

September 2020

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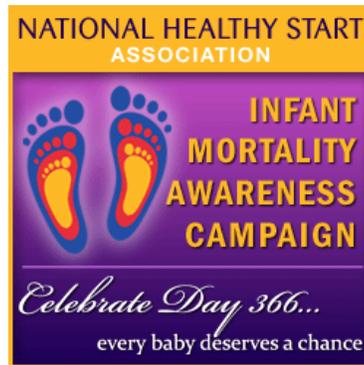
## Coming Next Month

**National Infant Mortality Awareness Month at the Healthy Start Projects:** photos, stories, proclamations – one of the most exciting issues of the year!

**October is SIDS Awareness Month.** New this year: weekly themes. That should be interesting!



## September is a Month of Many Important Health Observances – Including NHSA’s National Infant Mortality Awareness Month!



### National Infant Mortality Awareness Month, Sponsored by NHSA!

While America’s infant mortality rate (IMR) has consistently improved over the last 50 years, it still remains higher than other industrialized nations. In 1950, the IMR was 31.95 deaths per 1,000 live births. And in 2019, it was 5.75! Quite an improvement. Yet, the U.S. ranks behind comparable countries, with Germany having an IMR of 2.98 in 2019, Sweden 1.98 and Japan 1.72.

### Causes of IMR in the U.S.

The causes of IMR in America have remained consistent over time: premature birth, low birthweight, congenital malformations, maternal complications, SIDS and unintentional injury. Mortality rates are higher for babies born to mothers who are Black, American Indian and Alaska Natives and Pacific Islanders. Black mothers experience the highest IMR among all racial and ethnic groups, 10.97 per 1,000 live births. Socioeconomic disadvantage is linked to high IMRs in the U.S. and other

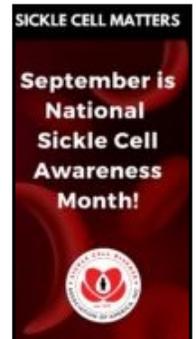
### Other Important Health Observances

*Highlights of some of this month’s many health observances, with links for more information.*

#### National Sickle Cell Awareness Month

This year’s theme is *Sickle Cell Matters*. Sponsored by the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, this month is designated by Congress to focus attention on the need for research and treatment of sickle cell disease. According to the NIH’s Genetic Home Reference,

“Sickle cell disease is a group of disorders that affects hemoglobin, the molecule in red blood cells that delivers oxygen to cells throughout the body. People with this disease have atypical hemoglobin molecules called hemoglobin S, which can distort red blood cells into a sickle, or crescent, shape. Signs and symptoms of sickle cell disease usually begin in early childhood. Characteristic features of this disorder include a low number of red blood cells (anemia), repeated infections, and periodic episodes of pain. The severity of symptoms varies from person to person. Some people have mild symptoms, while others are frequently hospitalized for more serious complications.” For information on this awareness month’s observances, click [here](#).



*Continued on page 2*

*More health observances on page 6*

## Getting off to a Healthy Start

### National Infant Mortality Awareness Month (NIMAM), continued from p. 1



industrialized countries. Recent research that explores health disparities in the U.S. is focusing on structural racism as a primary risk factor for African American mothers and their babies, in great part due to the stress it imposes on mothers throughout their lives.

#### Other IMR Facts and Stats

- IMR is highest in moms under age 20 (9.0) and lowest among mothers aged between 30-34 years old (4.8).
- Congenital malformations are the most common cause of infant death in the U.S. MedicineNet defines these as, “A physical defect present in a baby at birth that can involve many different parts of the body, including the brain, [heart](#), [lungs](#), [liver](#), bones, and intestinal tract. Congenital malformation can be genetic, it can result from exposure of the fetus to a malforming agent (such as [alcohol](#)), or it can be of unknown origin. [Congenital malformations](#) are now the leading cause of infant mortality (death) in the U.S. and many other developed nations. Examples include heart defects, [cleft lip](#) and palate, [spina bifida](#), limb defects, and [Down syndrome](#).”
- IMRs are relatively high in southern states. Massachusetts has the lowest rate (3.66 deaths per 1,000 live births) and Mississippi has the highest (8.73). The District of Columbia and 15 states have significantly higher rates than the national rate (AL, AR, GA, IN, KY, LA, MD, MI, MS, NC, OH, OK, SC, SD and TN).

#### What Can Be Done to Reduce Infant Mortality? Healthy Start to the Rescue!

The federally-funded Healthy Start programs are community-based and community-driven and located in the poorest neighborhoods in the United States. Since its initiation in 1991, Healthy Start has served hundreds of thousands of families. Over 63% of all Healthy Start families are African American, Hispanic or Native American.

Healthy Start specializes in outreach and home visiting — the surest way to reach the most at-risk women and families. Healthy Start focuses on getting women into prenatal care as early in the pregnancy as possible. It is generally accepted by medical and research fields that early entrance into prenatal care is the single most critical factor in improving birth outcomes.

Healthy Start has pioneered the use of women living in the community as outreach workers and home visitors as an effective method to successfully reach the most at-risk families. As a network rooted in the local community, the federal Healthy Start Initiative is distinguished as a unique delivery system where program participants are engaged and active in the quest to eliminate health disparities in their own lives, in their communities and across the nation.

