

Welcome!

We are so glad you are here!

We will get started shortly.
In the meantime, we invite you to
intentionally enter this space.



Silence your cell phone



Close the door



Close browser windows



Check your audio and video



Stretch



Take a few deep breaths



Emotionally release your to-do list



Take a bio break



This session is being recorded.



All participants are muted upon entry. We ask that you remain muted to limit background noise.



Participants are encouraged to share comments and ask questions using the chat box.



Conversations with the Division

Tuesday, January 27th, 2026
2:00pm – 3:30pm ET

The Healthy Start TA & Support Center is operated by the National Institute for Children's Health Quality (nichQ). This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number 1 UF5MC327500100 titled Supporting Healthy Start Performance Project.

nichQ
National Institute for
Children's Health Quality

HEALTHY
start
TA & SUPPORT CENTER



Conversations with the Division
Hosted by the Healthy Start TA & Support Center at NICHQ

Welcome & Introductions

Karen Chustz
Healthy Start TA &
Support Center



Agenda

Welcome

Message from the Director

Healthy Start 2026 Priorities

Data & Evaluation Branch

Q&A

Karen Chustz
Healthy Start TA & Support Center (TASC)

Johannie Escarne
Division of Healthy Start & Perinatal Services (DHSPS)

Mia Morrison, India Hunter, Kristal Dail, Ardandia Campbell-Williams, Mabatemije Otubu
DHSPS

Ada Determan

DHSPS

Partnership Highlight: NHSA

Partnership Highlight: Partnership for National MCH Leadership

TASC Updates & Priorities

Closing & Adjournment

Deborah Frazier
National Healthy Start Association (NHSA)

Kenn Harris
League of Voices
Susanna Joy
Michigan Public Health Institute

Karen Chustz, Tess Pierson
TASC

Mia Morrison
DHSPS



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Message from the Director

Johannie Escarne
Division of Healthy
Start & Perinatal
Services

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Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services (DHSPS)

Message from the Director

Johannie Escarne
Acting Director, DHSPS
Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB)

Vision: Healthy Communities, Healthy People



Our Leaders



Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
HHS Secretary



Thomas J. Engels
HRSA Administrator



Eliza Heppner
*MCHB Acting
Associate
Administrator*



Lauren Ramos
*MCHB Acting
Deputy Associate
Administrator*

Division of Healthy Start & Perinatal Services Leadership



CDR Johannie G. Escarne, MPH

Acting Division Director



Vanessa Lee, MPH

Acting Deputy Division Director



Mia Morrison, MPH

Acting Chief, Healthy Start Branch



Maternal and Child Health Bureau



Proposed MCHB Bill

	FY24 Enacted	FY26 Bill	FY26 +/- FY24
Maternal and Child Health Block Grant	813,700	818,700	+5,000
SPRANS (non-add)	210,116	215,116	+5,000
Innovation for Maternal Health	15,300	17,300	+2,000
Maternal Mental Health Hotline	7,000	8,000	+1,000
Autism and Other Developmental Disorders	56,344	57,344	+1,000
Healthy Start	145,000	145,250	+250
Poison Control	26,846	27,846	+1,000
Screening and Treatment for Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder	11,000	12,000	+1,000
Family-to-Family Health Information Centers (Mandatory)	5,658	6,000	+342
Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) (Mandatory)	565,800	612,950	+47,150



Learn more at <https://mchb.hrsa.gov>

Proposed SPRANS Bill

	FY24 Enacted	FY26 Bill	FY26 +/- FY24
SPRANS (non-add)	210,116	215,116	+5,000
Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia (HHT) Centers of Excellence	2,000	3,000	+1,000
Infant Toddler Courts	18,000	20,000	+2,000
Newborn Essentials Support Toolkit (NEW)	-	5,000	+5,000
Maternal Produce Prescriptions (NEW)	-	15,000	+15,000



Learn more at <https://mchb.hrsa.gov>

DHSPS Priority: Communication



DHSPS Priority: Align with MAHA



DHS/HRSA Priority: Collaboration & Partnerships

State Systems & Innovations

- State Title V MCH Block Grant
- State Maternal Health Innovation (MHI) & State MHI Data Capacity Program
- Maternal Health Action and Resource Center (MHARC)

Workforce & Quality Improvement

- AIM Capacity
- AIM TA Center
- Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

Direct Support & Services

- National Maternal Mental Health Hotline
- Maternal, Infant & Early Childhood Home Visiting
- Healthy Start
- Integrated Maternal Health Services

Learn more at <https://mchb.hrsa.gov>





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Healthy Start Branch Updates

Mia Morrison
Division of Healthy Start & Perinatal Services

nicHQ
National Institute for
Children's Health Quality

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Healthy Start Branch Updates

Conversations with the Division

January 27, 2026

Mia Morrison, MPH

Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services
Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB)

