Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions

2023-2024 Annual Report

Table of Contents

Welcome Letter 1

Mission Statement 2

Structure 3

Healthy Start Timeline 4

Partnerships 6

Programs & Services 8

Accomplishments 14

Advocacy & Finances 20

Looking Ahead 21

Hello!

With another successful year behind us, we reflect on our accomplishments and look forward to what lies ahead. First and foremost, and on behalf of the Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions (FAHSC), I extend our gratitude and appreciation for our wonderful partners, funders, and health care providers who are featured on page six of this report. Without their generous support and enduring collaborations, Florida Healthy Start would not be able to deliver our range of services and programs to families throughout our beautiful state.

This year, we continued to grow our two newest additions: TEAM Dad and the Healthy Start Doula program. You can learn about both programs and what they have accomplished this year in the Programs & Services and Accomplishments sections of this report.

Our new programs are exciting and have certainly been keeping us busy as we work toward improving maternal and child health and in responding to more than 295,000 referrals from the Florida Prenatal and Infant Screens and other community referrals. Learn more about our screening data on page 14.

Additionally, we're proud to continue to administer the federal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems: Health Integration Prenatal to Three Program (ECCS P-3 Program), the National Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (FIMR), the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) child abuse preventions program, and the Florida Department of Health (DOH) Nurse-family Partnership. More about these programs and our success with them are found throughout this report.

Finally, not only are we proud of the progress we've made this year with our programs and services but also in our advocacy, which is detailed on page 20 and a key part of what we do to help Florida families and give every baby a healthy start in life.

Sincerely,

Cathy Timuta

Cathy Timuta, CEO

Mission Statement

Vision, Mission, Purpose

Vision: Every baby will have a healthy start in life.

Mission: To improve the health of pregnant women, mothers, babies, and families through statewide advocacy and initiatives that support local communities and Healthy Start Coalitions.

Purpose: To develop and support local systems of care to optimize the health of Florida mothers, pregnant women, babies, and families.

Structure

Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions

FAHSC

As the parent company to Healthy Start MomCare Network (HSMN) and using a community-focused model, FAHSC supports 32 Healthy Start Coalitions throughout the state with program supports, best practices, and advocacy.

Healthy Start MomCare Network

HSMN

The Healthy Start MomCare Network, Inc. (HSMN) is an administrative service organization representing all Healthy Start Coalitions. HSMN is tasked with implementing Healthy Start services provided to Medicaid participants and coordinating with health plans.

32 Coalitions Statewide

Coalitions

Each coalition leverages funds in their local communities and administers services tailored to the unique needs of their communities.

Families

"When I began the Healthy Start program, I had a lot of questions and concerns as a mom of premature twins. I was able to attend Healthy Start classes and baby shower events, and I moved mountains so my babies could receive therapies for their conditions. The program has impacted mine and my babies' lives and been a support system throughout the process of the babies being in and out of the hospital."

Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County client Kamelysh Otero and her twins.

Healthy Start Th

1991 — The Beginning

Healthy Start is established by Florida statute.

1996 — Expanded Services

Expanded services for children up to 3 years of age.

2001 — Medicaid Waiver

Approved for the first time to cover Healthy Start services.

2011 — MomCare Network

The MomCare Network is established by Florida statute.

rough the Years

2014

Managed Care
Coordination of services with health plans.

2019

New Programming
Established to follow a new and improved service delivery model.

2022

New Programming
Expanded FIMR statewide and added TEAM Dad.

2024

Doula Program
Launched statewide, providing doulas to birthing mothers at no cost .

Thank you!

Funders and Partners

- AETNA/CVS
- Florida Agency for Health Care Administration
- Florida Department of Children and Families
- Florida Department of Health
- Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Sunshine Health Plan

Partners

Home Visiting Programs

- Early Head Start
- Federal Healthy Start
- Healthy Families Florida
- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters
- Nurse Family Partnership
- Parents as Teachers

Health Plans

- AETNA Better Health of Florida
- Amerihealth Caritas Florida
- Community Care Plan
- Florida Community Care
- Humana Medical Plan, Inc.
- Molina Healthcare of Florida, Inc.
- Simply Healthcare Plans, Inc.
- Sunshine Health Plan
- United Healthcare Services, Inc