#### NIMAM in 2020

Every year, NHSA encourages every Healthy Start project to find unique and creative ways to celebrate NIMAM and our campaign, *Celebrate Day 366...Every Baby Deserves a Chance*, to celebrate babies living beyond the first year of life. Projects seek proclamations from their local and state governments proclaiming September as NIMAM and bringing awareness to an often unrecognized issue in this country. The projects will have to be creative this year due to COVID-19. The October issue of *Getting off to a Healthy Start* will feature photos and stories of how the projects managed – which we know they will! Meanwhile, visit our new Instagram page for some on-the-spot NIMAM photos. *(Sources for this article are found on p. 7.)*



*Indianapolis Healthy Start had a NIMAM display of onesies at their public library in 2016. Each garment represented one baby that died that year.*

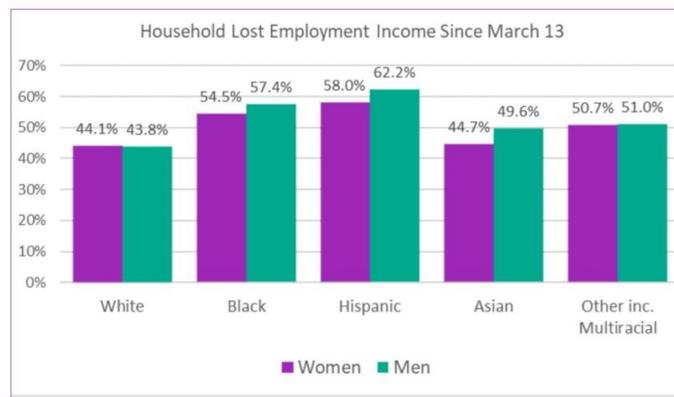
## Research News: **Hot Stats** and **Fast Facts**

### COVID-19 Continues to Expose Racial and Ethnic Disparities

The pandemic continues to showcase inequities in communities of color, including food and health insecurities. The August 25<sup>th</sup> Roundup from the Joint Center said, “The Institute for Women’s Policy Research pointed out that [a]mong Black women in households without a loss of employment income since March 13, 12.6 percent report insufficient food compared with 27.7 percent in households that experienced a loss of employment income. Among White women without income loss, 4.4 percent report insufficient food in their households compared with 11.7 percent of those reporting employment income loss.’ Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Dean Michelle A. Williams explained that the COVID-19 crisis has laid bare the issues of vast disparities for people of color in education, job opportunities, wealth and health care, and emphasized the need for ‘radical, large-scale investment’ to address the crisis. Building on their previous report that analyzed the disproportionate harms of COVID-19 on Black workers, the Economic Policy Institute’s most recent report examined the impact on Latinx workers, noting ‘Latina workers experienced the largest increase in unemployment between February and April, an increase of 15.3 percentage points.’”

Source: [August 25th COVID-19 Policy & Black Communities Roundup](#), Joint Center. (The Roundup has lots more information of interest.)

Figure 1: Reported Loss of Household Employment Income Since March 13 by Gender and Race or Ethnicity



Source: IWPR analysis of data from U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, Week 3 (May 14-19, 2020). Race categories are non-Hispanic; Hispanics can be of any race.

### Black Newborns Less Likely to Die When Cared for by Black Doctors

A study team comprised of researchers from the University of Minnesota, Harvard University and George Mason University examined 1.8 million births in hospitals in the state of Florida from 1992 and 2015 and found that when Black newborns are cared for by Black physicians, rather than white doctors, their in-hospital death rate is a third lower. “Our findings demonstrate that when newborns and the physicians treating them are of the same race, that newborn survival rate is significantly improved,” said study co-author Rachel Hardeman, an associate professor in the School of Public Health. “This study is the first piece of evidence that demonstrates the effect of physician-patient racial concordance on the Black-white mortality gap. As we seek to close persistent racial gaps in birth outcomes, this finding is incredibly important.” Continued the article, “This fact that Black newborns do so much better under the care of Black physicians warrants greater investigation by researchers and medical practitioners into drivers of differences between higher- and lower-performing physicians, and why Black physicians systemically outperform their colleagues when caring for Black newborns,” said study co-author Aaron Sojourner, an associate professor in the Carlson School of Management. To view the full study, click [here](#).

Source: [U of M Research Finds Black Newborns Die Less When Cared for by Black Doctors](#), WCCO/CBS Minnesota, 08/18/2020. Supplemental material from multiple other resources. Check out this article from [Science News](#), which explores the topic in more detail.

### Rural Infants and Toddlers Have Less Access to Key Health Care Resources

According to Child Trends, which used data from the [State of Babies Yearbook 2020](#), research found that babies and toddlers in low-income families are less likely to have health insurance than children in urban areas. They also found that those babies and young children are less likely to receive recommended vaccines and preventive visits with dentists and doctors. “Policymakers can work to address this issue by identifying any barriers that rural, low-income families may face in enrolling their kids in their state’s Children’s Health Insurance Program; expanding mobile and telemedicine options to families in remote areas; and exploring gaps in current outreach and enrollment efforts for health care programs and services and determining how to address these barriers,” says Child Trends. Access the report [here](#).

Sources: The Latest from Child Trends, 07/27/2020 and [Health Care Access for Infants and Toddlers in Rural Areas](#), Child Trends, 07/23/2020.

More Research News on page 6.

## Resources You Can Use!

### Resources to Educate Children about Breastfeeding

A recent article in the Huffington Post featured children's books that show kids that breastfeeding is normal. Check it out here: [19 Children's Books That Normalize Breastfeeding](#). Another resource is from our friends at Platypus Media, who've put together some materials in their [Breastfeeding Education for Children](#) module. Showing breastfeeding as normal fosters positivity and builds community support for the practice.

