



Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



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Letter from the **President**

It has been an exciting year to be President of the Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition Board. Along with the excellent core Healthy Start services which have been provided in this community for 33 years, newer programs have become very successful, including Parents as Teachers, the Fatherhood Program, Sister Friends, and the Community Doula Program. This year, CAHSC expanded the CONNECT Family Partner into HCA Florida Capital Hospital, developed the COAST Through Pregnancy Program, and worked with Leon County Schools to launch the Littles to Leaders Program. Budgets and staff have increased to reflect these new initiatives. The Coalition continues to be the leading maternal and child health education and advocacy organization in Leon and Wakulla counties.

Through their Lunch and Learn series, Traveling Crib exhibit, Fetal and Infant Mortality Review, and displays in various community events, CAHSC takes every opportunity to highlight the causes of infant death and educate the public on ways to support pregnant women and their families. It has been eye-opening to learn about all the partnerships Chris Szorcsik, Executive Director, and her staff have developed throughout the community. It has been an honor to work with such a caring board as well as an executive director and staff who are so dedicated to supporting moms, dads, babies and families. With the excellent leadership of Chris, CAHSC will continue to identify gaps and find solutions to ensure that every baby has a healthy start. I look forward to seeing what next year will bring!

Betsy Wood

2023-24 CAHSC Board President



Meet Our **Leadership Team**

Board Officers

Board Members

Our Staff



Betsy Wood
President



Nikita Graham
President Elect



John Hightower
Treasurer



Cheron Davis
Secretary



Dr. Monica Hayes
Past President

Board Officers

Board Members

Our Staff

Marie Clewis

Antoinette Bowen

Greg Cowan

Melissa Damelio

Jodi-Ann Livingstone

Chesha James

Audrey Moore

Libbie Stroud

Trishay Young

Meet Our **Leadership Team**

Board Officers

Board Members

Our Staff

Directors

Chris Szorcsik
Executive Director

Amanda Madden
Associate Executive Director

Sandy Glazer
Administrative Director

Danielle Whitfield
Connect Program Director

Abigail Olcese
Community Relations Director

Administrative

Angel Dameron
Administrative Assistant

Communications

Destiny Gaines
Community Relations Assistant

Alfred Williams
Public Relations Specialist

Fatherhood

Kenyatta Colvin, Sr.
TEAM Dad Program Coordinator

Kendrick Harris, Sr.
TEAM Dad Specialist

Connect

Cortney Nealy
HCA Connect Family Partner

Nacoya Humphrey-Bell
TMH Connect Family Partner

Tamia Hale
Connect Intake Specialist

Mackenzie Haight
Connect Intake Specialist

COAST

Chelsea Edler
COAST Pregnancy Navigator

Haleigh Gilbert
COAST Pregnancy Navigator

Community Doula

Keshia Jenkins
Community Doula Coordinator

Parents As Teachers

Rebecca Kilpatrick
PAT Program Supervisor

Ashley Cochran
PAT Parent Educator

Melissa Quinnell
PAT Parent Educator

FIMR

Shaneke Louis
FIMR Program Coordinator

Sister Friends

Donnielle Ivory
Sister Friends Program Coordinator



What is **CAHSC**?

Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition (CAHSC) is a non profit organization committed to enhancing the health and well-being of infants and their families in Leon and Wakulla Counties.

Established in 1992, our organization, rooted in the community, aims to assist pregnant women, new parents, fathers, and families with infants up to three years old who may face challenges such as poor birth outcomes and developmental delays. Our objectives include enhancing maternal and infant health, providing access to care, offering education on healthy pregnancies, child development, breastfeeding, women's health, as well as support and care coordination for all families.

In the fiscal year 2023-2024, our team of 23 employees supported over 4,800 pregnant women, families, and infants through our seven direct client programs. We deliver home visiting services in collaboration with the Florida Department of Health, Healthy Start MomCare Network, Inc., Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions (FAHSC), and Community Human Services Partnership.

2023-2024 ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The dedicated staff at Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition engages in thousands of hours of community outreach each year, participating in diverse activities to raise awareness about their essential services and forge valuable partnerships. Their involvement spans events, health fairs, workshops, and training sessions, all aimed at underscoring the critical importance of maternal and child health.

DONATIONS

Regardless of income, insurance, or education, the core of Healthy Start programs is our team of home visitors who provide individualized care, support, and education. This past year, our home visitors have been able to help distribute over two thousand items to families that benefits the baby.