Maternal Child Health Partners

- Children's Forum
- Florida Association of Managing Entities
- Florida Home Visiting Alliance
- Florida Maternal Mental Health Collaborative Policy Committee (FLMMC)
- Team Future/American Children's Campaign

Early Childhood Comprehensive System Steering Committee

- Association of Early Learning Coalitions
- Champions for Children, Inc.
- Community Care Plan
- Devin Coleman, Parent Leader
- Family Network on Disabilities
- Florida Alliance of Children's Councils & Trusts
- Florida Association for Infant Mental Health (FAIMH)
- Florida BH IMPACT
- Florida Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics
- Florida Department of Children and Families
- Florida Department of Education, Division of Early Learning
- Florida Department of Health
- Florida HIPPY Training & TA Center
- Florida International University
- Florida State University Center for Prevention and Early Intervention Policy
- Head Start
- Healthy Families Florida
- Help Me Grow Florida
- Nemours Children's Health System
- Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida
- Talethia Edwards, Parent Advocate
- The Children's Movement
- University of South Florida

Health Plan State Level Partnerships

Healthy Start's partnership with each of the Medicaid Managed Assistance health plans is invaluable in ensuring the well-being of pregnant mothers and families with newborn babies. These collaborations provide comprehensive support, combining medical care with access to essential community resources, parenting and health education, and emotional support. Together, we create a holistic approach that not only improves maternal and infant health outcomes but also fosters a supportive environment for families during a critical period in their lives. This synergy ensures that mothers and fathers can provide their newborns with the best possible start, promoting long-term health and well-being for the family.

Health plans partner with Healthy Start Coalitions on a variety of initiatives at the local level. At the state level, partnerships included:

Data Sharing

- Exchanged weekly data sharing files for 46,352 Medicaid clients (a decrease from 50,462 the previous fiscal year)

Grant Funding

- AETNA/CVS $75,000 grant supported the upgrades for the data system for the new Healthy Start Doula Program, paid for part of the HSMN Doula Director position and part of the Doula Coordinator position for Osceola Healthy Start Coalition
- Sunshine grant to promote all home visiting programs and the CONNECT Coordinated Intake and Referral program
- AETNA/CVS grant for Florida expansion and partnerships

Interdisciplinary Case Team Calls

- Teams from the health plans and Healthy Start reviewed 660 cases at monthly meetings with each of the plans (an increase from 467 cases the previous year)

Doula Program

- Launched the Healthy Start Doula Program with a Sunshine contract in August 2024
- We are negotiating contracts with several other health plans

Florida Prenatal and Infant Screening

Florida's universal screening and coordinated intake and referral program are national best practices.

Florida offers universal screening for all pregnant mothers usually at their first prenatal visit and again at the birth of the baby before leaving the delivery hospital.

Information collected from these screens helps families access an array of programs and services in their communities through Connect, a coordinated intake and referral program administered by Florida Healthy Start.

Healthcare providers can support families by:

- Screening everyone
- Reviewing the information with their patients
- Obtaining all required consents for sharing information
- Referring everyone to Connect if they are interested in receiving more information about services available in your community

Connect
Connecting families to community programs

Pregnant mothers and families with young children often find it difficult to locate support that meets their needs. Connect provides a one-stop entry point for services such as education and support for childbirth, newborn care, parenting skills, child development, food and nutrition, mental health, and financial self-sufficiency. Through a universal screening and Connect's intake and referral process, families are ensured streamlined access to community services, home visiting programs, and supports that best meet their needs.

Prenatal

- Pregnancy Education and Support
- Childbirth Education
- Stress Management Education

Newborn

- Newborn Care Instruction
- Breastfeeding Education and Support
- Nutritional Education
- Car Seat Safety
- Infant Safety
- Home Visiting Programs
- Child Development Education and Support

Parent Services

- Parenting Education and Support
- Counseling Services
- Help to Quit Smoking
- Family Planning Education
- Other Community Resources

Health Start Home Visiting

The Florida Healthy Start program provides education, support, and proven interventions to expecting and new families who are at-risk of a poor birth outcome or delay in development. The program focuses on common issues or conditions that occur during pregnancy or in infancy. Healthy Start is voluntary and available statewide to all families. Families can participate in Healthy Start beginning in pregnancy and until their baby reaches age one. Services can be extended if needed up to age three.