**Your Pregnancy Checklist** is a slide show with 14 things that need to be on a woman's pre-pregnancy planning to do list. Nothing here is a surprise, but it's well done, with information to support each item on the list. For example, let's take *Watch Your Weight*. Here's what this slide says: "Being too thin can make it harder to get pregnant. Being too heavy can also cause problems: It raises your chances of diabetes and high blood pressure. It can also make labor last longer -- and you don't want that! Talk to your doctor about what weight is healthy for you." Click [here](#) to check out the checklist from WebMD's Pregnancy & Baby Bulletin, 08/06/2020.

**Alcohol's Effect on the Fetus** is another good resource from the same issue of WebMD's Pregnancy & Baby Bulletin. In clear, concise language, this short article explains why alcohol and pregnancy do not go together, and what a pregnant woman, or one thinking about getting pregnant can do. It covers Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and other problems. What to do? Stop drinking. Plan ahead. Ask for help. Each "What You Can Do" step comes with specific information or directions. Click [here](#) to access the entire article.

### MCH Navigator's Summer Edition of the MCH Alert

Here's some of what you will find in this issue: new trainings in the Navigator, such as "Empowering Communities to Address Health Disparities: Practical Steps to Take at the Local level;" new resources from the field, for example, "Community Health Workers: Evidence of their Effectiveness;" MCH Best Database, with Phase 1 being the "Bank of Evidence-linked Strategies and Tools." But wait, there's more! There's a brief and a full report on "Smoking in Pregnancy." The National Workforce Development Center's Summer Webinar Series: the first two webinars are archived and ready to be accessed: "Appreciative Inquiry" and "Introduction to Systems Thinking." There's even more, but we'll let you check it out yourself! Click [here](#).



## Not Exactly Resources, Not Exactly Research – But Still Relevant!

### Former HHS Officials Explore Vaccine Hesitancy in Black Community: “COVID-19 burden for African-Americans will only worsen if they refuse immunizations”



Photo: [website](#) of the Office of the President Emeritus.

Recent public opinion polls show that just under 50% of those surveyed said they are either unlikely or uncertain to get a COVID-19 vaccine. “The Black community hasn't forgotten [the infamous Tuskegee study](#) and remains distrustful of the medical establishment,” noted Louis Sullivan, MD, secretary of Health and Human Services under President George H.W. Bush and is founding dean of the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, according to the article, which reported on a virtual convention held earlier this summer. (Dr. Sullivan (L) was the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and an ardent supporter of Healthy Start. In fact, when first begun, Healthy Start was housed in the Secretary's Office.)

Current Surgeon General Jerome Adams, MD, MPH, who moderated the discussion, asked his predecessors for their ideas on how to increase buy-in for the vaccine among African Americans. Among the suggestions were partnering with Black churches and celebrity partnerships, the need for transparency, increased health literacy and using social media to disseminate information. Click [here](#) for the article.



## Healthy Start Dad Speaks About the Impact of COVID-19

The Community Service Council (CSC) Healthy Start Fatherhood Program in Tulsa, OK, offers several services designed to assist clients in attaining self-sufficiency. These services include Men's Health, Money Management, Parenting Skills, Child Support, Legal, Family Planning and Employment Referrals. Robert, a father of two, has been enrolled in the Fatherhood Program for one year. During this time, Robert has learned new parenting skills and has taken advantage of the program's employment referral service. In fact, Robert stated, "I decided to ask about the employment referral service because my girlfriend lost her job because of COVID-19."

"COVID-19 has made it harder to enjoy life outside of the house," Robert added in an interview about the impact of COVID-19. "We used to go to places as a family. Since COVID-19 came, I only go to work, my mama's house and to the grocery store. COVID-19 has made everything worse." Robert said he and his family wash their hands when they return from those places. "We're grateful for the Healthy Start COVID-19 totes that supplied us with masks, hand sanitizer and anti-bacterial soaps to keep us safe."

Robert explained that it was harder to provide for his family during the pandemic. Because his girlfriend, also a Healthy Start participant, is now unemployed, he feels pressured to pay all the bills. "We are barely making it. I am in the process of finding a better paying job." Sekou Clincy, Coordinator of the CSCHS Fatherhood Program, said that they work with several local staffing agencies to help their fathers with their employment needs. Mr. Clincy regularly refers clients to these staffing agencies for employment in areas from warehouse to janitorial work. FedEx Ground is a member of the (CSC) Healthy Start Program CAN, he said. This partnership allows them to refer clients to this employer, as well. FedEx offers employees a competitive salary and full benefits while working part time. Robert was very recently referred to this employer.



Robert showing his Healthy Start COVID-19 tote.

