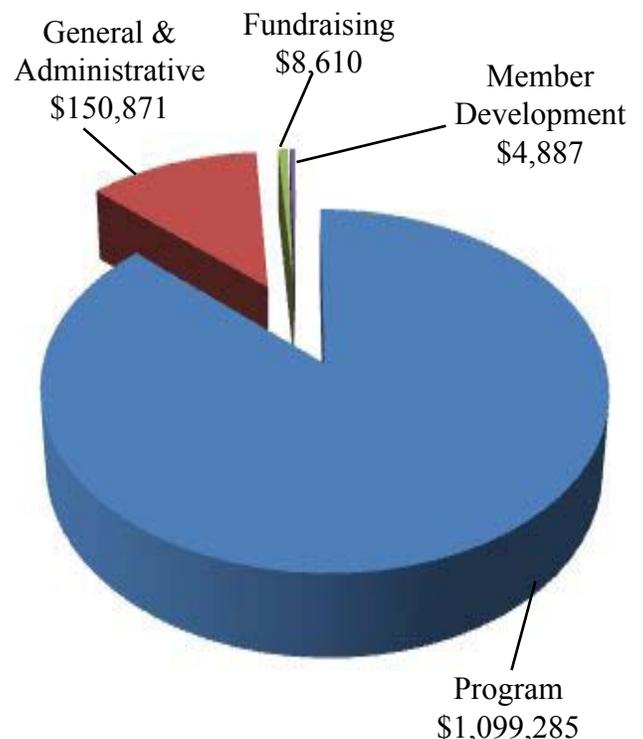
- Provided Health Education classes, health fairs and service referrals for 1,248 participants and distributed 1,200 Healthy Woman Kits through the Closing the Gap Grant partnership with the Leon County Office of Human Services and Community Partnerships
- Provided 3,593 pregnant women and their infants with emotional support, childbirth education, parenting and infant care classes, nutritional counseling, smoking cessation classes, breastfeeding education and support, community service referrals, home visits, specialty health care coordination and transportation assistance
- Partnered with the women of Club 25 to provide mentoring and career counseling to participants of the STRONGER Girls program. The STRONGER program, a healthy teen project for girls, focuses on building healthy self-esteem, examining risky relationships and behaviors, addressing nutrition, fitness, philanthropy and life skills
- Continued to provide cribs for low income families
- Sponsored and coordinated the 11th Annual Walk to Remember for families who have lost infants. 150 people attended the non-denominational service and participated in a candlelit memorial service. Healthy Start's Remembrance Quilts, which are made from quilt squares with names of lost babies, were on display
- Continued partnership with local Rotary Clubs around the National Infant Mortality Platform

Annual Report: 2011-2012 Income & Expenses

2011-2012 Income by Source



2011-2012 Functional Expenses



Community Provides Comfort at the 11th Annual Walk to Remember

On Thursday, October 18th families gathered together at St. Paul's United Methodist Church for the 11th annual Walk to Remember to honor babies who are no longer with us. The Walk to Remember event, which is dedicated to our local grieving families and to their departed children, is held each year to observe National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day.

Losing a baby is a traumatic experience. Walk to Remember is an opportunity for participants to share their stories of how they survived their loss. "It is so important that our families know they are not alone in their grief," said Ann Davis, Executive Director of Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition. "The annual Walk to Remember provides them with hope and support."



Voces Angelorum performs at Walk to Remember



Guests were invited to write messages on a Memory Quilt

Family members were invited to write messages on remembrance quilt squares to honor their loved ones. Babies' names were read aloud during the memorial service held in the sanctuary. County Commissioner Akin Akinyemi read the County's proclamation. His wife, Elvira, shared their story about their daughter, Vanessa, whom they lost to a heart defect in 1998.

Randy and Sharia Brent understand what it means to lose a child, and told their story in hopes to connect to other parents who have experienced similar tragedies. Four

years ago, Sharia had a beautiful baby girl named Serena Grace. The Brents were excited about sharing their lives with Serena. Unfortunately, health complications occurred and Serena only lived one day short of her one month birthday.

“The first time I was able to hold Serena was when the tubes were taken out of her and she was taken off of a machine,” Sharia explained. “She died in my arms so peacefully.”

The memorial service was followed by a candlelit ceremony that included performances by the Tallahassee Pipe Band and Voces Angelorum.

“Walk to Remember brings awareness to a serious infant mortality problem in our local community,” stated Dr. Fran Close, Associate Professor at Florida A&M University’s College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences’ Institute of Public Health, and Capital Area Healthy Start Board President. “This event gives grieving moms, dads and extended family the opportunity to receive support from CAHSC and our partners. For the last 11 years, we have observed this national day of remembrance in our community. CAHSC feels it is essential that we do all we can in our community to ensure that we not only bring awareness to the issue, but ultimately reduce infant mortality.”