Vision: Healthy Communities, Healthy People



Healthy Start Project Officers

Policy and Program Operations Team



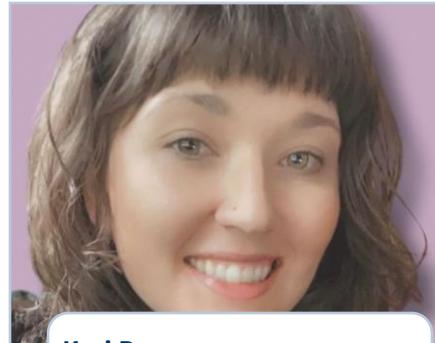
Anna Maria Padlan
Electronic Handbooks, HS Enhanced



Ardandia Campbell-Williams, MPH
Technical Writing, Infant Health



Efiok Ekorikoh, MSHCA/MBA
Rural Communities, Fatherhood



Keri Bean
Housing & Homelessness



Shontelle Dixon, MPH
Reproductive Health, Alumni Peer Navigators

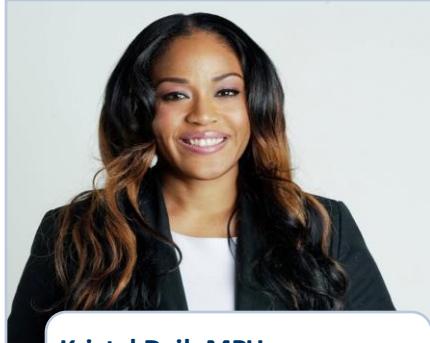


Healthy Start Project Officers

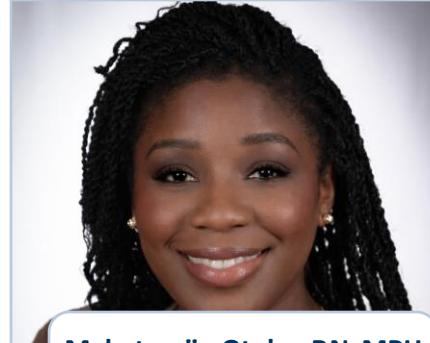
Technical Assistance (TA) and Program Operations Team