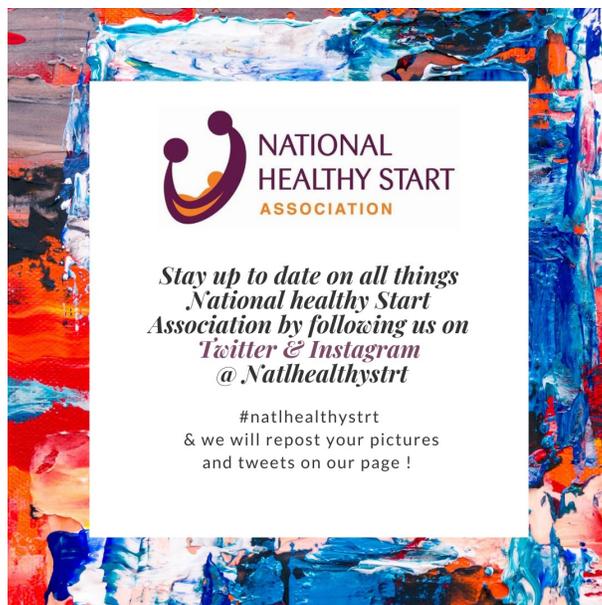
Robert was asked what advice he would give to other fathers dealing with COVID-19. He said he would tell them to talk with family and friends on a regular basis. "It helps to keep your mind off all the negative things." He said he copes with the stress by playing video games and music and playing with his kids. Said Clincy, "It has been gratifying to watch Robert grow as a father, provider and devoted partner for his family during his time in the (CSC) Community Service Council Healthy Start Fatherhood Program. Robert plans on taking the goal setting lessons learned in the fatherhood program and enrolling at Tulsa Technology Center to earn a certification in automotive maintenance or carpentry."

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**Third Thursday of every month at 1:00 p.m. ET: NHTSA Fatherhood Practitioners Webinars.** Healthy Start Project Directors, please make sure we have your Fatherhood Coordinator in our database so they receive notices about the webinars. Send name and email address to [Hida Reese](#) and/or [Bea Haskins](#).

### Healthy Start Projects!

Send us photos and stories for *Getting off to a Healthy Start!* It's a great way to spread the word about what your project is doing! Send to [Bea Haskins](#).



## September Health Observances, continued from p. 1

### Newborn Screening Awareness Month (NSAM)

[Baby's First Test](#), a program of [Expecting Health](#), sponsors this health observance, with a "tradition of sharing [newborn screening](#) facts, videos, and stories on our social media platforms as well as highlighting education and awareness efforts from communities and organizations across the nation." The theme for 2020 is *Expect Newborn Screening*. Click [here](#) for the NSAM toolkit. (↓ *One of NSAM's social media graphics to share.*)



### Baby Safety Month

"Founded by the Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association (JPMA) in 1983, Baby Safety Month (BSM) occurs every September and offers a great chance for parents and retailers to brush up on baby-proof safety standards and tips. Every year, JPMA offers toolkits to manufacturers, retailers, doctors, and parents to help educate them on childhood safety. Babies aren't the only ones going through a huge learning curve in life – the rest of us often need to brush up on our skills in order to ensure no accidents occur." ([National Today](#), accessed 09/03/2020.) How to observe this month? 1. Spread awareness on social media using #BabySafetyMonth 2. Educate yourself by visiting JPMA's [website](#). 3. Invest in safe baby products.

### Prostate Cancer Awareness Month (PCAM)

PCAM was officially established in September 2003 in a [proclamation](#) by President George W. Bush. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men, according to the American Cancer Society. It is most common among African American men and men age 65 and older. Click [here](#) to read this year's presidential statement and learn more. Visit these links for even more info from our partner, the Men's Health Network, which manages PCAM:

- [http://www.pgpost.com/New\\_Standard.html](http://www.pgpost.com/New_Standard.html)
- <https://afro.com/september-is-prostate-cancer-awareness-month/>

## Research News, continued from p. 6

### Countering Anti-Mask Backlash & Vaccine Skepticism

Many Americans feel that being mandated to wear a mask in public is an assault on their personal freedom. They don't see it as a way of protecting themselves and others from the novel coronavirus. But some researchers from Duke University say these attitudes can be turned around using empathy, rather than judgement.

Suggested Gavan Fitzsimons, professor of marketing and psychology at Duke's Fuqua School of Business, "Help those resistant to masks feel they have the freedom to make a choice." It might not work, Fitzsimons acknowledged, but the individual will feel less threatened and part of the solution, so they're more likely to comply.

Lavanya Vasudevan, an assistant professor of community and family medicine at Duke, said this approach might be useful with people who have misgivings about a vaccine when one becomes available. "There are many people out there who are either not convinced there is a pandemic or don't think COVID is a threat to them either because of their age or other circumstance," she noted. "We really need to start communicating about why the [vaccine](#) is important to them in terms of benefits rather than threats." She added that the focus needs to be on building community confidence in [vaccine](#) safety and effectiveness. Vasudevan echoed Fitzsimons central point: "It's always good to communicate in terms of benefits rather than threats. Talking to folks about the benefits of mask-wearing, the benefits of vaccinations, is always better."

Source: [How to Counter the Anti-Mask Backlash? Empathy.](#), WebMD, 07/20/2020.

### National Survey on the Well-being of Parents and Children During the COVID-19 Pandemic

"Since March 2020, 27% of parents reported worsening mental health for themselves, and 14% reported worsening behavioral health for their children. The proportion of families with moderate or severe food insecurity increased from 6% before March 2020 to 8% after, employer-sponsored insurance coverage of children decreased from 63% to 60%, and 24% of parents reported a loss of regular childcare. Worsening mental health for parents occurred alongside worsening behavioral health for children in nearly 1 in 10 families, among whom 48% reported loss of regular childcare, 16% reported change in insurance status, and 11% reported worsening food security."

Citation: Patrick SW, Henkhaus LE, Zickafoose JS, et al. Well-being of parents and children during the COVID-19 pandemic: a national survey. *Pediatrics*. 2020; doi: 10.1542/peds.2020-016824. Click [here](#) for a PDF of the article.

