

Healthy Babies Coalition

A Message from the Chairperson of the Healthy Babies Coalition



The Anne Arundel County Healthy Babies Coalition celebrated its first anniversary in September 2007. The Coalition has spent the past year working towards the goal of ending African American maternal and infant health disparities in the County. During the Coalition's first year, it developed and began to implement a comprehensive plan to improve the health of the County's African American pregnant women and infants. The plan includes community health interventions and a health information campaign. The Coalition's influence continues to grow with membership now consisting of over 60 stakeholders including government representatives, community groups, health care providers, faith organizations and County residents.

The Coalition's first year has been successful, but much work remains to be done. We ask that you continue to support the Coalition and encourage your colleagues to join the Coalition. Together we can make a difference in the health of Anne Arundel County's pregnant women and infants. For more information about the Coalition, please contact Laurie Fetterman, M.S.W., at 410-222-7203 or hdfett00@aacounty.org.

Thank you for your continued support of the Anne Arundel County Healthy Babies Coalition.

Sincerely,

Charlestine Fairley, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Anne Arundel County Healthy Babies Coalition

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Safe Sleep for Babies Starts with a Safe Crib



The Anne Arundel County Department of Health recently received an injury prevention grant to pilot a program that distributes portable cribs to families in need of a safe sleep environment for their babies. The parent or guardian must show proof of Anne Arundel County residency and current eligibility for Maryland Medical Assistance, WIC, Food Stamps or Healthy Start or other proof of hardship. Before receiving a crib, parents or guardians receive education about the proper use of the crib and safe sleeping practices. Parents and guardians are asked to sign a pledge card promising that they will provide a safe sleep environment for their babies. Parents and guardians receiving a portable crib are contacted in 30-60 days to assess knowledge and use of safe sleeping

practices. The pilot project is being conducted with Anne Arundel County Department of Health's Healthy Start program and the YWCA West County Family Support Center. If successful, the program may expand to include eligible families in other programs throughout Anne Arundel County.

Subcommittee News and Updates

Access to Care and Provider Issues Subcommittee

The Access to Care and Provider Issues Subcommittee is currently working on identifying potential barriers to prenatal care and forming recommendations to address them. The Subcommittee has held meetings with staff from the Department of Health, the Department of Social Services and managed care organizations to research the procedures that pregnant women must follow in order to access care through the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP). Analyzing the MCHP application process and the managed care process is a crucial step in identifying potential delays in accessing early and consistent prenatal care. The Subcommittee is continuing to identify and research additional potential barriers to care. As part of the Subcommittee's ongoing effort to assure access to quality health care services, the Subcommittee is drafting a report that proposes recommendations for improving access to care for pregnant women and children.



Community Education and Outreach Subcommittee

Be sure to complete the Healthy Babies Perinatal Education Survey available online at www.aahealth.org/healthybabiesurvey.asp

The Community Education and Outreach Subcommittee has been conducting a survey of maternal and infant health programs in Anne Arundel County. The survey will identify strengths and possible gaps in perinatal education programs offered to County families. The survey will also assist the Coalition in planning programs that will help improve outcomes for African American women and babies.