COMMUNITY DOULAS

Since 2021, Simply Healthcare, Sunshine Health, and the March of Dimes have generously funded Capital Area Healthy Start's doula training program. This initiative has successfully expanded the number of doulas in our community, enhancing maternal and infant health through their valuable support and care.

SAFE SLEEP

The Traveling Crib initiative was launched in 2017 to educate the community on the fact that babies are safest when they sleep alone, and on their backs, and in a safe crib. This year, the Traveling Crib has traveled to 13 locations!

BREASTMILK BANK DEPOT

Established in August 2022, our CAHSC'S Milk Depot was launched in partnership with Mother's Milk Bank of Florida. The milk depot facilitates the donation process by receiving milk, packing milk, and sending it to the main milk bank, which screens and distributes the donor milk to babies in local NICU.

FIMR

2023 CASES REVIEWED

At CAHSC, we are fighting to reduce fetal and infant mortality. One way that we do this is through the Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) project. The CAHSC FIMR project expanded beyond Leon and Wakulla counties to include Gadsden, Jefferson, Madison, and Taylor counties.

2023 Trends in Maternal Conditions



CHRONIC CONDITIONS: *HYPERTENSION, DIABETES, OBESITY*



MENTAL HEALTH: *ANXIETY & DEPRESSION*



STRESS: *FINANCIAL, EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL*



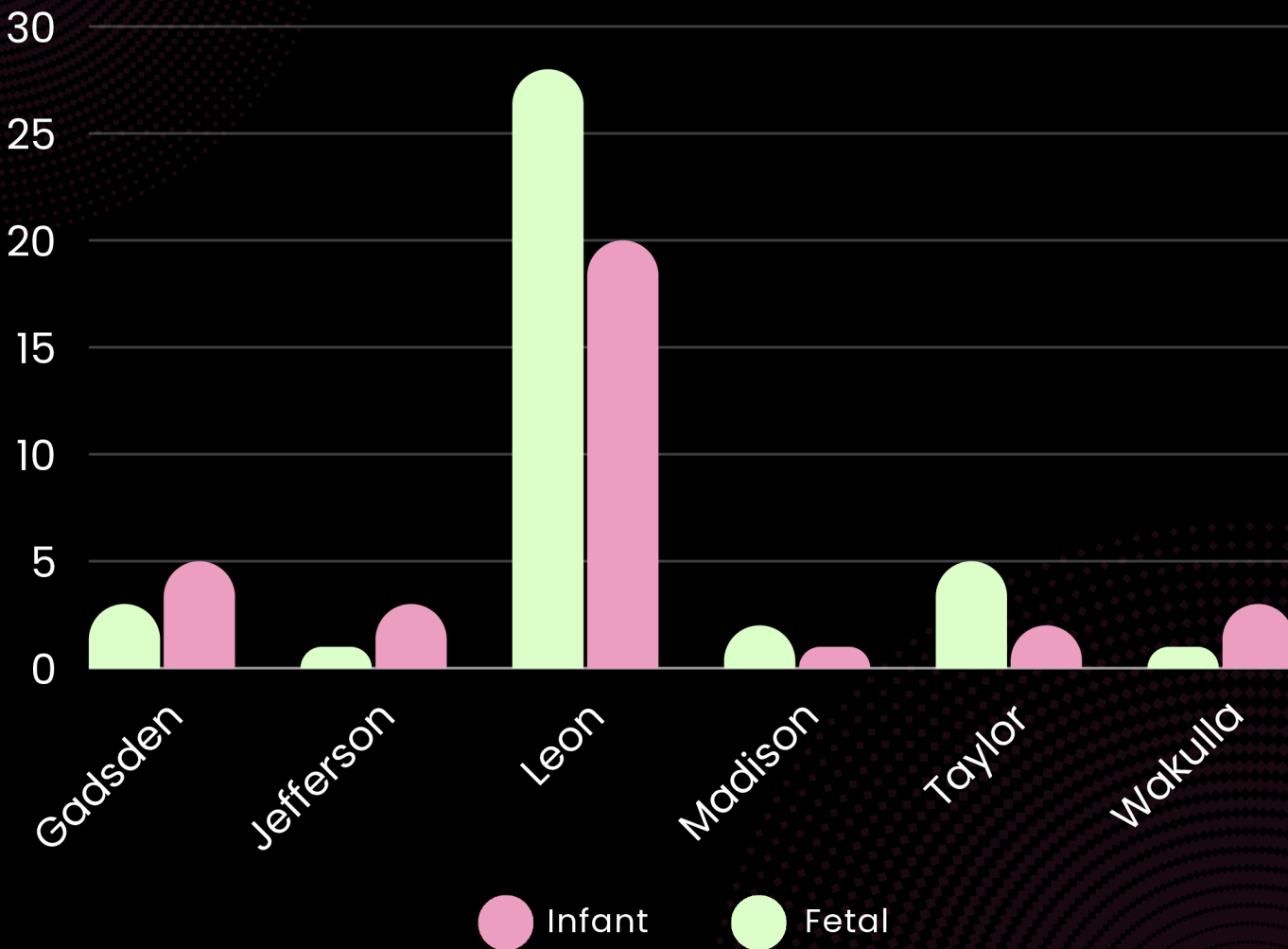
LATE ENTRY: *INTRO TO PRENATAL CARE*

40 Cases Reviewed | 24 Infant | 16 Fetal

The purpose of FIMR is to reduce fetal and infant mortality by gathering and reviewing detailed information to better understand how a variety of local social, economic, cultural, public health, educational, and environmental factors contribute to the tragedy of fetal and infant loss. Additionally, FIMR teams use the findings to take action that can prevent future infant deaths and improve the systems of care and resources for infants and their families.

FIMR

2023 DEATH COUNTY BY COUNTY



Total Infant: 34 | Total Fetal: 40

CONNECT PROGRAM

Healthy Start's Connect Program, also known as the Coordinated Intake and Referral Program (CI&R), assists pregnant women, moms, fathers, and families, with young children by providing a one stop entry point for families to learn more about community services and programs.

Our Connect staff consists of a team of social services professionals who are dedicated to serving local families and connecting them to needed community resources. This fiscal year, the CI&R staff received a total of 4853 *referrals*, 2509 of those were *prenatal referrals* & 2344 were *infant referrals*. They also completed 1940 *initial intakes* that assesses risks and needs.