India Hunter, MPH, MSW
Community Consortia, HS Enhanced, TA



Kristal Dail, MPH
TA, Nutrition



Mabatemije Otubi, RN, MPH
Clinical Services, TA



Mary Emanuele, RN
Tribal Communities, Breastfeeding



Melodye Watson, LCSW
Behavioral Health, Catalyst



Shé-Tiel Coley-Winder
Group-Based Education, MCH Collaboration



Simone Esho, MPH
Community-Based Doulas

Healthy Start All Grantee Meeting

Grantee
Leadership &
Expertise

Healthy Babies,
Moms, Dads &
Families

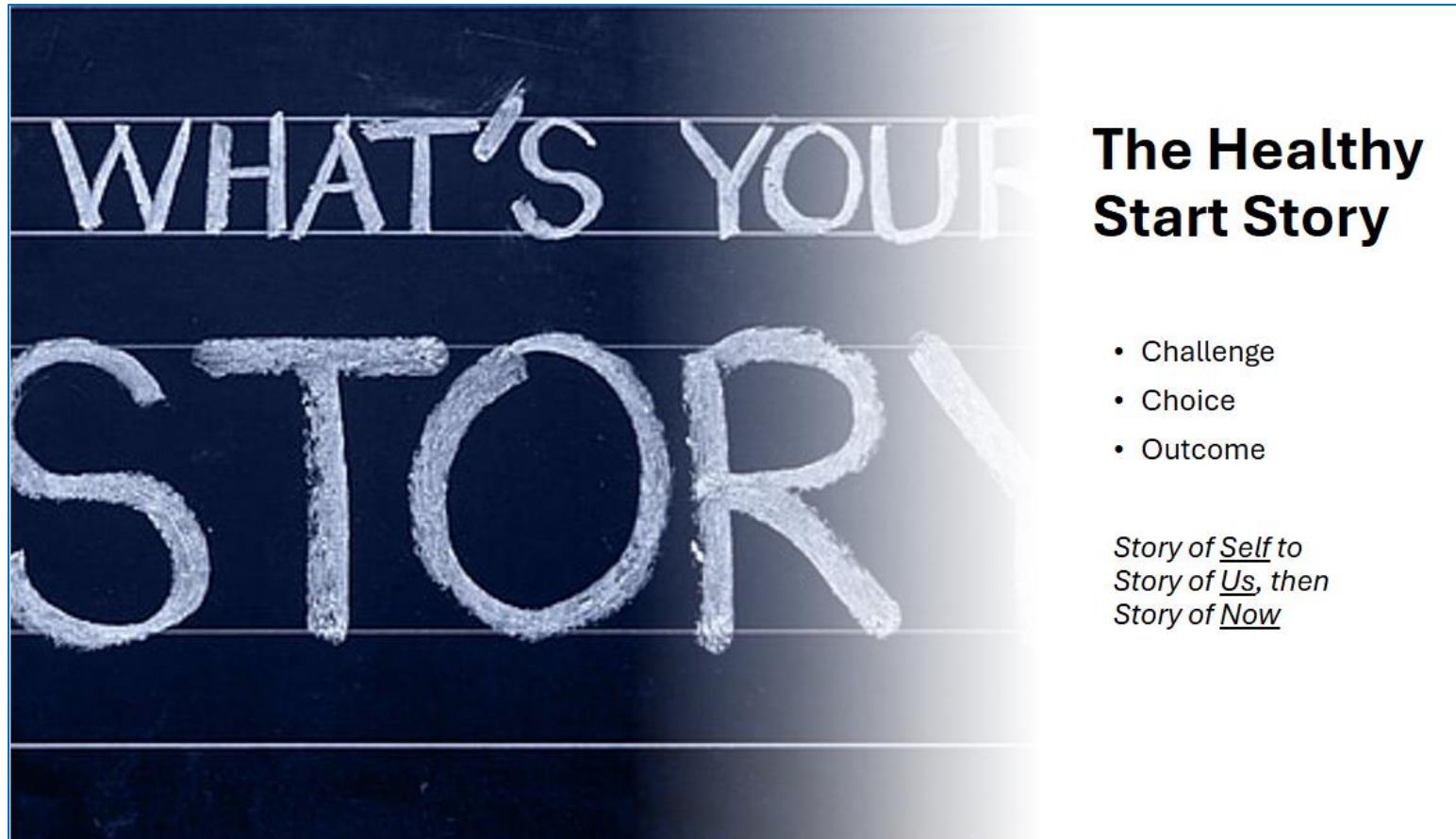
Sustainability

Resilience

Customized
Initiatives



Resiliency



The Healthy Start Story

- Challenge
- Choice
- Outcome

*Story of Self to
Story of Us, then
Story of Now*

- Plenary Session Presented by Dr. Alice Schnall
- Major Takeaways:
 - Advance organizational resilience using strategic and high-level thinking
 - Expand boundaries
 - Establish psychological safety
 - Recognize the difference between a polarity *versus* a problem



Sustainability

- Plenary Session: Panel
- Major Takeaways:
 - Blended and braided funding
 - Domains of sustainability
 - Vision setting for internal and external focus and resources
 - Storytelling as a form of awareness and relationship building



Make America Healthy Again – Healthy Start Priorities

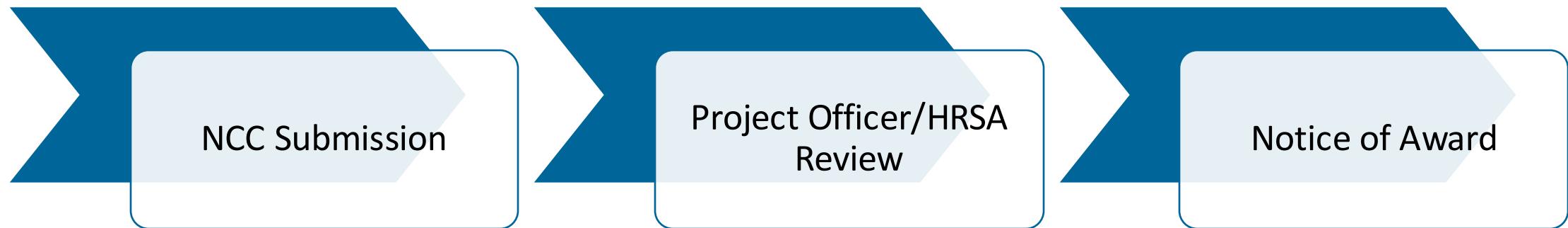
- Nutrition and Breastfeeding
 - Supporting initiation and duration of breastfeeding
 - Encouraging good nutrition before, during and after pregnancy
 - Promoting healthy nutrition for mothers and infants to support early development and long-term health
- Maternal Mental Health
 - Supporting screening and referral for perinatal and postpartum depression to promote healthy maternal and infant outcomes
- Community-Led Prevention
 - Engaging Healthy Start Community Consortiums and local partners to support community driven efforts that promote prevention and improve maternal and infant health outcomes



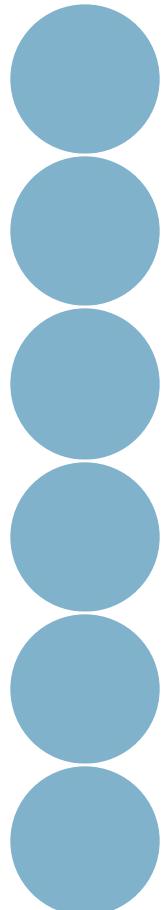
Programmatic Updates



Noncompeting Continuation (NCC) Progress Reports



Healthy Start Site Visits



DHSPS plans to resume in-person site visits this year.

Site visits are conducted to assess progress in providing direct and enabling services to Healthy Start participants and implementing Community Consortia.

All grantees should receive at least one visit within the 5-year grant period.

To prepare for your site visit, you'll meet with your Project Officer to discuss the agenda, presentations, and requested documentation.