Florida Healthy Start Doula Program

Florida Healthy Start uses the G.R.O.W. Doula™ model for its statewide doula program, which supports, educates, and empowers pregnant mothers to take control of their health and achieve a healthy pregnancy and birth.

What's a Doula?

A doula is a non-medical professional trained to support mothers and families with physical, emotional, and evidence-based information before, during, and after birth. A doula helps ensure that a mother, baby, and family achieve the healthiest birth experience possible.

Doula Care

- Care begins between 26–28 weeks gestation.
- There are up to five visits prenatally prior to 42 weeks gestation.
- Doulas are on call up until the moment labor begins.
- Continued support after birth and until breastfeeding is initiated.
- After delivery, doulas provide up to three postpartum visits.

Benefits

- Learn healthy ways of dealing with everyday stress.
- Get support in setting and achieving personal and family goals.
- Connect with community resources.
- Learn about you and your baby's growth and development.

Programs & Services

T.E.A.M DAD
Fatherhood Initiative of Florida
Healthy Start
Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions

TEAM Dad Teaches, Empowers, Advocates for, and Mentors men to fulfill their potential and become the fathers their children need them to be. Many new fathers struggle to figure out their role when their wife or partner has a baby. TEAM Dad offers education, training, and support to help men become responsible, engaged, and empowered fathers.

TEAM Dad helps with:

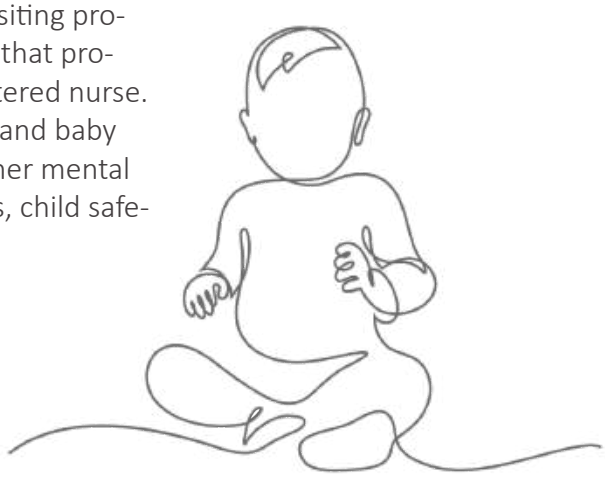
- Parenting & Co-Parenting Education
- Improving Child Development
- Building healthy family & community relationships
- Workforce Development & Economic Stability
- Personal Development

Interconception/Between Pregnancy Care

Between pregnancies, the Healthy Start program supports mothers in making healthy choices about when they become pregnant to protect the health of the mother and reduce the occurrence of poor birth outcomes. Based on their responses to family planning questions, participants in this program are provided with guidance and resources to encourage the recommended 18-24 months spacing that current research indicates as the optimal between pregnancy time period.

Specialized Home Visiting Services

The Florida Department of Children and Families Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) grant supports a specialized home visiting program for substance exposed families and focuses on child safety that provides one-on-one home visits for mothers and fathers by a registered nurse. The nurse home visitor prioritizes the health and safety of mom and baby and considers the mother's experience with substance use and her mental health and wellness as well as family history, living arrangements, child safety concerns, and other needs for support.



Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)

Legislative funding supports FAHSC's Nurse-Family Partnership program. NFP is a home visiting program for first-time pregnant mothers that connects expectant moms with a registered nurse. Through home visits or meetings at another location of the mother's choice, the nurse provides support with education and guidance for a healthy pregnancy, parenting, and personal goals throughout pregnancy and until the child's second birthday.

Programs & Services

Led by FAHSC, the federal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program is implemented in Florida with the goal to improve health and developmental outcomes for at-risk children through evidence-based home visiting programs. Florida MIECHV funds proven programs that leverage established community resources and work for families who seek help in a trusted environment—their homes. Because families ask for help, they are committed, want to do better, and work hard to be better parents.