# Systemic Racism: A Public Health Crisis



**Systemic Racism Is a Public Health Crisis:**  
Impact on the Black Community

**DATA INSIGHTS**

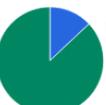
**What is systemic racism?**



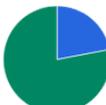
**Systemic racism:**  
the way policies & practices of organizations or systems advantage some populations, while disadvantaging others, creating different outcomes for different racial groups

Among Black Americans, systemic racism has led to long-standing inequities and striking disparities linked to COVID-19.

**COVID-19 highlights the link between racism and health**



Black individuals account for **13%** of the US population



And **22%** of COVID-19 related deaths where race is known

Black people are dying from COVID-19 at a rate **2.4x higher** than White people

**What makes the Black community more at risk for COVID-19?**



Higher rates of pre-existing health conditions



Over-represented in frontline & essential worker jobs



Unequal access to quality health care & insurance coverage



More likely to live in hypersegregated neighborhoods

**Long-standing inequities caused by systemic racism exacerbate health impacts**

Food Insecurity

Black Americans are more than **2x** more likely to face hunger than White peers

Housing Insecurity

Black individuals make up **40%** of the homeless population

Wealth

The net worth of a typical White family is **10x** greater than of a Black family

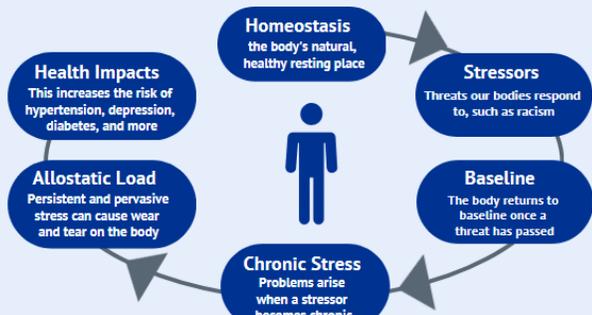
Education

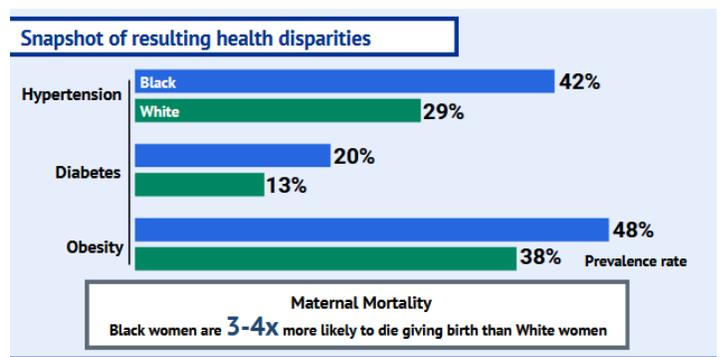
**40%** of Black students receive a 4-year degree vs **64%** of White students

Mass Incarceration

Black Americans are incarcerated at more than **5x** the rate of White Americans

**How does systemic racism and the stress of racism impact health?**





**Strategies for Change**

**Actionable ways to address health disparities - within the health care system:**

Identify & correct racially-biased health care algorithms

Improve medical school training

Address provider bias

Conduct community outreach & engagement

Incorporate equity in value-based care arrangements

Increase opportunities for self protection & prevention

Increase internet access & telehealth opportunities

Improve locations of COVID-19 testing sites

**If we want to have lasting change, we have to address systemic problems**



Dismantle structures that support racism



Deconstruct systems that contribute to wealth inequality

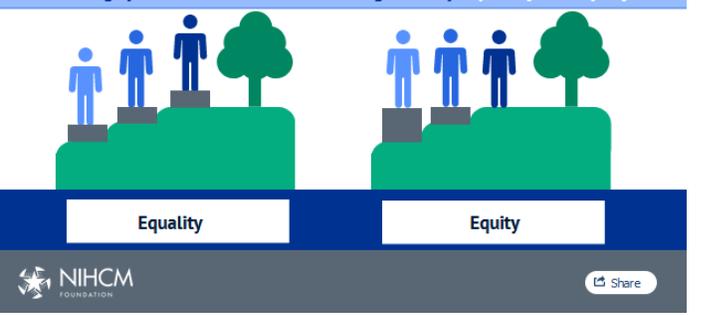


Expand health care coverage & access



Address social determinants of health - food, housing & education

Addressing systemic racism means achieving not only equality but equity



The infographic can be found on the website of the National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM). Visit their website [here](#), where you can download or share the infographic. The NIHCM Foundation is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to improving the health of all Americans by spurring workable and creative solutions to pressing health care problems.

Sources for the NIMAM article, pages 1 & 2, accessed 09/12/2020:

- [What do we know about infant mortality in the U.S. and comparable countries?](#) Peterson-KFF Healthy System Tracker.
- [Medical Definition of Congenital malformation](#), MedicineNet.
- Macrotrends, <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/USA/united-states/infant-mortality-rate> (replace country name for other countries in article).
- [NHS's Infant Mortality Awareness Fact Card](#) (click the "Open in Apricot" icon to print).

## Getting off to a Healthy Start

# Healthy Start Projects Recognize August as National Breastfeeding Month

We've set up a new album on our Facebook page with the rest of the September photos; click [here](#) to see it. You'll know if a project has photos in the album when you see the Facebook icon by a project's name. Check them out! And keep sending those stories and photos to our newsletter editor at [bhaskins@nationalhealthystart.org](mailto:bhaskins@nationalhealthystart.org)!