During the site visit, your Project Officer will observe program activities, interview staff, observe home visits, provide technical assistance, and address questions.

Your site visit will conclude with an exit meeting. Your Project Officer will review high-level findings, which will be included in the final site visit report.



Healthy Start Clinician Funding: Key Reminders

- ✓ **Current snapshot:** Grantees are supporting **clinical and behavioral health providers** to deliver maternal and child health services
- ✓ Unused clinician funds **should be carried over** for clinical support
- ✓ Changes in clinician type **require** Prior Approval in EHB

Submit a “PA Other Request” in the EHB, along with:

- ✓ *A signed cover letter on organizational letterhead*
- ✓ *Justification*
- ✓ *Budget revisions (if applicable)*



Fetal & Infant Mortality Review (FIMR)

- The National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention (NCFRP) - <http://ncfrp.org>
- Systemic Solutions: Use FIMR Team data to fix **systemic barriers**
- Technical Assistance:
 - ✓ Direct **training** on processes and implementation.
 - ✓ **National Case Reporting System (NFR-CRS):** Free, web-based platform
- Translating Data to Action:
 - ✓ **NCFRP toolkits** to assist **community-level interventions and policy changes.**
- Team Resilience:
 - ✓ **Resources** to prevent burnout and **support staff wellness**
- Networking and Shared Learning:
 - ✓ **Professional** listservs and workgroups focused on sharing best practices

<https://ncfrp.org/what-we-do/fimr/>



Healthy Start Branch / Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services

Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB)

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

Email: mchbhealthystart@hrsa.gov

Web: mchb.hrsa.gov

Learn more at <https://mchb.hrsa.gov>



Connect with HRSA

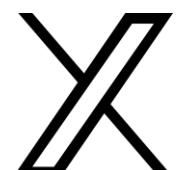
Learn more about our agency at:

www.HRSA.gov



[Sign up for the HRSA eNews](#)

FOLLOW US:

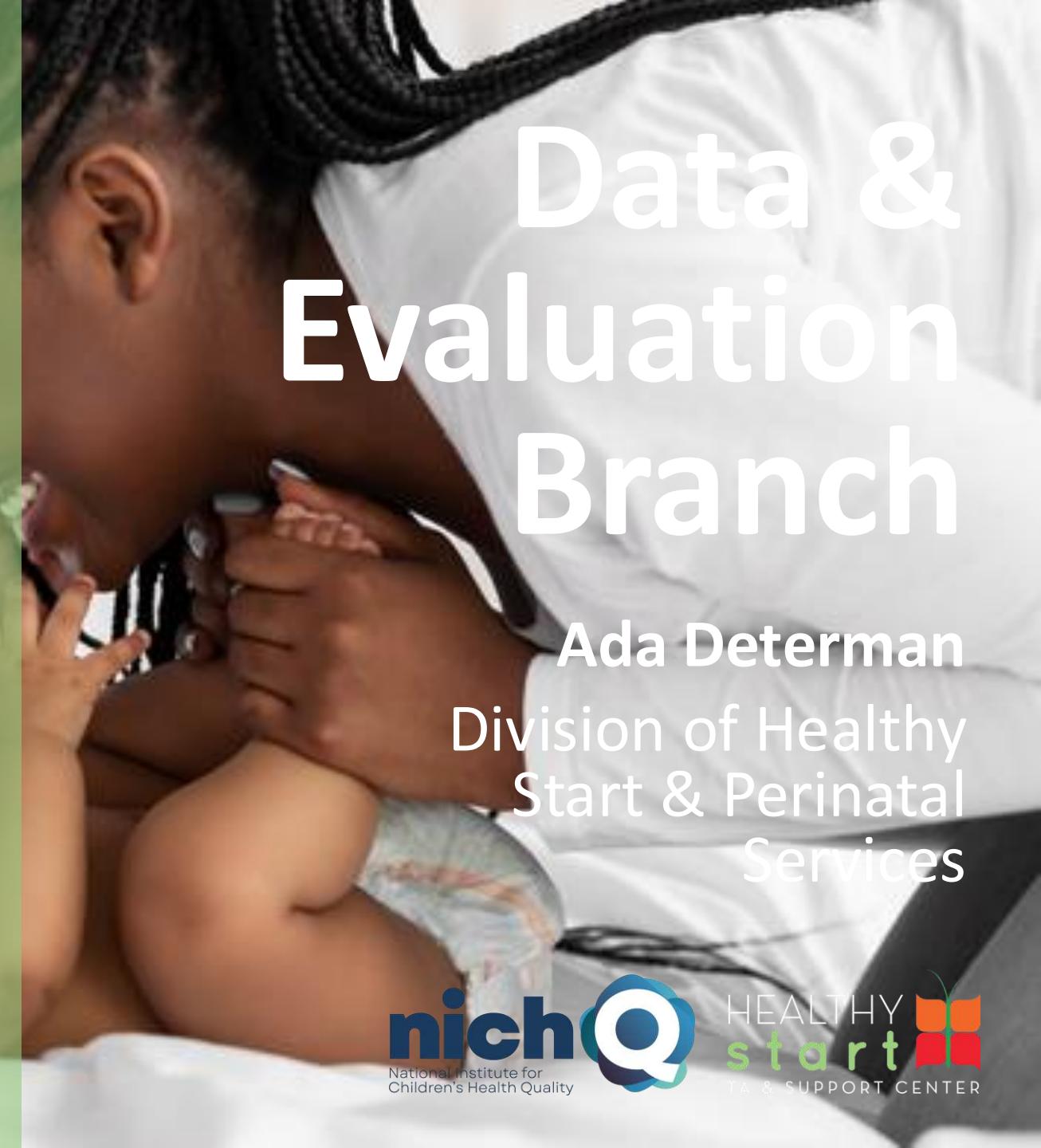


Learn more at <https://mchb.hrsa.gov>

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Data & Evaluation Branch

Ada Determan
Division of Healthy
Start & Perinatal
Services



National Institute for
Children's Health Quality



Data Analysis and Planning Branch (DAPB)

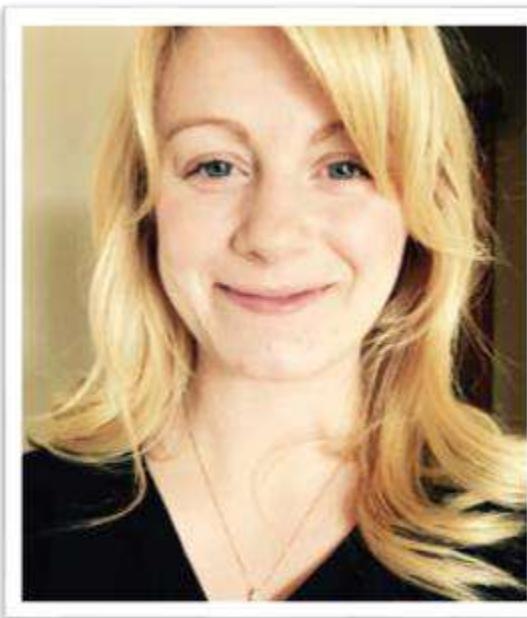


Data Analysis and Planning Branch (DAPB)

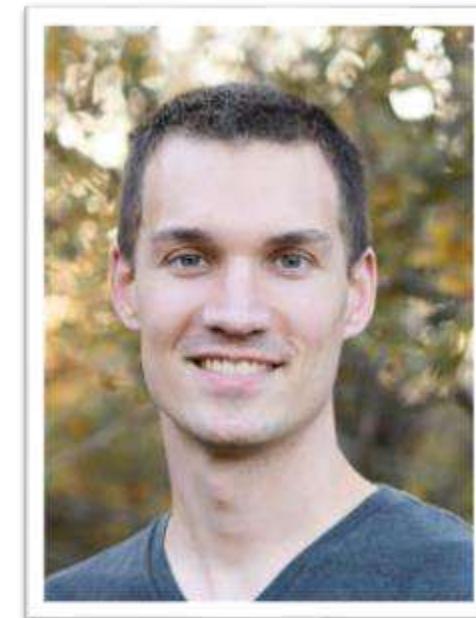
Ada Determan, PhD, MPH
Branch Chief



Julie Donney, PhD, MPH
Team Lead



Peter LaMois, MS
HS IT Project Manager



Kristin Silcox, MS
Health Scientist



DAPB: Reporting Updates

- **DGIS**
 - **Healthy Start**
 - ✓ Finalizing 2024 data from NCCPRs that were due July 30, 2025
 - ✓ Next report due June 30, 2026
 - Reporting period 4/1/2025 to 3/31/2026
 - **Healthy Start Enhanced**
 - ✓ Finalizing 2024 data from NCCPRs that were due December 29, 2025
 - ✓ Next report due December 29, 2026
 - Reporting period 9/30/2025 to 9/29/2026
- **HSMED**
 - **Next HSMED Report Deadline: April 21, 2026**
 - ✓ Include data from January 1, 2026 – March 31, 2026



DAPB: National Evaluation Updates

- **Westat completed 4-year evaluation of Healthy Start program**
 - Findings shared at the All-Grantee Meeting
 - ✓ Results show Healthy Start:
 - CANs strengthen HS services and local systems of care
 - Programs reach and serve families with elevated risk for poor birth outcomes
 - Programs deliver a wide array of in-person and virtual services tailored to families facing complex medical, social, and economic challenges
 - Is associated with reductions in preterm birth and low birthweight and improvements in key maternal and child health behaviors
 - Final report is under review



DAPB: Collaboration with NICHQ

- **Alumni Peer Navigator Pilot Evaluation**
 - NICHQ completed process and outcome evaluation activities
 - Drafting results and recommendations
- **Annual Technical Assistance Needs Assessment**
 - NICHQ will conduct online NA survey in February
 - ✓ Review survey questions with your team prior to completing survey