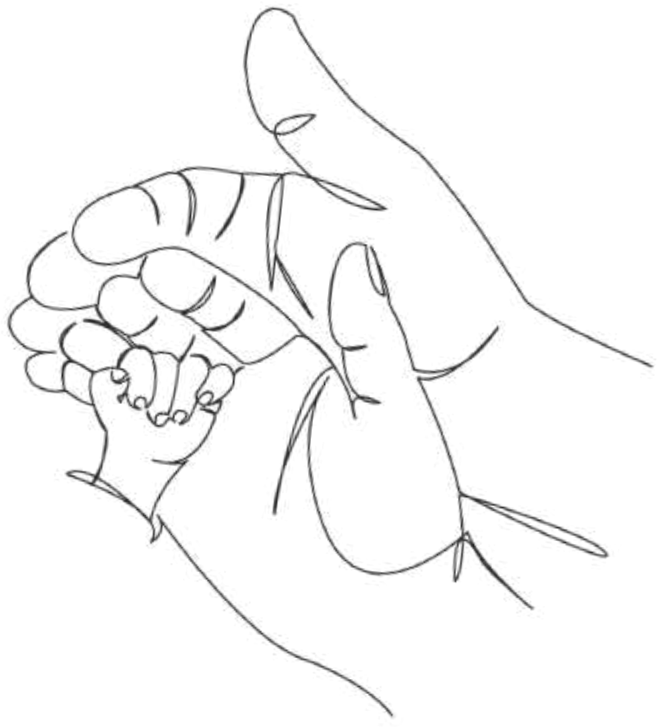
Sixteen local implementing agencies implement one of three home visiting programs in 35 high-need communities and four contiguous areas across Florida aimed at equipping parents and other caregivers with the knowledge, skills, and tools they need to assist their children in being healthy, safe, and ready to succeed in school. These models are Healthy Families, Nurse Family Partnership, and Parents as Teachers. They were selected by the communities based on local needs, gaps in services, and resources. Florida MIECHV also supports early childhood prevention services through professional development, fostering program accountability, and a culture of continuous quality improvement.

The federal MIECHV program was established in Section 2951 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148) amending Title V of the Social Security Act. The Florida MIECHV program is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Health & Human Services (HRSA #X10MC31134).

Florida ECCS Health Integration Prenatal to Three Program

FAHSC leads the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems: Health Integration Prenatal to Three Program (ECCS P-3 Program). This grant-funded program works with state level partners to coordinate a comprehensive continuum of services for expecting families and families with infants and young children. The program strengthens the role of families in planning and policy development and contributes to health equity by focusing on service gaps and needs that underpin racial and ethnic disparities.

The ECCS P-3 Program is a five-year endeavor and extends the work of FAHSC's previous Florida ECCS Impact Project Grant, and the Florida ECCS Advisory Group in developing cross-sector, community-driven collaboration around developmental screening, parent leadership, and equity.



Florida's Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (FIMR)

FIMR began in 1990 as a collaborative effort between the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Florida adopted the FIMR model in 1992. FIMR is implemented statewide through Florida Healthy Start coalitions.

FIMR is:

- A strategy to close the gap in health disparities at the community level.
- A timely and valuable source of information about changing health care systems and how they impact real families trying to access them.
- A form of continuous quality improvement that allows communities to assess the performance of systems and the impact of changes in those systems.
- A voice for local families who have lost their baby.
- A tool that helps local health officials implement policies to safeguard families.

Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative (FPQC)