## Strong Beginnings Healthy Start (Grand Rapids, MI)



← *Strong Beginnings partners every year with a local media company that offers in-kind ad space for raising awareness of issues relating to the project's work. "And of course," says Bonita Agee, Education Coordinator, "breastfeeding is one of them." The photos were placed on digital and standing poster billboards throughout their county.*

→ Bonita co-hosted this event along with one of the project's Helping Us Grow

Strong (HUGS) Breastfeeding Café co-facilitators. The other four women have previously worked with Strong Beginnings in capacities ranging from Community Health Worker to leading HUGS and Café Con Leche support groups. The groups served African American and Latina clients and community moms. "These women are amazing in their respective spaces," commented Agee. "I'm delighted to spend some time with them talking about a most important and relevant topic." Click [here](#) for a recording; passcode: \*4Y%j2KU

**STRONG Beginnings**  
Presenting Black Breastfeeding Week

**PRESENTS...**  
**BLACK BREASTFEEDING: A CANDID COMMUNITY CONVERSATION**

**AUG 31, 2020 10-11:30am** **CELEBRATING...**

**WITH CO-HOSTS & PANELISTS**

<b>BONITA AGEE</b> BS, CLC	<b>KIARA BASKIN</b> CB, CLC BUMP TO BIRTH DOULA SERVICES	<b>TIFFANY TOWNSEND</b> LM, CPM, CLC DE LA MIDWIFERY, LLC
<b>LYANNA MOORE</b> PEER COUNSELOR	<b>LATOYIA LEROUX</b> IBCLC, CLC	<b>CHRISTINE STANCLC</b> CLC, CPLC

JOIN US ON: <https://zoom.us/j/91884770223?pwd=V29hZjZlbnk2Q2R0aU9ONjFVWFYWSWJlT09>

#MIBLBFWK, #CHOCOLATEMILKMAGIC, #PAYEQUITY, #BLKBOOB54BLKBABIES

## Health Care Coalition of Southern Oregon Healthy Start (Medford, OR)



In honor of Breastfeeding Awareness Month, Health Care Coalition of Southern Oregon prioritized lactation training for staff and community members. They are supporting eight Healthy Start staff members and six CAN members for the online Certified Lactation Counselor training through the Center for Breastfeeding. In their rural community, the online course is a great opportunity to connect professionals to this important training. "We will have certified staff at all of our Healthy Start locations and, by also supporting CAN members, we hope to see an improved system of support across our communities for breastfeeding families. Our community partners participating in this training represent an array of services/agencies including doulas, substance abuse counselors, home visiting nurses and homeless shelter staff," reported Lee Ann Grogan, Healthy Start Program Manager.

↑Wendy Osicup at United Communities Action Network in Roseburg, Oregon, holds her certificate. Wendy is the first Healthy Start staff member to complete the self-paced course. Congratulations, Wendy!

### Healthy Start Project Directors:

#### Send Us Your Healthy Start in the News & Consumer Success Stories!

Don't forget your Consumer Success stories as well as your "In the News" stories! NHTA wants to spotlight consumers in future issues of *Getting off to a Healthy Start*. We have a form with sample questions to help you interview your consumer. To request the form, send an email to [Bea Haskins](mailto:Bea.Haskins). If you already have a story, send it in, along with photos of your consumer and family! (Make sure you have a waiver form in your files, of course.) And if you have a nice staff story to tell, send that along to Bea, too! We'll include them when we have space.

## More Breastfeeding Month Activities at the Healthy Start Projects

### Delta Healthy Start Collaborative (Greenwood, MS)

Delta Healthy Start Collaborative (Delta Breastfeeding Coalition) served 30 participants at the Breastfeeding Awareness Community Drive-Thru Event that took place at Greenwood Leflore Hospital parking lot in Greenwood, MS. The Breastfeeding Awareness Community Drive-Thru was to promote breastfeeding awareness in hopes to empower women to commit to breastfeeding. It also served to let the participants and community know what programs the Healthy Start project has to offer, available resources and literature on breastfeeding. Since it isn't possible to do any awareness face-to-face, the staff thought partnering with different community agencies, hospitals and within Delta Health Alliance would promote change within the participants and communities they serve. The giveaway, which included baby products, hand sanitizer, masks, books and more, was a thank you for being a part of their programs and community.

Check out the Delta Healthy Start's Drive-Thru photos on NHTA's Facebook page. Click [here](#) for the September album.



↑ Representatives of Delta Health Alliance, Greenwood Leflore Hospital and Magnolia Health handed out supplies and information in honor of Breastfeeding Awareness Month. From left are Tawanda Logan-Hurt, Timia Wells, Lee Whittington, Kerri Reaves Grossman, Jacqueline Lambert, Cheryl A. Jones, Melanie Williams, Faith Tabor, Gloria Wilson and Robert Love.

### Community Health Center of Richmond's Healthy Start Program (Staten Island, NY)



In honor of National Breastfeeding Month as well as Black Breastfeeding Week, the Community Health Center of Richmond's (CHCR) Healthy Start program hosted a virtual event on August 26, 2020. Along with the Center's Maternal Infant Health Department, they hosted over 69 participants including breastfeeding mothers and their partners and community-based organizations. Community Health Workers and Case Managers entertained the crowd as they provided participants with fun games such as trivia, educational videos and raffles in which winners won prizes such as newborn gift sets, lunch bags and original artwork painted by their Fatherhood Coordinator. Moms shared stories on the joys and challenges of breastfeeding and

staff provided information on breastfeeding support services, as well as information on local maternal infant health programs and services. At the end of the celebration, a video was shown that captured mothers and families in all their breastfeeding glory. Clients were proud to see themselves in the video and spectators were moved by the warm images of mothers breastfeeding their babies. To close out the event, participants were presented with a Breastfeeding Certificate signed by CHCR's CEO, Dr. Henry Thompson. ↑ *Breastfeeding Staff participating in the virtual celebration.*

### Bronx Healthy Start (NY)



Bronx Healthy Start held "Tittilating Tuesdays" during Breastfeeding Month, virtual gatherings with expert speakers.