Race and Community Issues Subcommittee

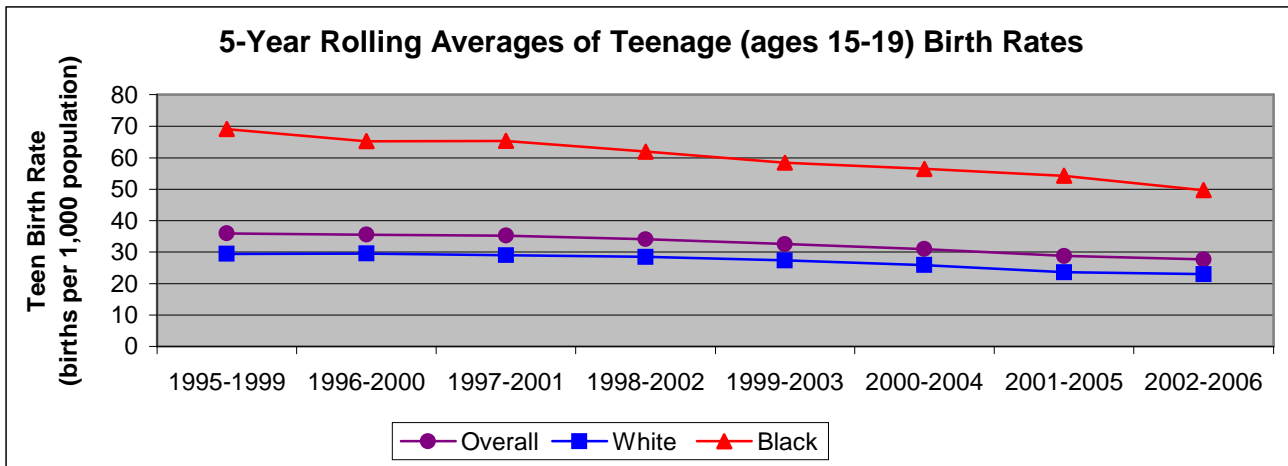
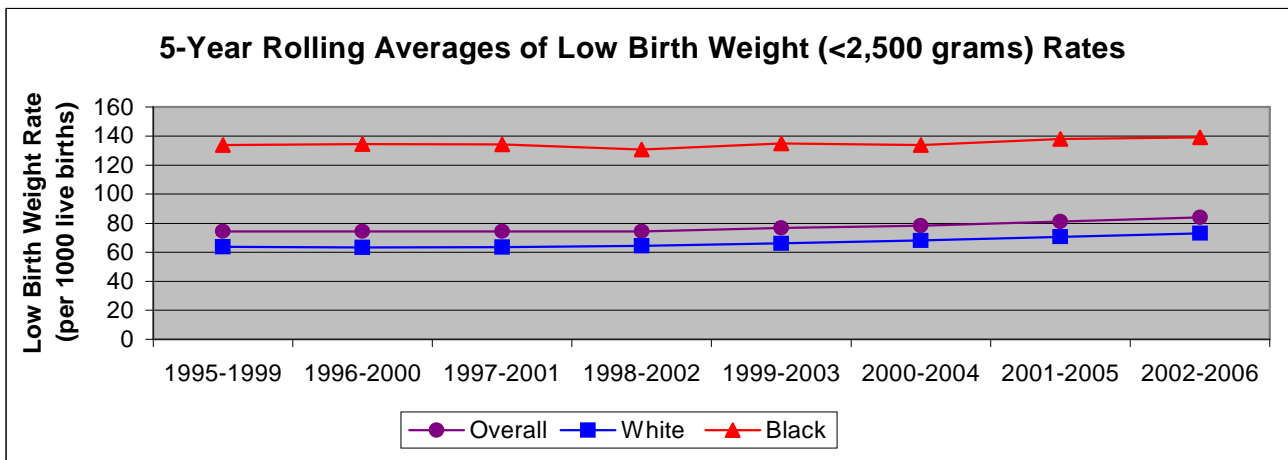
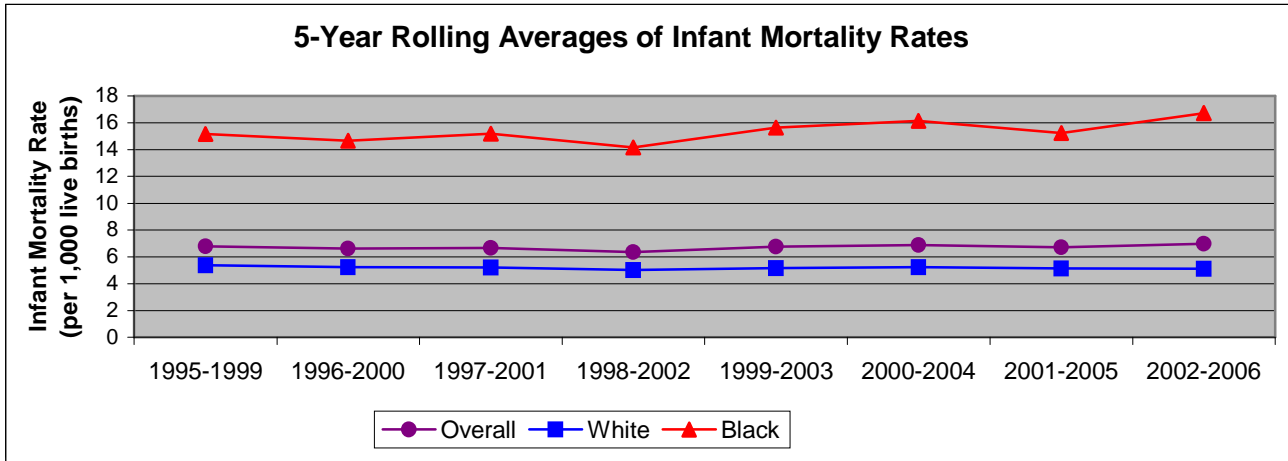
The Race and Community Issues Subcommittee members have begun work on the activities outlined in the Coalition's *Implementation Plan for Community Health Interventions*. The Subcommittee is focused on ensuring that the outreach efforts, programs and services available in Anne Arundel County are both culturally appropriate and responsive to the needs of African American County residents. Ongoing work efforts of the Race and Community Issues Subcommittee are focused on conducting research to support the development and implementation of programs and services targeting pregnant and parenting African American women and their partners. These programs provide information and education on topics such as prenatal health, having a healthy pregnancy, infant care, life skills and community resources.

Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Subcommittee

The Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Subcommittee meets monthly to strategize ways to reduce teenage pregnancy. Subcommittee members have been asked to provide their mission statement and a description of services that their organizations offer. This information will be used to develop linkages between services so that plans can be implemented to reduce infant mortality and teenage pregnancy. The Subcommittee also aims to promote healthy decision making and provide health education to the County's teenage population.

***Would you like to join a Subcommittee?
See Page 6 of this newsletter for Subcommittee Chairperson contact information.***

Infant Health Data
Anne Arundel County, Maryland



Data Sources: All data is from calendar year of birth and/or death certificate data from the Vital Statistics Administration, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Healthy Babies Information Campaign

The Healthy Babies information campaign was launched in May 2007 to raise awareness about the high rate of infant deaths in Anne Arundel County's African American community and provide a call to action. The campaign includes media releases, radio and print advertisements, posters, flyers and resource directory brochures.

These materials encourage parents and caregivers to call the Family Tree Tot's Line for Anne Arundel County at 1-877-817-TOTS(8687) for advice and referrals to County services. Callers can also request free information kits about pregnancy and baby care. **Information is also available on the "Healthy Moms and Healthy Babies" Web page on the Department of Health's Web site, www.ahealth.org/healthybabies.asp.**

The campaign now includes specific risk reduction messages to improve pregnancy and infant health outcomes. Information cards on fetal movements, preterm labor and safe sleeping for babies are now available. These materials are being distributed to health and social service providers within the County. Since the campaign's launch, over 5,200 resource directory brochures, 1,580 flyers and 125 posters have been distributed.

To order Healthy Babies information, contact Laurie Fetterman at 410-222-7203 or hdfett00@aacounty.org

In Spring 2008, the Healthy Babies information campaign will include print and radio advertisements to promote safe sleeping for babies. Posters and flyers are available for distribution and display at health and social service provider offices, churches and other community gathering places.

Stork's Nest Prenatal Education Program

The Anne Arundel County Stork's Nest is a free prenatal education program for Anne Arundel County pregnant women. Stork's Nest was started in September 2006 to reduce disparities in pregnancy and birth outcomes in the County's high-risk pregnant women. Stork's Nest teaches pregnant women and their partners how to have a healthy pregnancy and baby. More than 60 women and their partners have completed a 6-week series of prenatal education classes. The classes cover topics such as fetal development, healthy behaviors for pregnancy, warning signs of preterm labor, breastfeeding and baby care.

