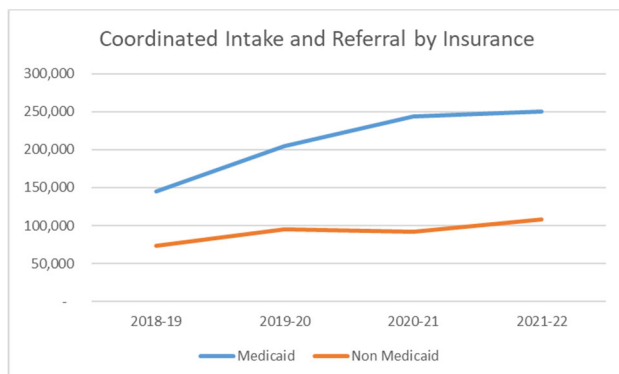
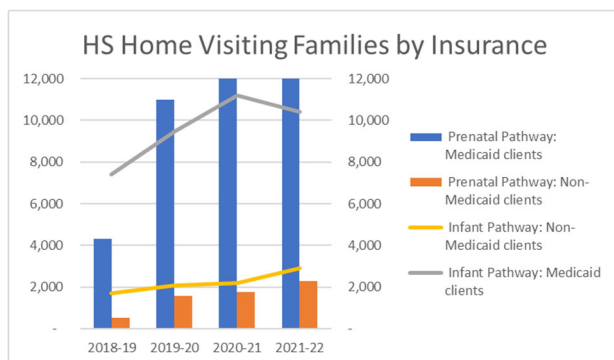


Healthy Start Services for Families Not Eligible for Medicaid

Below is the funding request submitted for the 2023 session. We thank the Legislature for approving \$9.5 million of the \$19.2 million requested. For the 2024 session, we are requesting the remaining \$9.7 million. Edits to the original funding request are highlighted in blue.

Healthy Start services for families not eligible for Medicaid are funded by the Florida Department of Health. This **funding has not been increased for more than 17 yearsⁱ**. Since then, the cost of providing services has increased 51%ⁱⁱ. Healthy Start Coalitions are struggling to meet the needs of these families and adequately pay for the workforce needed to support these services. **In the last four years, we have seen a significant increase in the number families being served who are not eligible for Medicaid (132% increase in home visitingⁱⁱⁱ and 47% Coordinated Intake and Referral)**. With the end of the Public Health Emergency, we also anticipate 7%^{iv} more families will shift from Medicaid to non-Medicaid.

Additional funding is needed because Healthy Start Coalitions are understaffed for service delivery where caseloads are too high and vacant positions cannot be filled at current wage rates. Additional community health workers are needed to address socioeconomic barriers impacting birth outcomes. They conduct outreach in neighborhoods experiencing higher rates of poor maternal and birth outcomes. A new electronic prenatal risk screen will be launched by DOH, and Healthy Start provider liaisons will need to work with every prenatal clinic on the implementation and promote the voluntary risk screen with families. We want to pay our workforce well enough to have a living wage and be competitive in the marketplace to fill vacant positions. Healthy Start is also launching a doula program through contracts with some of the health plans for the Medicaid population; however, we are in need of funding for the pregnant mothers who are not eligible for Medicaid which represent approximately 50% of the births in Florida.



Also, Healthy Start's data system needs significant updates to meet the needs of the users which include Healthy Start workers, health plans, other home visiting programs. We may use a procurement process to obtain bids.

HEALTHY START SERVICES are a good investment in preventing infant mortality and other poor birth outcomes. The Florida infant mortality rate in 2021 was 5.9 per 1,000 live births as compared to 3.58 for those in the Healthy Start home visiting program who received the full intervention (defined as entering the program before 28 weeks gestation and receiving at least six home visits). Families who did not receive the full intervention also had an infant mortality rate lower than the state average.

DOULAS are an exciting enhancement to the services offered by Healthy Start. We will be using the G.R.O.W. Doula™ model that has achieved the following outcomes^v:

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- Reduction in preterm birth--4.2% within program participants compared to 10.75% for the county and 10.4% for the state.
- Decrease in C-Sections—25% within program participants compared to 33.4% for the county and 36.4% for the state. Also, the c-section rate was 13% within program participants who were given a trial of labor.
- Fewer babies born low birth weight—6.3% within program participants compared to 8.2% for the county and 8.7% for the state.
- Improved disparities in birth outcomes for women of color including a reduction in preterm birth of black women—7.9% for black participants compared to 16.7% for the county and 14.4% for the state.

Doula services and other childbirth education services are offered by Healthy Start Coalitions with sufficient infrastructure and community resources. In the first year, 16 of the 32 Coalitions plan to train 240 new doulas. We project 112 will be active doulas and will deliver an average of 12 babies each per year for a total of 1,344 births in the first year.

REQUEST

After more than 17 years, Healthy Start needs an additional \$19,200,000 to meet the needs for families who are not eligible for Medicaid. Our current appropriation is \$24,460,607.

ⁱ The increase in 2012-13 was a partial restoration of cuts incurred several years in a row. Increases in 2022-23 are for FIMR and Fatherhood programs, not core Healthy Start services.

ⁱⁱ US Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI Inflation Calculator, January 2006 to January 2023.

https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm accessed 2-16-23.

ⁱⁱⁱ Well Family System prenatal and infant initial assessments: 2018-19 compared to 2021-22.

^{iv} Well Family System successful intakes, non-Medicaid, 2018-19 (37%) compared to 2021-22 (30%)

^v G.R.O.W. Doula Program data based on 190 births from July 2018-June 30 2021 (33% black, 38% white (non-Hispanic), 22% Hispanic (white), 7% other or unknown)

Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics County and state 3 year rolling rates from 2018-2020