← *Artwork for one week of the Tuesday events.*

→ *Tittilating Tuesday newsletter. Click [here](#) to view.*

BRONX HEALTHY START BREASTFEEDING MONTH VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

Breastfeeding Awareness Month  
Breastfeeding for a Healthier Planet

TITILLATING EVERY TUESDAY IN AUGUST  
Join us on Zoom at 11:00am

Mondays Tuesdays Wednesdays Thursdays Fridays

Tittilating Tuesdays is a weekly Zoom gathering of Healthy Start participants and other Bronx residents with Lactation Specialists and Pediatricians to engage around various breastfeeding topics. Each Tuesday we presented to a variety of audience – prenatal, postpartum and parenting persons as well as care givers and other providers. The series opened with a general overview of breastfeeding and delves more into the need for support, education and resources, common struggles such as introducing pacifiers, co-sleeping and including milk production. Each week participants had the opportunity to win prizes such as Bronx Nursing Pillows, Post-Partum Survival Kits, Nursing Bras and Healthy Start Branded Items, swag-bags, for answering questions related to the sessions. Prizes, other than the swag bags, were awarded based on attendance, post-partum or parenting. Individuals attending all 4 sessions received a Baby Box Baby Gift cards. The sessions were all well attended with numbers ranging from 34 - 50 individuals on the Zoom. What we've learned is that the sessions were effective in delivering the intended messages and resonated with the participants, many would like to continue providing the virtual classes, and for those who were not enrolled in Healthy Start, they want to be contacted. 50% of the survey respondents indicate that they would like to join the Bronx Healthy Start CAN #HealthyStartStrong #NonJudgmentalBreastfeeding

MILK OF LIFE

Tittilating Tuesday  
MILK OF LIFE  
Full Time Breastfeeding Support

Mrs. Lashonda Dandridge, IBCLC, is co-founder of Uptown Village Cooperative a doula and lactation support organization in New York City presented the first two sessions, August 4th 2020

## Getting off to a Healthy Start

### Breastfeeding Month and More Happenings at the Healthy Start Projects!

#### Nashville Strong Babies (TN)



Nashville Strong Babies celebrated Black Breastfeeding Week with a drive through parade in East Nashville on August 26, 2020. Joined by more than a dozen partners, the parade team promoted breastfeeding and encouraged families with the “Breast is best!” message. The drive-through parade was a result of successful collaboration between numerous local health department programs and services, community organizations and community partners. Key partners include Homeland Heart Birth and Wellness Collaborative (Doula Support for enrolled moms), the New Life Center (Fatherhood Support for enrolled dads), SurgPrep (Medical Supply Support) and the following Metro Public Health Department programs (Healthy Start Administrator): Sexual Health, Preconception Health, Ryan White, Fetal Infant Mortality Review, Adolescent Health, Youth Violence Prevention, Coronavirus Community Response and the Director of Health, along with the Metro Nashville Fire Department. The caravan of vehicles was led by the local fire engine and items such as masks, hand sanitizer, lip balm pens, keychain lights and a number of other items were distributed to promote community health and celebrate breastfeeding.

↘ Love the thumbs up in this photo!



Pictured: (1<sup>st</sup> Picture, Left to Right) Talice Thomas (Care Manager), Donna Jean-Jumeau (Care Manager), Ms. Ronesha and Mr. Jarrod (Breastfeeding Parents), Robert Taylor (New Life Center); (2<sup>nd</sup> Picture, Left to Right) Angela Williams (Program Manager), Donna Jean-Jumeau (Care Manager), Ms. Shajuanda (Breastfeeding Mom), Kelly Roland (SurgPrep Medical Assistant), Pam Garvey (Care Manager), Kristen Mejia-Green (Homeland Heart Birth and Wellness Collaborative), Talice Thomas (Care Manager); (3<sup>rd</sup> Picture, Left to Right) Talice Thomas (Care Manager), Ms. Debresha and Baby (Breastfeeding Mom and Baby), D'Yuanna Allen-Robb (Project Director).

Do you want to see photos of the parade? Of course you do!

Click [here](#) to go NHTA's Facebook page with the September album. You'll find them there.

#### Midlands Healthy Start (Columbia, SC)



On Friday, August 28, 2020, Midlands Healthy Start hosted a virtual *Breastfeeding Appreciation*

event for all participants that have ever breastfed their babies. Participants also shared what they loved about breastfeeding and were able to share breastfeeding testimonials. Each participant will receive a PinMart Liquid Gold Breastmilk Breastfeeding New Mom Enamel Lapel pin.



involved through the Community Action Network and other public programs hosted by Midlands Healthy Start. One father who graduated stated, *“I thought it would be weird at first having someone teach me about parenting, but it turns out it was one of the best decisions we made. Being part of Midlands Healthy Start has taught me how to be a father and help my daughter to grow up successfully.”*

