

Supporting Healthy Start Performance Project NEWSLETTER



Strengthening Healthy Start to support family health and well-being

TA & Support Center News & Updates

Deadlines:

Oct 14 [Healthy Start COIN on Structural Determinants of Health Application Due](#)

Oct 15 HSMED-II Report (CSV or XML) Due

Oct 21 [TIROE CIT Coaching Calls Application Due](#)

Events:

Oct 6 [Healthy Start Grantee Listening Session: Part 1](#)

Oct 13 [Healthy Start Grantee Listening Session: Part 2](#)

New Resource! Artifact from the Reducing Infant Deaths in the Sleep Environment - Safe Sleep Practices and National Trends for Risk Reduction: Healthy Start Ambassadors' Training

As a follow-up to the three-hour safe sleep training that the Healthy Start TA & Support Center (TASC) hosted in August, the TASC has released an artifact outlining the key takeaways from the training and highlighting useful resources. The three-hour training covered the latest statistics, trends, and practices in safe sleep and risk reduction, including the American Academy of Pediatrics' 2022 Recommendations for Reducing Infant Deaths in the Sleep Environment. Attendees learned how sleep-related infant death is defined, the Triple-Risk Model/Vulnerability of Infants, and the impact of racial, ethnic, and social inequalities on safe sleep outcomes. The TASC hosted this training in partnership with Dr. Stacy Scott, founder of the Global Infant Safe Sleep Center (GISS), a long-time international and community advocate and educator for safe sleep initiatives. Dr. Scott is also an Executive Project Director & Equity Lead at NICHQ overseeing the NAPPS-IN initiative. **To view artifact, please click [here](#). To view the recording, please click [here](#).**

Two-part Healthy Start Grantee Listening Session

As a reminder, the Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services is hosting a two-part *Healthy Start Grantee Listening Session* on **Thursday, October 6** and **Thursday, October 13 from 1-3 pm ET (12-2 CT/10-12 PT)**. **[Please complete this brief survey to indicate that you plan to join the sessions.](#)** Upon completion, you will receive an email with a registration link.

Please note, 2-3 program staff members from each Healthy Start project should attend both sessions. While all Healthy Start staff are welcome, the following staff from each site should be in attendance: **Project Director** and **Data & Evaluation Manager** (or someone else in Program Leadership who can speak to data/evaluation).

During the session, grantees will have the opportunity to provide recommendations for future Healthy Start program development during a Grantee Comment Period. If you would like to speak during the Grantee Comment Period, **please submit a prepared statement to healthystart@nichq.org by COB Friday, September 30.** Each speaker will have up to two minutes to speak. When you email your statement, please include your name, role/title, and Healthy Start project name and location.

Finally, the session will include breakout groups, where grantees will be asked to discuss questions around specific topics. These questions will be sent to the grantees a few days prior to each of the two listening sessions. We encourage attendees to review them and be prepared to respond.

We look forward to seeing you at the Two-part Healthy Start Grantee Listening Session! If you have any questions in the meantime, please email healthystart@nichq.org.

Now Open:2022-2023 Healthy Start COIN on Structural Determinants of Health Application

The Healthy Start TASC is pleased to announce that the application for the 2022-2023 Healthy Start Collaborative Innovation Network (COIN) on Structural Determinants of

Health is now open. A COIN is a team of self-motivated people with a collective vision, enabled by the web to collaborate in achieving a common goal by sharing ideas, information and work.

To learn more about the HS COIN, please [click here](#).

The Healthy Start TASC hosted the second Healthy Start Collaborative Innovation Network (COIN) Creation: Fleshing Out “Out of the Box” Ideas webinar on Monday, September 19. During the webinar, the HS community came together to explore, imagine, and innovate potential areas of focus for the HS COIN. If you were not able to attend, the recording will be available on the [EPIC website](#) soon.

The COIN team will meet on **the third Tuesday of each month from 1-2:30 p.m. ET** from November 2022 through September 2023. In addition to the monthly meeting, COIN participants will be expected to spend approximately one hour per month engaging with their fellow COIN team members and subject matter experts.

