

Investing in a Healthy Start for Florida's Children

In a tight budget year, it is vital to remember that the highest rate of return on investment is during the earliest years (ages 0-3)¹. This is why it is critical to ensure that every baby has a chance at a Healthy Start.

According to the March of Dimes, one pre-term baby averages \$15,000 in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit costs. This does not include the additional potential costs of developmental services throughout childhood. The return on investment is **\$10.00 saved per \$1.00 expended**.²

According to the Casey Family Foundation, home visiting has strong evidence for promoting positive outcomes for mothers and young children. Improved cognitive development, high school graduation rates, family economic self-sufficiency, and maternal and child health outcomes all show the value of home visiting services.³

Florida's Healthy Start Coalitions leveraged \$22.4 million in additional funds for their local communities. Also, the Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions administers a **\$9.2 million** Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting federal program providing support for Nurse Family Partnership, Healthy Families, and Parents as Teachers programs in Florida.

The ultimate ROI values are the positive outcomes and successes achieved through our quality program services. In 2019, Healthy Start launched a completely redesigned program. An early report on the outcomes for Medicaid-supported clients who received services as the model is designed shows **90% of mothers delivered a normal birthweight baby**.



Healthy Start is an essential public health service.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been providing services virtually, or outside of homes to help families in need by providing diapers, referrals to food pantries, education on safety during pregnancy, accessing medical care and community services and more.

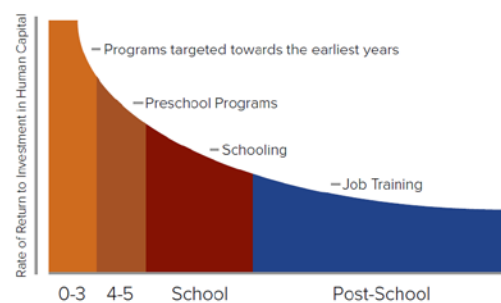
The CDC has stated that pregnant women are at higher risk of being hospitalized if they contract COVID-19 making education and support all the more important. Family members who have lost their jobs are in need of help accessing local services and support. Much of our time has been spent on addressing the social determinants of health during this crisis.

Florida's Healthy Start will celebrate our 30th birthday in 2021!

Healthy Start is the umbrella and safety net for the maternal and child health system of care in every community. Healthy Start was created by the Florida Legislature in 1991 to address infant mortality, low birth weight, and access to care. Florida's 32 Healthy Start



Figure 2: Returns to a Unit Dollar Invested are Highest in Earliest Years



Source: Heckman and LaFontaine (2007)

¹ The Heckman Curve, <https://heckmanequation.org/resource/the-heckman-curve/>

² <https://www.marchofdimes.org/news/premature-babies-cost-employers-127-billion-annually.aspx>

³ <https://www.casey.org/home-visiting-programs/>

Coalitions are responsible for implementing systems of care in every community as well as providing services for pregnant women and young children up to the age of three.

Florida’s universal risk screening remains the crucial infrastructure in place since 1991 to identify families in need at the earliest point possible – from the first prenatal appointment through the delivery of the baby.

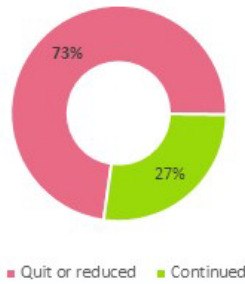
Since Healthy Start was created, more than 6.6-million babies have been born in Florida. One measure of our success has been a 32-percent reduction of infant mortality over our three decades of service.

Last year, Healthy Start screened 72% of all pregnant women and 96% of newborns. Healthy Start provided services for more than 200,000 pregnant women, babies, and their families.

Outcomes for Healthy Start Moms and Babies Receiving Medicaid

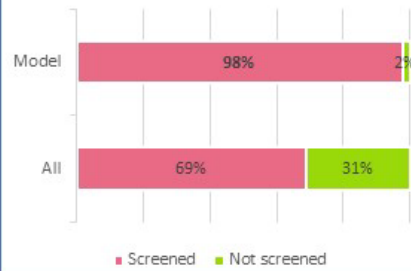
Having a Healthy Pregnancy

Moms quit or reduced tobacco use



131 of all clients were at risk of substance abuse. Of those, **95%** discontinued or reduced use.

Women were screened for depression

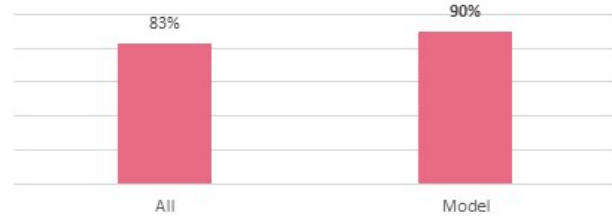


Delivering A Healthy Baby

Women delivered full term babies



Babies were a normal birthweight



Continuing Healthy Behaviors

81% of all moms initiated breastfeeding



81% of all moms went to their post partum appointment

Model refers to mothers who received at least six home visits or face to face services.

All refers to all mothers who received any services.

**Source: Well Family System*