

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



Stretch



Close the door



Take a few deep
breaths



Close browser
windows



Emotionally release
your to-do list



Check your audio
and video



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



National Institute for
Children's Health Quality



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 UF5MC327500-100 titled Supporting Healthy Start Performance Project.



Welcome & Introductions

Karen Chustz

**Healthy Start TA &
Support Center**

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



Agenda

Welcome

Karen Chustz
Healthy Start TA & Support
Center (TASC)

Partnership Highlight: NHSA

Deborah Frazier
National Healthy Start
Association (NHSA)

Message from the Director

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

Partnership Highlight: Partnership for National MCH Leadership

Kenn Harris
League of Voices
Susanna Joy
Michigan Public Health
Institute

Healthy Start 2026 Priorities

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

TASC Updates & Priorities

Karen Chustz, Tess Pierson
TASC

Data & Evaluation Branch

Ada Determan

Closing & Adjournment

Mia Morrison
DHSPS

Q&A

DHSPS



Message from the Director

Johannie Escarne
Division of Healthy
Start & Perinatal
Services

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





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

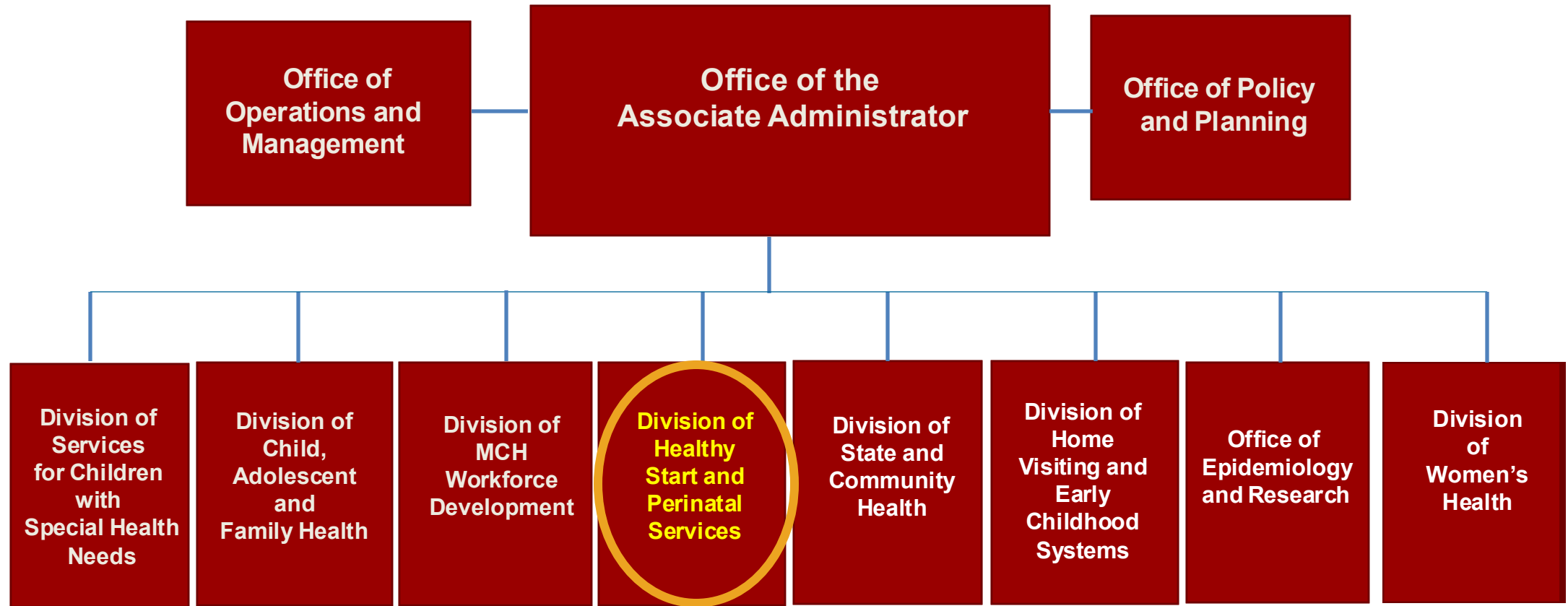


Vanessa Lee, MPH
Acting Deputy Division Director



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



DHSPS Priority: Communication



DHSPS Priority: Align with MAHA



Cutting
Bureaucratic
Sprawl



Streamlining
Services



Scientific
Integrity



Disease
Prevention



Fighting the
Chronic Disease
Epidemic



Gold Standard
Science



Food Safety



Autism Initiative



Informed
Consent



Nutrition



PRIORITIES FOR MAKING
AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN



Mental