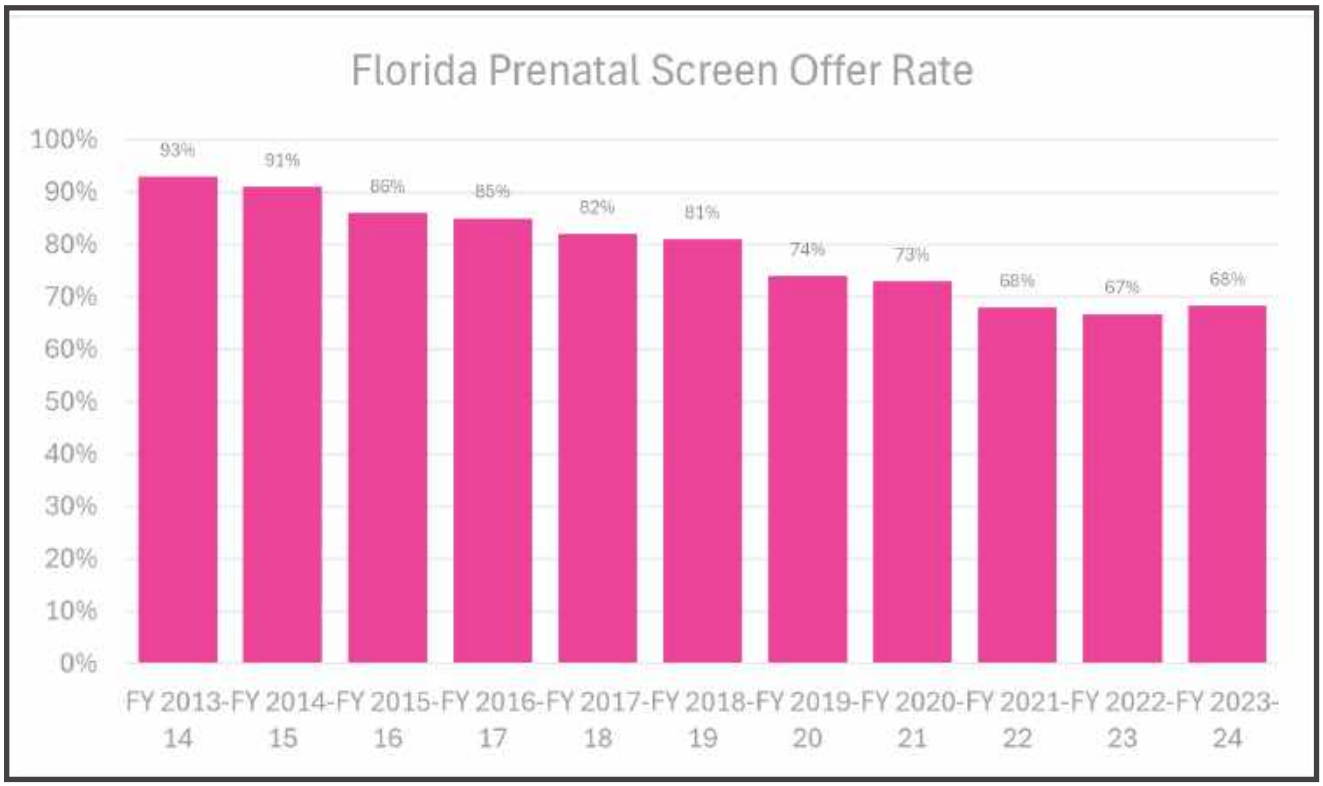
Healthy Start is a proud partner with the FPQC. As part of FPQC'S Mother-Focused Care Initiative, FPQC collaborated with FAHSC and researchers at the University of South Florida College of Public Health for statewide interviews with almost 200 mothers who had given birth within the past two years. The "Listening to Mothers' Voices" recordings were provided to local Healthy Start Coalitions throughout the state who in turn shared with hospitals in their communities. These listening sessions sparked conversations about how hospitals can contribute to improved quality of care in their area. Healthy Start also provided local resource directories to hospitals to facilitate referrals based on social drivers of health.

Accomplishments

Florida Prenatal Screening

The Florida Prenatal and Infant Screens are a voluntary screening tools offered to all expecting mothers usually at their first prenatal appointment and again at the delivery hospital. The primary purpose is to identify pregnant mothers and newborn babies who may benefit from home visiting services to improve pregnancy, birth, and developmental outcomes. The screens help healthcare providers understand the needs of expecting mothers and connect them to essential support services, such as prenatal education, nutrition counseling, childbirth education, and care coordination.

The Florida Prenatal Screen rate remains too low, but we are excited about the launch of the new electronic version of the screen in 2024–25 which we hope will help increase referrals once all prenatal providers are fully trained and using the new tool.



Florida Infant Screening

- 94,064 infant screens received
- 21,301 infant referrals received
- 115,365 total infant screens and referrals received

Health Start Home Visiting

27,066 new mothers and infants were enrolled in Healthy Start in addition to existing families receiving services. This was a 3% increase (763) compared to the previous year.