DAPB: CAREWare Updates

Recent System Upgrades

- **Implemented required updates** aligned with Executive Orders
- **Added system enhancements** to improve data quality and reduce validation errors
- NICHQ is finalizing release of an **updated Performance Measure Tool** that calculates annual performance measures directly from CAREWare data

Planned Improvements for CAREWare Support

- On-demand trainings based on common TA requests
- CAREWare office hours
- New and/or improved resources for users
- Increased communications with grantees



DAPB: Data-Related Points of Contact

HealthyStartData@hrsa.gov (Healthy Start Data Team)

- HSMED due date extensions, questions on administering screening forms, annual performance measure definitions, general data policy questions

careware@nichq.org

- For CAREWare Users: CAREWare technical assistance, HSMED validation errors, performance measure calculations

Project Officer

- EHB submission issues and due date extensions for EHB deliverables (e.g., DGIS Performance Report). Project Officers will assist the grantee with next steps.
- For a technical issue, contact the EHB Help Center at <https://community.hrsa.gov/EHBsCommunity/s/create-case>

NOTE: CC Project Officers on all emails



DAPB: Next steps

DAPB aims to engage in more frequent communications with grantees:

- **Spring 2026** – Share updates on 2024 performance report data & HSMED findings
- **Fall 2026** – Renew OMB approval of data collection forms (expire 9/2026)
 - May involve grantee input on some items
- **Late 2026/Early 2027** – Share updates on 2025 performance report data & HSMED findings





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Q&A Segment DHSPS

Partnership Highlight: NHSA



Deborah Frazier
National Healthy
Start Association



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Partnership Highlight: Partnership for National MCH Leadership