Health



Removing
Ultra-processed
Food Additives



Eliminating
Petroleum-based
Food Dyes



Radical
Transparency



Eradicating
Environmental
Toxins



Restoring Value-
based Care



Stewardship



Expanding
Access to
Primary Care



Ending the
Regulatory
Capture Loop



Strengthening
Services to Tribes

DHSPS 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





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



Healthy Start Branch Updates

Mia Morrison
Division of Healthy
Start & Perinatal
Services



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



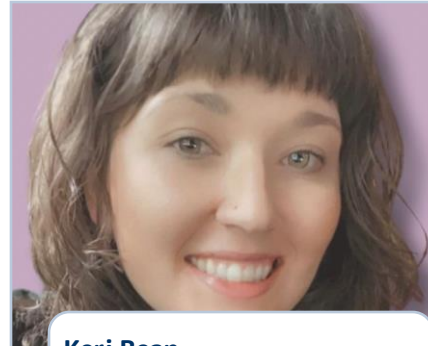
Anna Maria Padlan
*Electronic Handbooks, HS
Enhanced*



Ardandia Campbell-Williams, MPH
Technical Writing, Infant Health



Efiok Ekorikoh, MSHCA/MBA
*Rural Communities,
Fatherhood*



Keri Bean
Housing & Homelessness



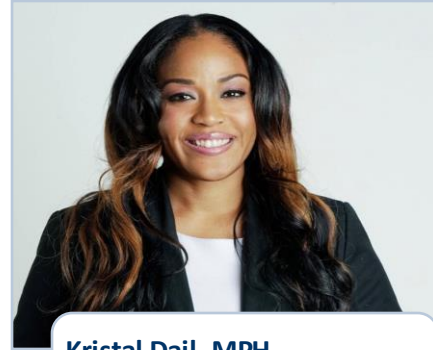
Shontelle Dixon, MPH
*Reproductive Health, Alumni
Peer Navigators*

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 Otubu, RN, MPH
Clinical Services, TA



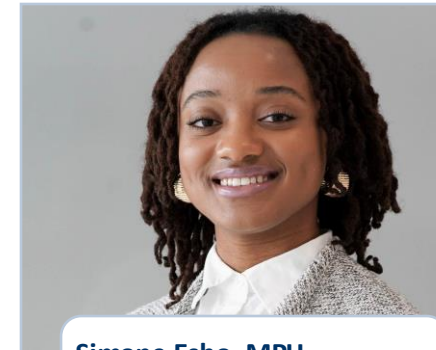
Mary Emanuele, RN
*Tribal Communities,
Breastfeeding*



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

Resilience


Healthy Babies,
Moms, Dads &
Families

Sustainability

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

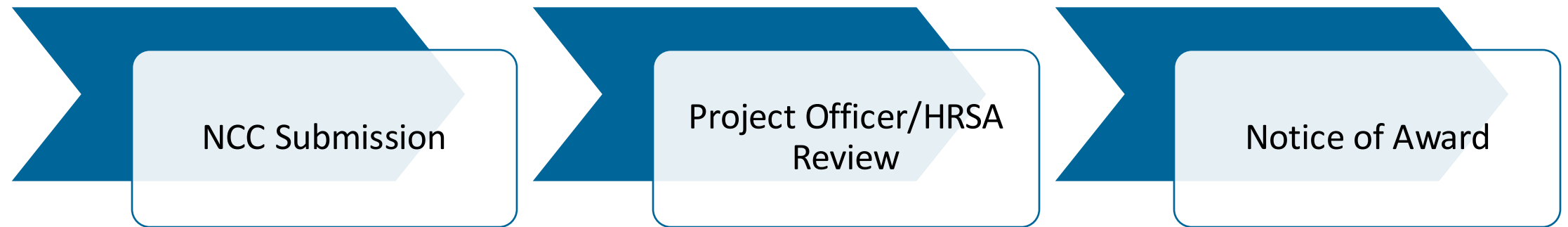
- Engaging Healthy Start Community Consortia and local partners to support community driven efforts that promote prevention and improve maternal and infant health outcomes



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 (NCR-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

Connect with HRSA

Learn more about our agency at:


www.HRSA.gov



[Sign up for the HRSA eNews](#)

FOLLOW US:





Data & Evaluation Branch

Ada Determan
Division of Healthy
Start & Perinatal
Services

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



Data Analysis and Planning Branch (DAPB)