If you are interested in participating in the HS COIN on Structural Determinants of Health, **please complete your application [here](#) by COB Friday, October 14.**

If you have any questions about the HS COIN or application, please email healthystart@nichq.org.

Now Open: TIROE Core Implementation Team Coaching Calls Application

The Healthy Start TASC is pleased to announce a new opportunity for select grantees to participate in a series of coaching calls with Dr. Linda Henderson-Smith. Dr. Henderson-Smith is an external consultant with the National Council who led the recent Trauma-Informed, Resilience-Oriented, and Equitable Care (TIROE) Community of Practice (CoP) for Healthy Start grantees. The upcoming TIROE Core Implementation Team (CIT) coaching calls will assist Healthy Start projects in action planning and will support the integration of TIROE approaches and values into all aspects of the projects' work.

Five Healthy Start projects will be selected to take part in the coaching calls with Dr. Henderson-Smith. All Healthy Start projects are eligible to apply whether they participated in past TIROE activities or not. Each CIT will be expected to:

- Disseminate an organizational self-assessment as pre-work to the coaching calls;
- Participate in monthly coaching calls from January through March 2023 to review data and develop a TIROE Strategic Plan; and
- Meet within their CIT at least once per month outside of the coaching calls to complete assignments discussed during coaching calls.

To learn more about this opportunity and to apply, [please click here](#). The application will close at COB on Friday, October 21. If you have any questions, please email healthystart@nichq.org.

In Case You Missed it...

Ask the Pediatrician: COVID Vaccinations for Children

In partnership with the Rapid Response Virtual Home Visiting Project, the Healthy Start TASC hosted a webinar entitled “Ask the Pediatrician: COVID Vaccinations for Children” on Wednesday, September 7. The webinar featured Dr. Mishelle Nace, a pediatrician with Foundation Health Partners. Dr. Nance shared information about COVID vaccinations for all children, including how to speak with families about the vaccine. The webinar included a question-and-answer session with participant submitted questions. **To view the webinar recording, please click [here](#).**

Fatherhood Talk Tuesday

After a restful summer break, Fatherhood Talk Tuesday returned on Tuesday, September 13! In honor of National Infant Mortality Awareness Month in September, TASC invited public health advocate and infant safe sleep expert, [Dr. Stacy Scott](#), to share insights, findings, and resources that fathers can utilize to better understand infant mortality. Attendees heard from fatherhood coordinator Reginald Van Appelen from Los Angeles County Healthy Start, who presented on strategies, programming insights, and lessons learned! **To view the webinar recording, please click [here](#).**

Networking Café: Staff Recruitment & Retention

In response to technical assistance requests, the Healthy Start TASC hosted a networking café focused on staff recruitment and retention on Wednesday, September 21. Attendees had a chance to discuss any staffing issues or successes that they have faced, and share ideas and strategies with one another. **To view the session recording, please click [here](#).**

Networking Café: Social Media Strategy and Content Creation Part 2

In August, the TASC and John Snow Inc. (JSI) hosted a two-part networking café focused on social media and communications. JSI facilitated a discussion around how and when to leverage the latest social media apps and trends. Grantees had an opportunity to share their experiences and learn about social media management for Healthy Start programs. **To watch the recording from part 1, please click [here](#). To watch the recording from part 2, please click [here](#).**

September: National Infant Mortality Awareness Month

September is [National Infant Mortality Awareness Month](#), a time to shed light on the infant mortality crisis in this country and remember the many babies who have tragically passed away before their first birthday. Although the overall infant mortality rate has [decreased significantly](#) over the past 100 years – reaching [5.4 deaths per 1,000 live births](#) in 2020 – racial disparities have increased dramatically. According to the [National Vital Statistics Reports](#), in 2019, non-Hispanic Black Americans had the highest rates of pregnancy-related infant deaths, closely followed by non-Hispanic Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders and non-Hispanic American Indians or Alaska Natives. Given these differences, we must continue working to reduce the overall number of infant deaths, while deepening our focus on increasing survival rates of those most impacted.