Kenn Harris & Susanna Joy

The League of Voices &
Michigan Public Health
Institute

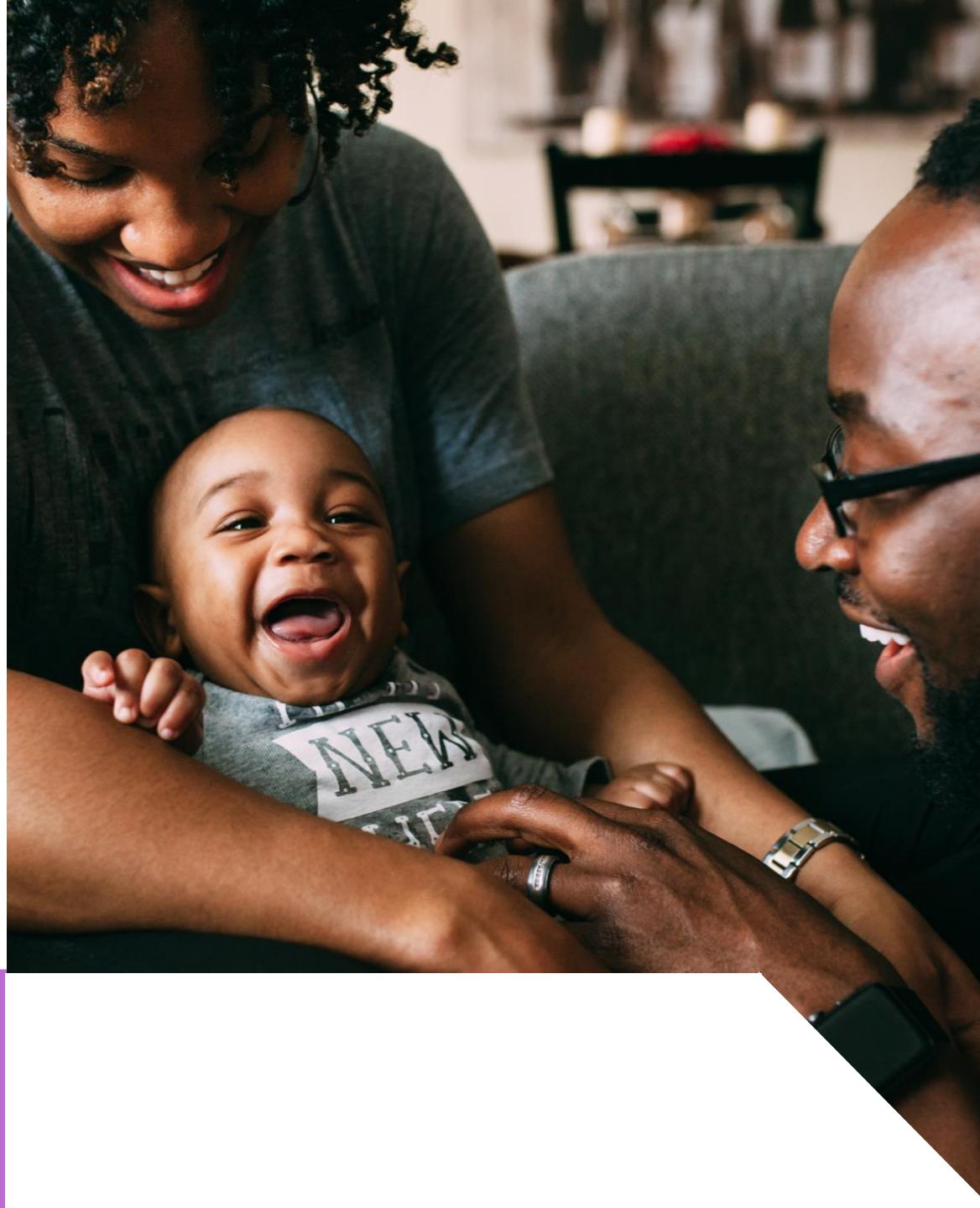


Conversations with the Division

January 27, 2026



For Mothers, Babies, Fathers, and Families



WE ARE ONE OF FOUR PNML GRANTEES- ALONGSIDE AMCHP, CityMatCH, AND EDC

Focus Area 1 recipient will support State Title V Directors and programs



Focus Area 2 recipient will support Urban MCH Leaders



Focus Area 3 recipient will support Healthy Start Project Directors and other staff to increase the effectiveness and impact of HS services.



Focus Area 4 recipient will support MIECHV Project Directors and other staff in home visiting services



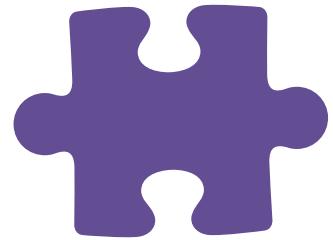
Building the future of maternal and child health (MCH) through strengthened partnerships

The overall purpose of the PNML is to build the capacity of our respective communities.

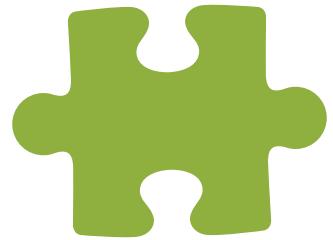


OUR U01 APPROACH

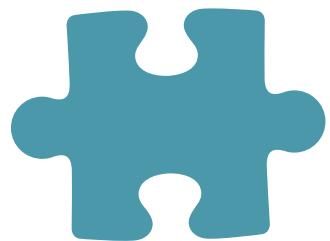
Our approach is designed to address gaps and barriers to accelerate the transformation of the MCH ecosystem – and consequently MCH outcomes – through coordinated, community-driven action.



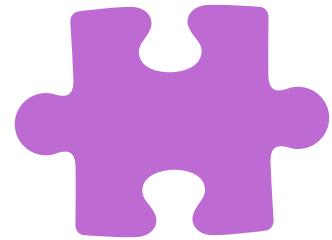
Collaboration and
Coordination



Current and Emerging
Public Health Issues



Peer Learning and
Support



Leadership and
Workforce

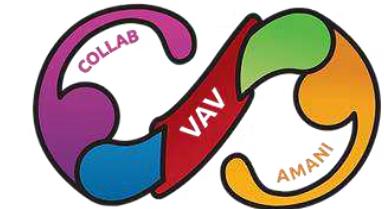
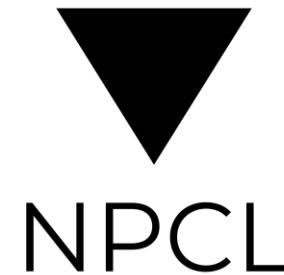
These four distinct components are aligned with the four core functions of the PNML grant.

Maternal Child Health Community Consortium (MCC)

Data Gathering

THE MCH COMMUNITY CONSORTIUM (MCC)

The League has established a *high-functioning, high-engagement, and high-impact* consortium, which serves as the vehicle through which we will foster collaboration across and amplify federal priorities among national, state, and urban/local MCH leaders.



JOIN US AT THE NEXT MEETING

The Next MCC Meeting will be held
in March 2026!

Data Gathered at the Annual Grantee Meeting

36.6% of programs have existed for 20+ years, while **31.1% are under five years old**.

Nearly half of current leaders (48%) have been in their role for two years or less.

Local partnerships are strong (with hospitals, doulas, and mental health providers), but **state and national connections are thinner**.

Leaders express moderate confidence in addressing new challenges, but **only 55% feel ready to lead systems change**.

Across all roles, leaders are eager for **resource sharing, collaborative problem-solving, and practical tools** to strengthen their programs and partnerships.

Leading Through Change: Design Circles

Communication &
Collaboration

Leading Through Change Design Circles: *Overview*

The *Leading Through Change Design Circles* provided a bi-weekly virtual space for **reflection, connection, and co-creation** among Healthy Start champions.

These 90-minute sessions blended elements of **design thinking, leadership development, and community building**.

Topics included: grounding and reframing challenges, mapping challenges and prioritizing strategies, leadership navigation, taking care of yourself and your team, and closing the circle and fortifying for the future

Leading Through Change Design Circles:

Next Steps

Next Steps:

- Assessment of first Leading Through Change Design Circle Pilot Program
- Creation and distribution of complete guide and resources

Stay Tuned for More Updates Soon!