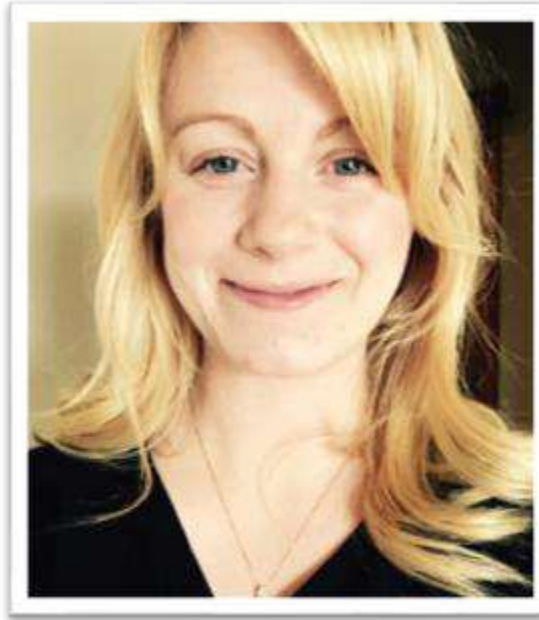


Data Analysis and Planning Branch (DAPB)

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

The background of the slide is a photograph of a woman with long blonde hair holding a baby on a beach. The woman is wearing a yellow top and a striped skirt. The baby is wearing a light blue dress. The background shows the ocean waves and a sandy beach. The image is split vertically: the left side is overlaid with a green tint, and the right side shows the original colors.