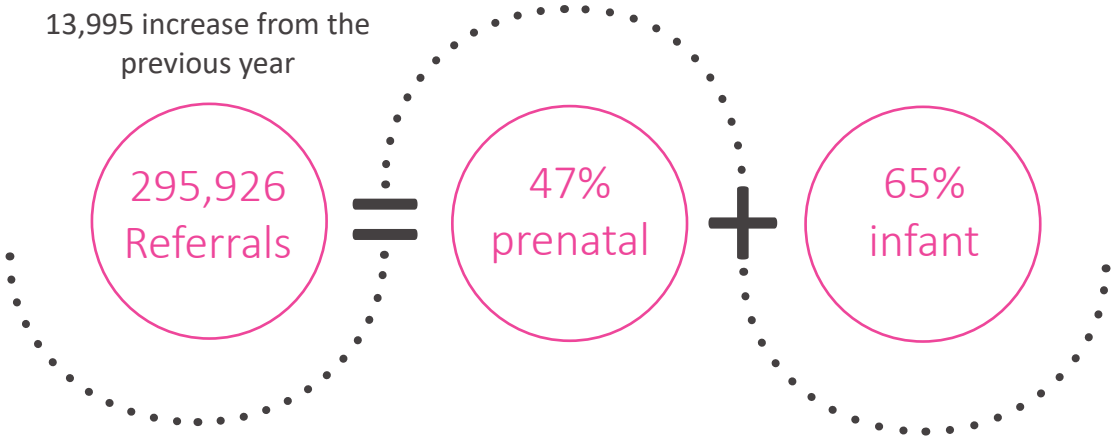
Outcomes	Healthy Start Full Model Intervention	Healthy Start Any Home Visits
Premature births	9.4%	14.4%
Low birth weight	12.3%	15.2%
Initiated breastfeeding	83.3%	82.4%
Quit or reduced tobacco use	84.4%	84%
Abstained from tobacco	97.2%	97%
Substance use % referred	89.8%	80.8%
% screened for depression	99.7%	96.1%
Postpartum visits	36.7%	29%

* Full model is defined as entering the program before 28 weeks gestation and received at least six home visits.

** Healthy Start received referrals for higher risk women and infants so it would be expected they would have higher percentage of poor birth outcomes than the general population.

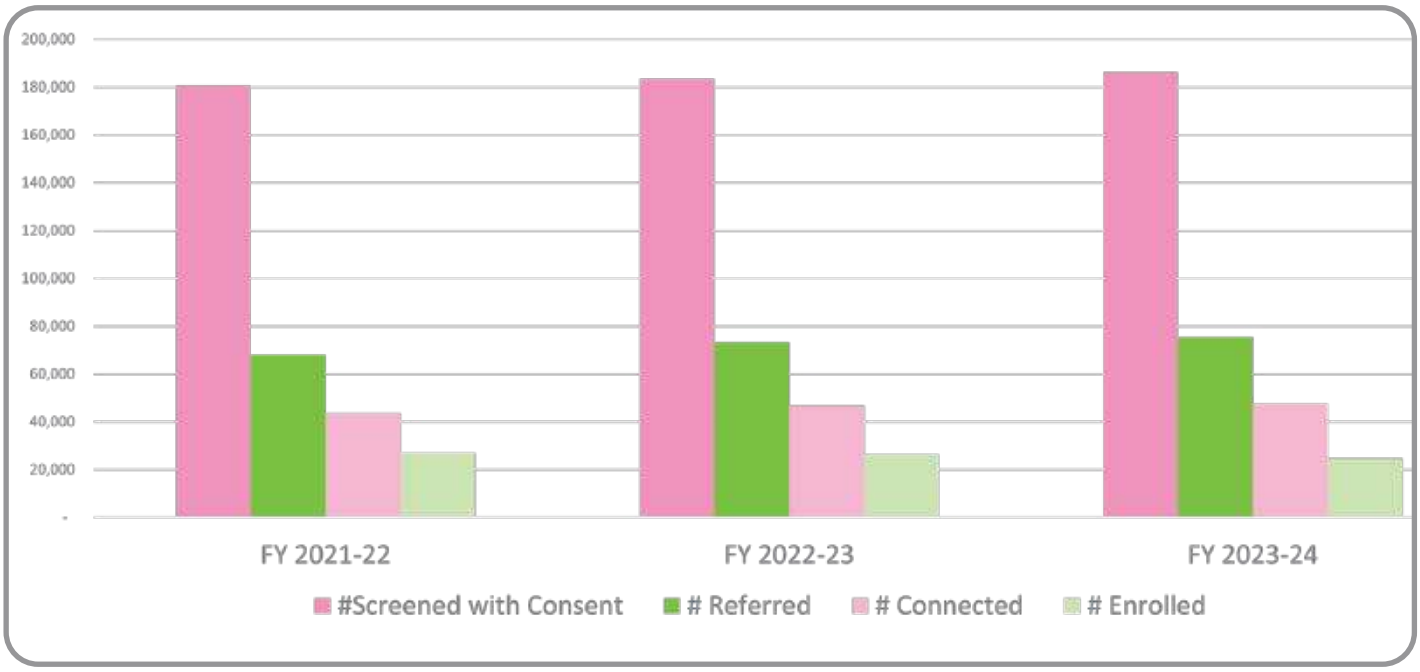
Coordinated Intake and Referral (CI&R)