"The partnership between our connect family partner and the community we serve, has been beyond beneficial for both our mothers and babies. Cortney has been able to educate our families and our staff on all the great resources our community has to offer. We are so thankful to be a part of changing lives for the better, while working with Healthy Start in our hospital."

Jordan Melgaard

Clinical Manager for Women's Services, HCA

TMH

HCA

07/23/2023 - 06/24/2024

Eligible Babies

1873

Initial Intakes

1570

COMPLETION RATE

83.82%

10/26/2023 - 06/30/2024

Eligible Babies

485

Initial Intakes

362

COMPLETION RATE

74.64%

PARENTS AS TEACHERS

Parents as Teachers is a **FREE** program for all families with newborns living in Leon County. This program matches parents and caregivers with parent educators who schedule regular visits to enrich all parenting journeys!

What our Parents As Teachers Educators offer:

- Information about child development (including language, cognitive, motor, and social-emotional milestones)
- Assistance on various parenting subjects such as health, safety, nutrition, sleep, guidance, discipline, and attachment.
- Techniques to enhance the bond between parent and child.

PAT Progress Summary

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Clients Served: Car Seat Checks:

49 **30**



HEALTHY START

Healthy Start meets the unique needs of each participant to ensure that every baby has a healthy start. This program is available to pregnant women, infants, and families with children under 3 living in Leon or Wakulla Counties.

Offering a variety of **FREE** services:

- Healthy Pregnancy & Parenting Education
- Childbirth Preparation
- Nutrition Education
- Stress management & Emotional Support
- Child Development Education
- Breastfeeding Education & Support
- Women's Health Education & Support
- Help to Quit Smoking
- Care Coordination

Baby Essential Items Distributed 2023-2024

51

CAR SEATS

61

CRIBS

312

WIPES

13

BUS PASSES

426

DIAPERS

333

BOOKS

1,589
Total Items



LITTLES TO LEADERS

INITIATIVE

Littles to Leaders launched on September 20, 2023 at TMH and November 14, 2023 at HCA. In 2023, 53% of the children entering kindergarten in Leon County did not demonstrate school readiness.

Littles to Leaders is a partnership between Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition, Leon County Schools, Simply Healthcare Plans, Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare, and HCA Florida Capital Hospital to provide “brain bags” to every newborn baby in Leon County. These brain bags are filled with resources to aid in early childhood development and increase kindergarten readiness.