Q&A Segment

DHSPS

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

Partnership Highlight: NHSA

Deborah Frazier
National Healthy
Start Association

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





Partnership Highlight: Partnership for National MCH Leadership

Kenn Harris & Susanna Joy

The League of Voices &
Michigan Public Health
Institute

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

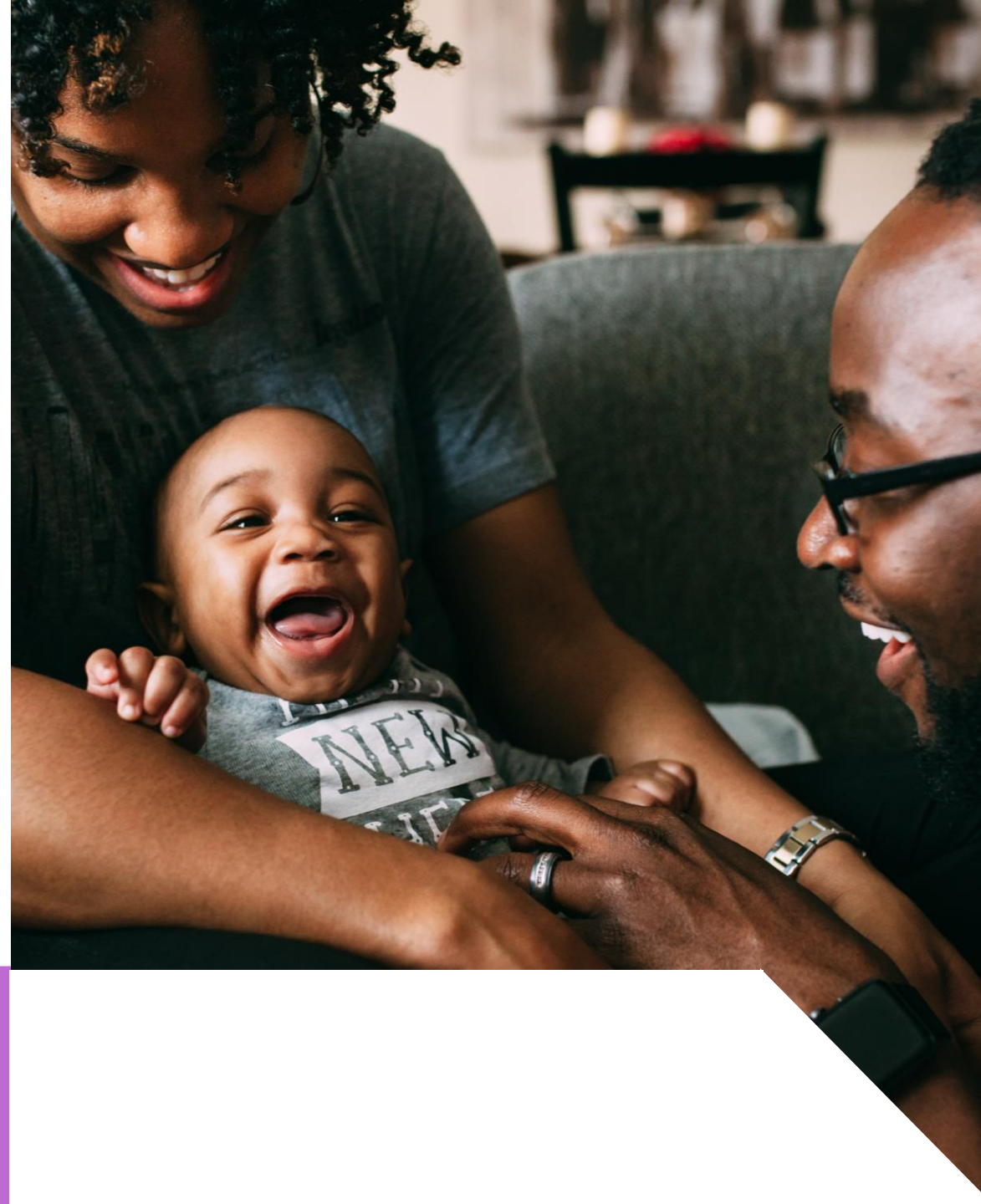


Conversations with the Division

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



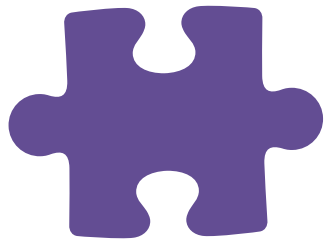
Building the future of maternal and child health (MCH) through strengthened partnerships

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



OUR U01 APPROACH

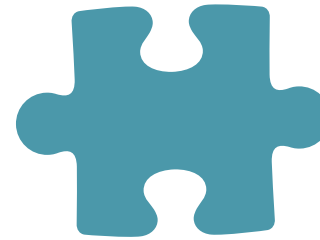
Our approach is designed to address gaps and barriers to accelerate the transformation of the MCH ecosystem – and consequently MCH outcomes – through coordinated, community-driven action.



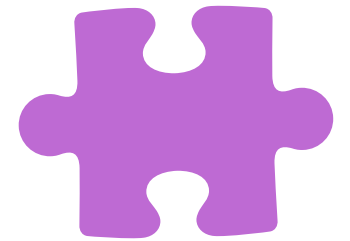
**Collaboration and
Coordination**



**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.



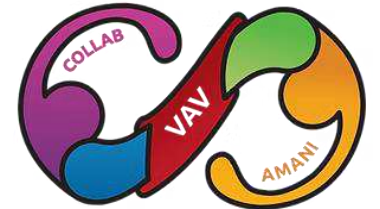
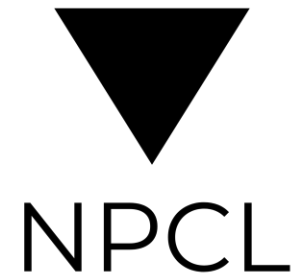
Maternal Child Health Community Consortium (MCC)

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



LEAGUE OF VOICES

For Mothers, Babies, Fathers, and Families

Thank You!



TASC Updates

Karen Chustz & Tess Pierson
Healthy Start TA &
Support Center

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

NICHQ
National Institute for
Children's Health Quality

**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)

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



The poster for the Love4Dads Summit features a blue background with a photo of a smiling man and woman. At the top, the 'love 4 dads' logo is displayed with wings. Below it, the text 'BRING A DAD!' is written in large, bold, white and yellow letters. Underneath, a yellow banner reads 'DADS, WE HAVE A TRACK FOR YOU TOO!'. A photo of a group of men sitting in a room is shown. The text 'JOIN US! FEBRUARY 2-4, 2026' is followed by the address 'HOTEL COLEE, 3377 PEACHTREE RD NE, ATLANTA, GA 30326'. A blue and yellow arrow points to a QR code with the text 'SECURE YOUR SPOT SCAN TO REGISTER'. Logos for 'PRESENTED BY' (4KIRA4DADS PATERNAL CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE) and 'SPONSORED BY' (HEALTHY start TA & SUPPORT CENTER and nichQ) are shown. A disclaimer at the bottom states: 'The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provided financial support for this event. The award provided 67% of total costs and totaled \$85,000. The contents are those of the author / event organizer. They may not reflect the policies of HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.' The website 'WWW.4KIRA4MOMS.COM | WWW.4KIRA4DADS.COM' and social media handles '@4KIRA4MOMS' are listed at the bottom.

love 4 dads
BRING A DAD!
DADS, WE HAVE A TRACK FOR YOU TOO!
JOIN US! **FEBRUARY 2-4, 2026**
HOTEL COLEE, 3377 PEACHTREE RD NE, ATLANTA, GA 30326
**SECURE YOUR SPOT
SCAN TO REGISTER**
PRESENTED BY **4KIRA4DADS** PATERNAL CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
SPONSORED BY **HEALTHY start** TA & SUPPORT CENTER **nichQ**
The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provided financial support for this event. The award provided 67% of total costs and totaled \$85,000. The contents are those of the author / event organizer. They may not reflect the policies of HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.
WWW.4KIRA4MOMS.COM | WWW.4KIRA4DADS.COM @4KIRA4MOMS

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



A composite image featuring a woman with curly hair holding a baby. The left side of the image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The right side shows the woman's hand gently cradling the baby's head.

Closing

Mia Morrison

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



Satisfaction Survey

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



Thank You for Joining Us Today!

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

NICHQ **HEALTHY**
National Institute for **start**
Children's Health Quality TA & SUPPORT CENTER