Stay in the Loop!

To stay up to date on The League's upcoming activities and offerings, sign up for our listserv!



https://form.jotform.com/League_Voices/listserv



For Mothers, Babies, Fathers, and Families

Thank You!



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TASC Updates

Karen Chustz & Tess Pierson
Healthy Start TA &
Support Center



2025 Annual Healthy Start All-Grantee Meeting Materials

- Within the *Documents* tab of this group on the Hub, you will find slide decks from the keynote address, plenaries, breakout sessions, and graphics visually depicting takeaways from the meeting.



Love4Dads Summit in Atlanta, Georgia

- **Host:** 4Kira4Moms and 4Kira4Dads
- **Purpose:** Share strategies, best practices, advance fatherhood engagement in maternal health
- **Content:** Plenaries, keynotes, and networking
 - Training Camp for Coaches
 - (Fatherhood Practitioners and Champions)
 - Training Camp for Dads
 - (*Healthy Start Community Dads and Community Participants*)



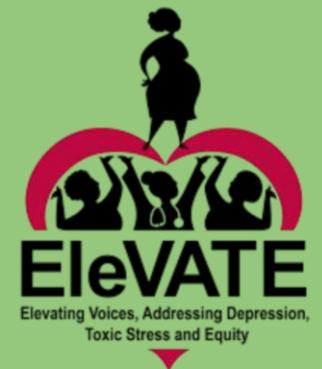
Strengthening Participation & Retention in Group-Based Education (GBE): GBE Training Series

In collaboration with the St. Louis Integrated Health Network (IHN) and the EleVATE Collaborative, TASC will host a training series for Healthy Start grantees to strengthen group-based education programs, from planning and recruitment to facilitation, engagement, retention, and sustainability.

There will be three 1.5-day, in-person bootcamps will be held in Missouri, North Carolina, and Texas in February, March, and April 2026.

Day 1: Group-based education foundations + recruitment and engagement strategies.

Day 2: EleVATE findings + retention/sustainability planning and action steps.



MATCHS Mentoring Program

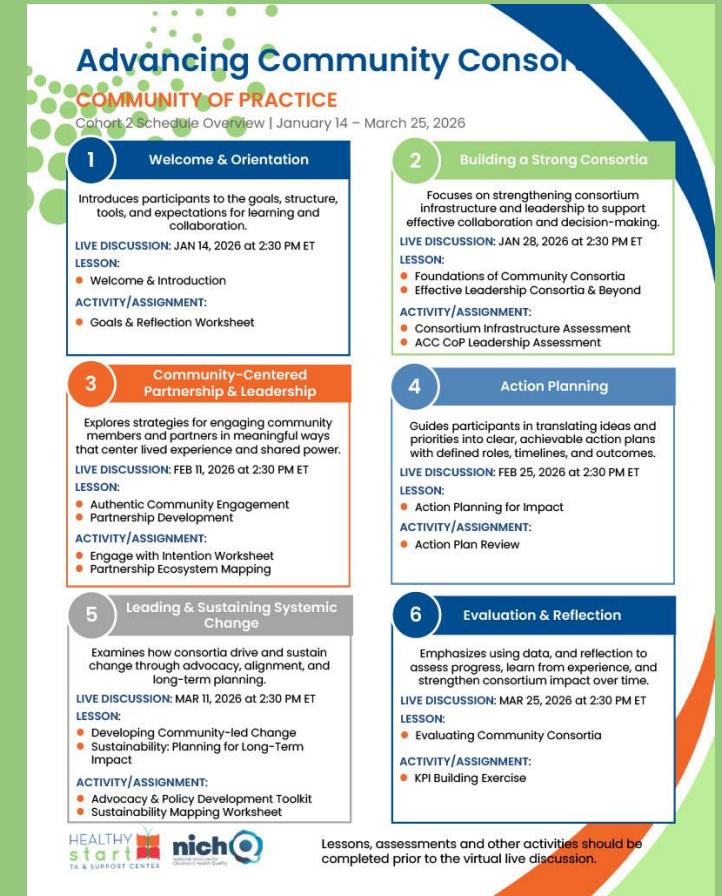
- Provides **peer-to-peer learning** and mentoring support to HS and HSE Project Directors
- Aims to strengthen **organizational leadership and program performance**

To learn more, join our **Information Webinar** on **Thursday, January 29 from 2:30-3:30 pm ET**

Application will be open January 29 through February 20

Advancing Community Consortia Community of Practice (CoP)

- **Cohort 1 Completed:** 23 participants from October to December 2025 from HS & HSE sites
- **Cohort 2 In-Progress:** 25 participants from January to March 2026 from HS & HSE sites
- Upcoming cohorts throughout the year to ensure all grantees can participate





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Closing

Mia Morrison

Satisfaction Survey

Your feedback is extremely valuable and will help ensure our offerings meet your support needs!





Thank You for Joining Us Today!

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