783

BRAIN BAGS

have been provided
LEON COUNTY

90%

DID YOU KNOW?

of brain development occurs
before kindergarten



FATHERHOOD

PROGRAM



**PARENTING
EDUCATION**



**CHILD
DEVELOPMENT**



**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**



**HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIPS**

16.5%

of all enrolled
Dad's in Florida

There are 32 Healthy Start Coalitions across Florida. In the 2023-2024 period, CAHSC made significant strides, enrolling 118 out of the 717 fathers statewide—a remarkable achievement in our community. Our T.E.A.M. Dad program celebrated these fathers' accomplishments with a graduation ceremony, contributing 31 of the 100 statewide graduates.

31%

of the statewide
graduates

C.O.A.S.T

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND SUPPORT TEAM

THROUGH PREGNANCY

COAST Through Pregnancy is a **FREE** program by the Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition, designed to support pregnant and postpartum women at risk of poor birthing outcomes due to high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, or mental health concerns.

COAST Through Pregnancy provides:

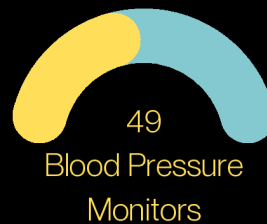
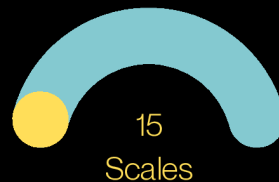
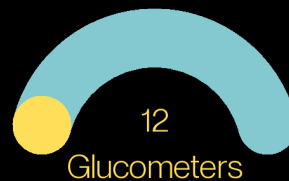
Blood pressure monitors, glucometers, and scales for health monitoring

Educational health information

Screenings for social determinants of health and connection to resources

Assistance with medical needs and community resources

Connections to doulas and mental health services as needed



The program ensures maternal health and safety by collaborating with community agencies to provide essential health monitoring tools and services. C.O.A.S.T. offers monthly telehealth visits with pregnancy navigators who guide and support women through pregnancy and postpartum. 76 total monitoring devices distributed.

86

Total of Women That
Have Been Served
Through COAST



434

Total hours of Mental
Health Services
Provided

SISTER FRIENDS PROGRAM



Creating



Change



Through



Connections

16 babies
have
celebrated
their 1st
Birthday with
Sister
Friends.

93% of our Little
Sisters attended
all prenatal
appointments.
100% attended
their
postpartum
appointments.

In fiscal year
2023-2024
there were 12
babies born
that were
carried to
term.

80% of our
sisters are
breastfeeding
their babies.

Sister Friends Tallahassee was founded in 2021 as an affiliate of The Birthing Project USA. This program provides support and healthy pregnancy information to African American women during pregnancy and postpartum by using trained and dedicated female volunteers known as Sister Friends.

COMMUNITY DOULA PROGRAM

Research shows that doula support during labor reduces the likelihood of preterm births and low birth weight, shortens labor, and improves satisfaction with the birthing experience.

We received funding from Simply Healthcare and from Sunshine Health, enabling us to train 37 local doulas. CAHSC has contracted 15 of these Doulas to provide services to families in Leon and Wakulla Counties. This Community Doula program offers free support to pregnant women during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum.



2023-2024 Community Doula Program Updates

37

DOULAS TRAINED

21

BABIES BORN

15

CONTRACTED DOULAS

BREASTMILK DEPOT

2023-2024 UPDATES

Established in August 2022, our CAHSC's Milk Depot was launched in partnership with Mother's Milk Bank of Florida.

A milk depot is a convenient location where local moms can drop off their excess breastmilk. The milk depot facilitates the donation process by receiving milk, packing milk, and sending it to the main milk bank, which is responsible for screening all donors and distributing the donor milk to babies in local Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU).

21,500 Ounces of Life-Saving Breastmilk Collected!



TRAVELING CRIB

TRAVELING CRIB RECOGNITION

Based on recommendations from our FIMR Community Action Team, the *Traveling Crib Initiative* was launched in 2017 to educate the community on the fact that babies are safest when they sleep Alone, on their Backs, and in a safe Crib.

This fiscal year, the Traveling Crib has made its way to 13 locations!

Brehon Family Services	Neighborhood Medical Center
Belly Boutique	Pace for Girls
Bond Community Health Center	Salvation Army
Children's Home Society	Ultrasound Made Easy
Children's Services Council	Wakulla Healthy Start
HCA	Whole Child Leon
WIC Program - Leon County	



CAHSC

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Angel Awards
August 17, 2023



Walk to Remember
October 19, 2023



Father's Bowl
February 13, 2024



Maternal Health Fair
January 27, 2024



Tornado Relief Drive
May 11, 2024



Dads & Strollers
June 15, 2024



T.E.A.M. Dad on Local News



Community Doula Training



CPR Training Classes



CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

Being a young, single mom, I didn't have good guidance around me...but healthy start has helped to guide me to becoming the best mother for my son.

Cassandra Pantgja



CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

I'm a second-time father and the Fatherhood Program opened my eyes to some of the mistakes of not knowing. This gives me a path when raising my son now.

Charles Whitfield

GET INVOLVED AND VOLUNTEER TODAY!

JOIN OUR BOARD

Community members who are committed to the long-term interests of the organization and meet regularly to oversee and direct business operations, set policies, approve business decisions, evaluate executive performances, and fulfill fiduciary responsibilities.

FIMR

Join our FIMR Project to reduce fetal and infant mortality by gathering and reviewing detailed information to better understand how a variety of local social, economic, cultural, public health, educational, and environmental factors contribute to the tragedy of fetal and infant loss. Additionally, FIMR teams use the findings to take action that can prevent future infant deaths and improve the systems of care and resources for infants and their families.

SISTER FRIENDS

Sister Friends TLH is a FREE and voluntary program that connects pregnant women to dedicated and trained female community volunteers to encourage healthy pregnancies by providing support to women during their pregnancy and following their birth. We are always recruiting volunteers to fill the role of a Sister Friend. Sister Friends will need to pass a level two background check. The program's time commitment is a minimum of 10 hours per month for up to 18 months.



FIMR Project volunteers meeting to brainstorm, create solutions, and implement resources.

SCAN HERE
FOR MORE INFORMATION



THANK YOU

TO OUR SUPPORTERS, COLLABORATORS, AND EVENT SPONSORS:

100+ Men Who Care – Tallahassee
Advanced Business Solutions
Agency for Health Care Administration
Alphalit

Big Bend AHEC
BodyWorks Therapeutic Massage
Brehon Family Services
BuzBalloons

Capital Area Breastfeeding Coalition
Capital Health Plan
Catholic Charities
Cheryl Willis
Children's Home Society
Children's Services Council of Leon County
City of Tallahassee
Clothesline
Community Foundation of North Florida
Community Human Service Partnership

David Beggs

Early Learning Coalition

Finacious
Florida A&M University
Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions
Florida Blue
Florida Department of Children and Families
Florida Department of Health
Florida Department of Health-Leon
Florida Department of Health-Wakulla
Florida Guardian ad Litem
Florida State University

Galt and Francine Allee
Generations Church
Goodwyne & Roberts P.A.

Healthy Families
Healthy Start Momcare Network
Humana Health

ImagineCare

Kathy & Richard Zorn
Kiwani's Club of Tallahassee

Lady Ward
Leon County
Detention Center
Leon County Emergency
Medical Services
Leon County Government
Leon County Schools
Leon County Sheriff's Office

Les McLean
Lewis Claborn
LifeStance Health

March of Dimes
Mission BBQ
Moore Business Strategies
North Florida Women's Care
NWF Health

P.E.O. Chapter GR
Pulsewrx

Queens of Unity

RB Oppenheim

Second Harvest

Simply Healthcare

SmartBank

St. Paul's United Methodist

Sunny Baby

Sunshine Health

Tallahassee Fire Department

Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare

Tallahassee Pediatric Dentistry

The Oasis Center for Women and Girls

The Stork's Nest of Tallahassee

Trinity Catholic School

Ultrasound Made Easy

United Partners for Human Services

United Way of the Big Bend

U-Vest Financial

Wakulla Pregnancy Center

Watson and Associates

Whole Child Leon

DONATE TODAY

TO CHANGE LIVES

Your donations help provide much needed education and support to local pregnant women and children (birth to three years old), which helps us fight infant mortality. From breastfeeding education & support to childbirth classes, we offer services like these (and more) free of charge to Healthy Start participants. When you donate, families can also receive basic items to care for their babies.

A Donation Of:

- **\$25** can buy 1 box of diapers
- **\$50** can buy 2 infant sleep sacks
- **\$150** can buy 3 portable cribs
- **\$200** can buy 4 car seats
- **\$300** can buy sleep sacks and safe sleep education for 15 families
- **\$500** can sponsor a free CPR class for 30 participants



For more information on Capital Area Healthy Start Coalition,
visit our website at www.capitalareahealthystart.org

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