On Thursday, August 6, 2020, Midlands Healthy Start hosted a virtual program graduation through WebEx. Thirteen (13) participants, along with their partners and babies, graduated from the program. At the virtual graduation, pictures were shown of each baby, from birth to present day. Parents were given a chance to share their fondest and/or funniest memories of their child and hopes for the child's future. Midlands Healthy Start staff provided inspirational quotes as well, and fond memories that they held from working with these families. After the virtual graduation, gifts were delivered to the families. The graduated participants shared their gratitude for the program and an interest to stay

## Still More Happenings at the Healthy Start Projects!

### WV Healthy Start/HAPI Project (Morgantown, WV)



← & ↓ On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, the WV Healthy Start/HAPI Project helped coordinate a “drive thru” style community baby shower. The 36 families were to actually attend the annual event at WV Wesleyan College on March 21<sup>st</sup>, but due to COVID-19, plans for the event were put on hold. Diaper bags full of infant care items, door prizes, presentations from nursing students, information from local non-profit agencies and medical providers were all ready for the new and expecting parents. The planning team knew that they could not provide a typical shower this year; they wanted to find a way to make sure the families were able to get the items and information. At a time when unemployment is high and many families feel isolated, they need support from the community more than ever. Local volunteers, staff from several agencies (the HAPI Project, the Family Resource Network, Centers Against Violence, Birth to Three, Parents as Teachers and others) brought all the donated items to the Buchanan-Upshur High School and made the shower happen as a drive thru. The families were very appreciative of the items and staff enjoyed seeing all the healthy and “HAPI” babies while they drove up to see them!



### Missouri Bootheel Healthy Start (Sikeston, MO)

Next month’s issue of *Getting off to a Healthy Start* will include a summary of the Missouri Bootheel Regional Consortium’s Virtual Low Birth-weight Partnership Conference, co-sponsored by NHSA and featuring CEO Deborah Frazier as one of the presenters. Stay tuned!

### Family Tree Healthy Start (Lafayette, LA)



↑ Barbershop Libraries.

In August, Family Tree Healthy Start celebrated National Book Lover's Day by hosting a virtual Early Literacy Event and giveaways. Part of this initiative included starting community libraries in their fatherhood-trained barbershops! Each shop received a range of books from baby books, books about hair, books about dads, books about self-love, books about black history and books for young teen and adult readers. They also received lots of barbershop specific Healthy Start "swag" like combs, beard brushes, razors, capes and towels. Lastly, each barber received a blood pressure cuff to help monitor the health of their adult customers. Great things are happening in the community even in the midst of hurricanes and a pandemic!

## Getting off to a Healthy Start

### More Healthy Start Projects' Happenings!

#### Cradle Cincinnati Connections (OH)

In August, Cradle Cincinnati Connections partnered with Buckeye Health Plan and Cincinnati Hamilton-County Community Action Agency to host a socially-distanced drive-thru baby shower for 60 local moms-to-be. Kimberly McGinnis, Community Health Worker, did a fantastic job organizing the event. "Although we are experiencing a pandemic, it is important to recognize the milestones and provide families with resources to prepare for baby's arrival. This drive-thru was a fun and safe way to shower moms with gifts and resources in celebration of their growing families," she said. Thanks to donations from many local agencies, moms received portable cribs, food boxes, diaper bags with wipes, baby shampoos and lotions and more. Cincinnati news station WCPO stopped by and interviewed their team – [you can watch the news story here](#). This has been just one way in which Cradle Cincinnati Connections has creatively adapted how they support families during this time – and one that they already plan on replicating again this fall!



↑ Left to right – Danielle Lee (Connections), Tonaya Brownlee (Connections), Dr. Stephanie Napolitano (Cincinnati Children's), Kimberly McGinnis (Connections), Tamiaka Gray (Cincinnati Health Department).

#### San Antonio Healthy Start (TX)

San Antonio Healthy Start participated in a drive-by ice cream social on August 26th, where the public drove through the parking lot and stopped by their station for a goody bag with program flyers. The staff introduced themselves and provided a brief description of the program before the guests were moved along to the next station. It was so busy, the team couldn't get any photos! They are looking into having a second event involving a drive-by food drive where they will be able to provide more information.



↑Cars lined up for the baby shower.

#### Stay Connected with NHTSA on social media!



#### Attention Healthy Start Project Directors and Program Staff!

##### Newsletters

- Be sure to include NHTSA in your newsletter distribution list so we can include your news in *Getting off to a Healthy Start!* Please add Bea Haskins, Communications Coordinator and our newsletter editor, [bhaskins@nationalhealthystart.org](mailto:bhaskins@nationalhealthystart.org).
- Do you have project staff you'd like to be on *our* distribution list? Send their name, title and email address to Bea so she can add them!
- Not a Healthy Start Project? That's OK! Let us know if you want to add someone to our distribution list.

##### Photos, Stories and More

- Send us photos and news stories for inclusion in the next issue of *Getting off to a Healthy Start*. The deadline is the 6<sup>th</sup> of each month. Send everything to [Bea Haskins](mailto:Bea Haskins).



National Healthy Start Association | Raynard Washington, President | Deborah L. Frazier, CEO | 1325 G Street, NW, Suite 500 | Washington, DC 20005 | 202-295-2195 | [www.nationalhealthystart.org](http://www.nationalhealthystart.org)

The National Healthy Start Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The mission of the NHTSA is to be our nation's voice in providing leadership and advocacy for health equity services and interventions that improve birth outcomes and family well-being.

**Newsletter Editor:** Bea Haskins, Communications Coordinator | **Contributing Writers:** Healthy Start Projects' Staff; **Photo Credits:** Thank you to the Healthy Start projects that sent in photos used in this issue!

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