13,995 increase from the previous year



Accomplishments

Connect: State referral outcomes



Doula Program

- Launched in August 2024
- FAHSC trained 484 doulas statewide.

TEAM Dad

212 completed at least 8 sessions

711 fathers enrolled

100 completed all sessions

Training

- FAHSC held five TEAM Dad program trainings for 35 TEAM Dad Coaches.
- FAHSC held seven trainings with 381 home visitors on Understanding and Promoting TEAM Dad.

Technical Assistance

- Scheduled 49 customized TA sessions.

Interconception/Between Pregnancy Care

18,746 mothers

Completed an interconception care assessment

Enrolled in the ICC program & received education on the family planning waiver

34,576 mothers

44,305 mothers

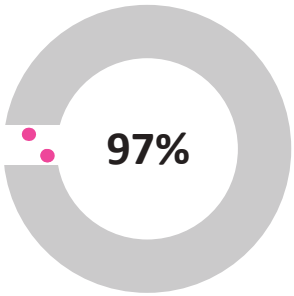
Face-to-face ICC visits

Accomplishments

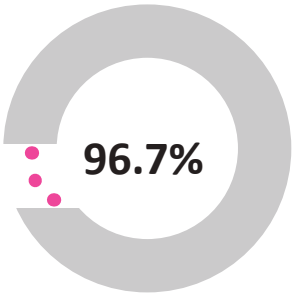
DCF Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)

Sites: Healthy Start Coalitions in Northeast Florida, Hillsborough, Orange, and Southwest Florida

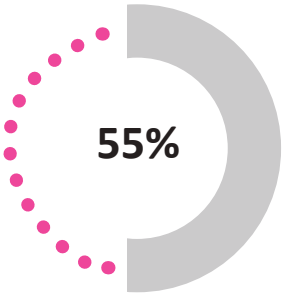
277 families served



Had a plan of safe care in place within 30 days of enrollment.



Scored for depression and received a referral to a provider who treats depression within 15 days.



Received at least 3 home visits during the quarter.

DOH Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)

Sites: Healthy Start Coalitions in Brevard, Hillsborough, Orange, and Health Choice Network in Miami

184

New families

3,129

Total number of families that received NFP services

268

Average number of visits each month

Florida Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)

October 2023 through July 2024

Measure	Percentage
Preterm Birth	9.83%
Breastfeeding	43.07%
Depression Screens	93.20%
Well-child Visits	73.10%
Postpartum Visit	74.60%
Tobacco Referrals	85%
Safe Sleep	79.46%
Dev. Screens (ASQ-3)	87.83%
Behavioral Concerns	99.53%
IPV Screening	91.51%

Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems

- Implemented two prenatal screening pilots with Healthy Start Coalitions.
- Completed a draft of Florida's early childhood system crosswalk.
- Initiated a pilot for developmental screening in Leon County.
- Partnered with March of Dimes on webinar on maternity care deserts in Florida.
- Continued the Parent Leader Alliance.