*We wish to thank our sponsors,
without whom the event would
not be possible:
Tallahassee Rotary Club
Capital Rotary Club
TMH Foundation
Tallahassee Memorial Women
& Children’s Services.*



Dr. Fran Close, Capital Area Healthy Start Board President, speaks at Walk to Remember



One of several Rememberance Quilts displayed at Walk to Remember

Club 25 Hosts Field Trips for STRONGER Girls

Members of Club 25, an organization formed from the 25 Women You Need to Know program implemented by the *Tallahassee Democrat*, partnered with Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition to provide summer learning opportunities for Healthy Start's STRONGER Girls Program. STRONGER is an after school program for middle school girls that focuses on the girls' health and fitness.

Sylvia White, Assistant Vice President of Capital City Bank hosted the girls for a two hour field trip to Capital City Services Company, which included a tour of the technical and marketing department. The girls learned about issues such as fraud and prevention and were shown how to create an effective marketing plan. "You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve," explained Ms. White. "Hosting the young ladies from the S.T.R.O.N.G.E.R. field trip was a pleasure. If they came away knowing one thing about banking that they did not know before the field trip, it was a success."

Marina Lickson, owner of Honeytree Natural Foods, invited the girls to the store for a discussion of the art of natural and organic products, and why choosing a healthy lifestyle is important to our bodies mentally, physically and emotionally. The girls



Jeanne Dariotis gives STRONGER girls a tour of the Blood Bank



Judge Judith Hawkins invited girls to witness court proceedings and participate in a mock trial

drank coconut water, and ate goat cheese and gluten free crackers. They learned about a variety of ingredients that can be substituted in foods for those who have allergies. The girls also sampled skin care products and cosmetics.

Dr. Alma Littles, Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education and Academic Affairs Professor, Family Medicine and Rural Health hosted



Zandra Wilson gives cooking instructions at Jack McLean Park

the girls on a field trip to Florida State University College of Medicine on July 19th. The girls had the opportunity to ask faculty, professors, and students questions about medical school, and also discussed the importance of establishing short and long term goals. College of Medicine students talked to the girls about their plans for the future, emphasizing the importance of maintaining good grades throughout school. The group toured the facility, and had the opportunity to learn how medical students learn life saving techniques on mechanical mannequins by identifying heartbeat abnormalities on a stethoscope and monitoring a baby's heartbeat. "We really enjoyed the opportunity to interact with the girls when they visited the College of Medicine," said Dr. Littles. "We all welcome the opportunity to make a difference, especially in the lives of children who might not otherwise have access to advice regarding careers in medicine."

Jeanne Dariotis, Vice President of Florida Blood Services within the North Region hosted the girls at the Southeastern Community Blood Center. She gave the girls a tour of the laboratory and donor room. Employees discussed their roles at SCBC, and the many opportunities offered.

Judge Judith Hawkins hosted the final field trip of the summer at the Leon County Teen Court, where the girls were invited to witness court room proceedings. They were welcomed by the teen court staff, observed first appearances with Judge Hawkins and took a tour of the courthouse. At the end of the day, they participated in a mock trial.

The girls also participated in the weekly Cookbook Project, initiated by Wendy Barber. This was a project designed to eat healthier and have fun doing it. They learned where to shop for specific ingredients, how to prepare nutritious and cost effective meals, where to find recipes and safety tips in the kitchen. As part of the project, the girls learned about whole foods, local foods and foods that heal. In addition to the Cookbook Project, the girls learned about finances. Thanks to Cari Molinaro, finance and math teacher at Godby High School, the girls were taught how to maintain a budget to suit their needs.

A special thank you goes out to the participating members of Club 25 for the time taken to share their wisdom and professional expertise with the STRONGER Girls program.



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Staff Spotlight: Chris Rivers

Chris Rivers is the new FIMR Nursing Advisor for Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition. Chris started her role in mid-May and says she “loves this job and loves coming to work every morning”. As a former Nursing Consultant for Infant Maternal and Reproductive Health Unit, Maternal Child Health Division at the Florida Department of Health, Chris believes her experience and knowledge will be valuable for performing her job. She was also the FIMR Quarterly Call coordinator at the Department of Health where she was involved with FIMR and developed the respect she has for the FIMR process.

As part of her job, Chris leads the monthly Community Review Team that reviews cases of fetal and infant mortality from Leon, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor and Wakulla Counties. The team looks for strengths and challenges in the delivery of prenatal care and pediatric care for each case and then forms recommendations that are forwarded to CAHSC various working groups. Through this process the community benefits from the information gathered, and the solutions provided.

Chris received her Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing from Valdosta State University, and was inducted as a member of Sigma Theta Tau, the International Honor Society of Nursing. She began her nursing career in the emergency room at South Georgia Medical Center, while at the same time also working at Valdosta State University as a nursing adjunct instructor. After moving to Florida, she worked with the Tallahassee Pediatric Foundation, and then with the Florida Department of Health at Children’s Medical Services, and then Infant Maternal and Reproductive Health. She has been married 36 years and has two children.