There are a variety of reasons that an infant can pass away within the first year of their life. Among the almost 20,000 infants who died in the U.S. in 2020, the five [leading causes](#)

were:

1. Birth defects
2. Preterm birth and low birth weight
3. Sudden infant death syndrome
4. Injuries
5. Maternal pregnancy complications

Fortunately, there are actions that mothers and families can take to help decrease the risk of these devastating outcomes. Examples include:

- Taking [folic acid](#) each day if you are a woman of reproductive age. This has been shown to reduce some serious birth defects of the baby's brain like [anencephaly](#) and [spina bifida](#).
- [Newborn screening tests](#), which all babies receive at birth, help to identify serious but rare health conditions. Check out [Baby's First Test](#) to learn more about the importance of identifying conditions early and accessing early treatment.
- Safe sleep practices, which can reduce the occurrence of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Review the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) newly [updated recommendations](#) for reducing infant deaths in the sleep environment.

Infant mortality rates not only signal the state of maternal and infant health, but also serve as an alarm about the overall health of a nation. In the United States, the infant mortality rate is one of many examples of the stark racial and ethnic disparities that exist and impact families every day. This month, we want to honor the essential role that Healthy Start programs play in supporting these families and working tirelessly to prevent infant deaths. September is not only a time to educate others about this issue, but also a time to reflect on Healthy Start's tremendous legacy in ensuring families have the care, resources, and tools to achieve a healthy birth outcome.



Toolkit: Developing an Infant Health Action Plan for Your Community

Last year, the Health Resources and Services Administration released supplemental funding to support Healthy Start projects in developing action plans to address infant mortality rates in Black and Native American communities. The TASC held a [series of webinars and created a toolkit](#) to support the grantees who received funding to develop these action plans, but the information is now available on the EPIC website for all grantees to support other HS grantees in developing community action plans for their communities.

Strategies for Reducing Infant Mortality

Although researchers continue to study the best ways to prevent and treat the causes of infant mortality, [National Institute of Child Health and Human Development](#) (NICHD) compiled [a list of strategies](#) that health care providers and families can consider to reduce infant mortality. This includes addressing preterm birth and low birth weight by receiving adequate prenatal care, preventing birth defects by taking folic acid before and during pregnancy, and lowering the rate of SIDS by creating a safe sleep environment.

Reducing Risks of Birth Defects

The [American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists \(ACOG\)](#) compiled a [list of frequently asked questions](#) about birth defects and ways care providers and families can help reduce the risk of birth defects. ACOG also has many [resources around medical conditions during pregnancy](#), including steps to control these conditions to avoid poor birth outcomes. Examples include infections, preeclampsia, and diabetes.

National Birth Equity Collaborative (NBEC) COVID & Pregnancy Toolkit

The National Birth Equity Collaborative recently released [a toolkit](#) about navigating pregnancy, labor, delivery and postpartum during the COVID-19 pandemic. The toolkit includes updated information about COVID and its impact on pregnancy and provides guidance for expecting mothers and families on staying active, healthy and well.

Talking to Families About Safe Sleep

[Safe Sleep North Carolina](#) created a [resource](#) to help health care providers and other safe sleep advocates talk to parents and caregivers. The resources reminds us that the goal is not only to reduce the risk by sharing information, but also by answering questions and concerns, discussing resources, problem-solving, and offering support.

Text4Baby

Text4baby is a [free service](#) that sends text messages to subscribers three times a week, throughout their pregnancy and until their baby's first birthday. Text messages are timed to the subscriber's due date and share important information about nutrition, signs and symptoms of labor, safe sleep, and more. To sign up, text BABY (or BEBE for Spanish) to 511411. There is also an app that provides additional information about infant development, pregnancy, child care, and more.