Advocacy & Finances

Advocacy

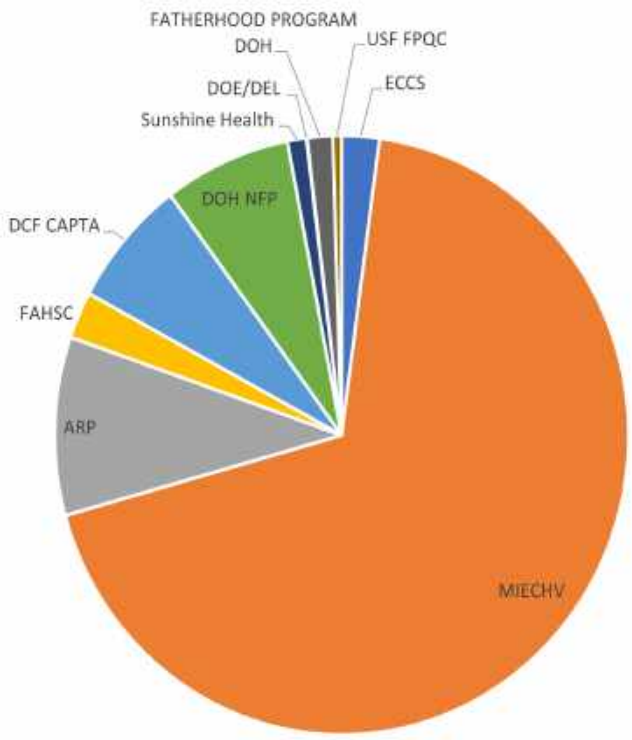
- FAHSC was thrilled to receive a $9.5 million dollar funding increase from the Florida Legislature last year. Thank you to our state leaders for their generous support!
- We continue to advocate for the remaining half of the budget request for an additional $9.7 million increase from the legislature to help lower caseloads and increase the quality of care provided.
- The Coalitions have been successful in hiring new staff and stabilizing the workforce with the additional $9.5 million received in 2023-24 and have hired 126 additional staff, nearly reaching our goal of 131.
- Coalitions also raised wages for some workers to be more competitive in the marketplace and reduce turnover. The increase in wages also supports home visitors who are paying for their gas and car maintenance where state travel reimbursement rates do not cover the costs and have not been increased since before 2006.
- By increasing our staff, FAHSC has reduced our average caseload from 75 in 2023 to 55 in 2024 caseloads per home visitor, allowing us to provide even better personalized support to Florida families.
- More than 239 legislative visits were conducted by our Coalitions.

2023-24 Preliminary Financial Report

PRELIMINARY	
Total Revenues	$13,922,087.15
Total Expenses	$13,862,907.92
Change in Net Assets	$59,179.23

PROGRAM	REVENUE	
ECCS	$294,554.73	2.1%
MIECHV	$9,545,061.97	68.6%
ARP	$1,341,000.08	9.6%
FAHSC	$352,851.70	2.5%
DCF CAPTA	$970,733.56	7.0%
DOH NFP	$995,171.21	7.1%
Sunshine Health	$148,000.00	1.1%
DOE/DEL	$6,154.59	0.0%
Fatherhood Program DOH	$200,246.51	1.4%
USF FPQC	$68,312.80	0.5%
Total	$13,922,087.15	

Preliminary Revenue Splits FY23



Goals for 2024-25

- Focus on addressing racial disparities in maternal and child health outcomes.
- Identify innovations and advocate for partnerships to address maternity care deserts.
- Participate in partnerships to address maternal hypertension and education on prenatal/postnatal warning signs.
- Support prenatal clinics across the state to successfully utilize the new electronic Florida Prenatal Screen.
- Implement the Healthy Start Doula Program with additional health plans.
- Implement a new cell phone application to support families in our programs.
- Upgrade the data system.

Every baby deserves a healthy start.

This report was produced by:
Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions (FAHSC)
2002 Old St. Augustine Road, Ste. E-45
Tallahassee, FL 32301
850-999-6200
healthystartflorida.com

Florida Healthy Start
Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions