



Dear Healthy Start Colleagues,

It is my honor to welcome you to the Healthy Start Virtual Grantees' Meeting (VGM). Like last year, 2021 has proved to be a challenging year. We continue to navigate a pandemic that has had profound medical, financial, and emotional impacts on many, including families from our 101 Healthy Start communities. Despite these challenges, Healthy Start staff around the country have showed up every day to sustain their critical work of providing women, men, children, and families with a "healthy start." Our efforts to provide individuals and families with the tools to help them and their communities thrive is more necessary than ever.

The VGM gives us an opportunity to pause and celebrate not only your dedication over the past year, but also Healthy Start's tremendous growth and accomplishments since its beginning. This year marks three decades for Healthy Start. Three decades of rewriting the narrative for infants and families across the nation. Three decades of equipping parents and enriching babies' lives. Three decades of working to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in outcomes for women and infants.

The Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services recognizes how difficult this work is, and how invested you each are in the families you serve. Just as you are there to support and lift up your families, we are here to do the same for you. We know that this 30th anniversary would not be possible without your unwavering commitment and your many contributions to the Healthy Start community. We thank you, and we are proud of you.

Although we are convening virtually again, we are committed to using this VGM as an opportunity to connect with you, the Healthy Start Family. We intend to take this time to see you, to hear you, and to let you know that we appreciate you and your tremendous work. Each of you provide haven, support, and reassurance to the individuals and families you serve.

Thank you for the countless hours you have poured into these communities over the past 30 years. We look forward to continuing our good work together, over the next three decades and beyond.

Lee A. Wilson
Director
Division of Health Start and Perinatal Services
Maternal and Child Health Bureau
Health Resources and Services Administration