Newborn Screening Action Center

The [EveryLife Foundation for Rare Diseases](#) runs the [Newborn Screening Action Center](#), an online space with information about newborn screening, including resources to take action to support and improve newborn screening programs in the United States. The website includes an [interactive map](#), which shows how each state's newborn screening program compares to the federal recommendations.

Share Your Story

To support babies in the NICU and to honor and remember infants that have passed, [March of Dimes](#) created the [Share Your Story](#) community. This online community includes blogs, forums, and groups where families can connect with one another and share their stories. March of Dimes has also created a [booklet](#) with information about understanding and coping with grief.

IRTH App

[The Irth app](#) shares reviews from prenatal, birthing, postpartum and pediatric care providers by Black and Brown women, for Black and Brown women. The free app helps birthing people of color have a safer and more empowered pregnancy and parenting experience. By turning collective experiences into meaningful data, the app pushes for change within health systems.

Postpartum Support International Infant Loss Resources

Postpartum Support International (PSI) offers several [support groups](#) for those who have experienced pregnancy and infant loss. Led by PSI trained facilitators, these groups help bereaved parents find support and resources to help them navigate the emotions of their loss. PSI also developed a [discussion tool](#) for parents experiencing loss, to help track their symptoms and guide their discussion with a health care provider.



Other Resources & External Events

Duke/Stanford Maternal Sepsis Study

The Healthy Start TASC would like to share an opportunity to get involved in research being conducted by Dr. Melissa Bauer as part of the Duke/Stanford Maternal Sepsis Study. This study seeks to identify barriers to care for patients with maternal sepsis. The overall goal of the study is to learn directly from patients in order to improve care, reduce disparities, and reduce maternal morbidity and mortality. The study is open to the women who have experienced maternal sepsis and the partner/support person who was present with her during that time. Dr. Bauer and her team are aiming to understand what their experiences were like during this critical time. Participants will be interviewed and asked to share their story. **If you are interested in participating, please contact maternalsepsis@duke.edu.**

Infant Formula Shortage

The United States is experiencing an infant formula shortage due to supply chain issues and [safety recalls of several powder formulas](#), including Similac, Alimentum, and EleCare. This has left many parents and caregivers concerned about how they will feed their babies. In response, MCHB Associate Administrator, Dr. Michael Warren, issued [a letter with important information and resources](#) that Healthy Start grantees can share with families to help them safely manage the shortage. TASC has also compiled additional resources about supporting families during the shortage. Please share this information with the women, fathers, and families you serve.

[Additional Steps to Address Infant Formula Shortage](#): This fact sheet from the White House outlines President Biden's strategy to ensure that safe infant formula is available to families across the country, including increasing imports and reducing prices.

[Infant Formula Recall and Supply](#): This webpage from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides an overview of the shortage, baby formula safety "do's and don'ts," key messages for consumers, and more.

[Helping Families Find Formula During the Infant Formula Shortage](#): This fact sheet from the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) shares resources – including hotlines, community resource specialists, and human milk banks – that may be able to help families locate formula or donor milk.

[What Should I Do if I Can't Find Any Formula?](#): This webpage from the American Academy of Pediatrics answers common questions from parents about managing the formula shortage, including whether it is safe to make your own formula.

[Contact Your Local Food Bank](#): The Feeding America website allows you to locate food banks in your area, as well as learn about national nutrition assistance programs like SNAP and WIC. Encourage families to contact their local food bank and ask if they have any formula.

[Recalled Formula Alternatives](#): This webpage from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics features a table with information about the recalled formulas and

[Check Formula Lot Number](#): This webpage from Abbott allows you to check the lot number on your Similac, Alimentum, or EleCare formula to check whether it was impacted by the recall.



Hosting or attending an exciting event or webinar?

We will use the EPIC Center [Training Calendar](#) to share information about events specifically planned for Healthy Start projects, as well as other relevant webinars, trainings, and other events that are open to the public. If you know of events or trainings that you think other Healthy Start projects should be aware of, please feel free to send information to healthystart@nichq.org.

Have questions? Either respond to this email or contact the sender on healthystart@nichq.org

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