Stork's Nest uses a point-based incentive system to encourage participation. Women earn points by attending Stork's Nest prenatal education classes, going to their prenatal care appointments and participating in other healthy activities. Women receive additional points if their partners also attend the prenatal education classes and health care appointments. Points can be exchanged for a variety of baby care items at The Nest, a store and educational center in Baltimore Washington Medical Center's Outreach Center at Arundel Mills Mall. After their baby is born, women can continue to earn points by breastfeeding and taking their baby to well baby check-ups. Women can remain in the program until their baby is one year old.



All pregnant Anne Arundel County residents are eligible to participate in Stork's Nest.

Priority is given to high-risk women.

For more information, call the Stork's Nest program coordinator, Kim Davidson, at 410-787-4366.

Stork's Nest is a partnership of Baltimore Washington Medical Center, the Anne Arundel County Department of Health, the March of Dimes Maryland Chapter and the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Rho Eta Zeta Chapter. The Nest's store is stocked with baby items donated by individuals and community organizations.

Healthy Babies Coalition in the Community and in the News

The Anne Arundel County Healthy Babies Coalition has been making a difference and making the news in Anne Arundel County, the state of Maryland and the nation.

Various coalition members have attended local health fairs and community events on behalf of the Coalition and distributed Healthy Babies information campaign materials to County residents.

The Coalition has been featured in several editions (Winter 2007, Spring 2007, Fall 2006) of the Maryland Perinatal Network Newsletter. The newsletters are available at <http://www.fha.state.md.us/mch/html/perinatalnetwork.cfm>. The Coalition and the activities of Coalition members have also received media coverage from *The Baltimore Sun*, *Capital* and *Maryland Gazette*.

In December 2007, the Coalition sponsored a Safe Babies Conference with the Anne Arundel County Departments of Health and Social Services, Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Team and Local Management Board. The Conference was attended by over 50 service providers and featured presentations about safe sleep, shaken baby syndrome, injury prevention, bereavement issues and resources.

In November 2007, the Coalition participated in a racial disparities panel at a March of Dimes Prematurity Summit. The Coalition shared information about the Healthy Babies information campaign with more than 130 professionals from the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

In August 2007, the Coalition was featured in a presentation and poster session at the 2007 National Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (NFIMR) Conference. The Coalition was also asked to submit an article for an upcoming NFIMR newsletter.

Girls in Real Life Situations: Preventing Additional Teen Pregnancies to Pregnant and Parenting Teens

The Empowering Believers Church of the Apostolic Faith in Glen Burnie, a member of the Anne Arundel County Healthy Babies Coalition, is offering a new mentoring program for African American pregnant and parenting teenage girls (ages 18 and younger). *Girls In Real Life Situations (GIRLS)* teaches life skills, encourages educational attainment and aims to prevent additional teenage pregnancies. Mentors and teens do not need to be members of Empowering Believers Church to participate. GIRLS is provided in partnership with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health and with grant funding from the Anne Arundel County Local Management Board. For more information, call Patricia Butler at 410-761-9272.



It's Your Life, Take Charge of It!



During the past year, Restoration Community Development Corporation (RCDC), an Annapolis-based Coalition member, conducted *It's Your Life, Take Charge of It!*, a series of three educational events for African American girls and women of reproductive age. These events educated participants about preconception health and provided specific risk reduction messages to improve the chances of having a healthy pregnancy and baby. This program was conducted in partnership with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health and was funded by a grant from the March of Dimes Maryland Chapter. RCDC has applied for additional grant funding to offer this program again in 2008. For more information, contact Sherry Medley at 410-267-6350.

**ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY
HEALTHY BABIES COALITION**

**BE A HEALTHY MOM.
HAVE A HEALTHY BABY.**

c/o Anne Arundel County
Department of Health
3 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401
[http://www.aahealth.org/
healthybabies.asp](http://www.aahealth.org/healthybabies.asp)

Coalition Contact:

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Access to Care and Provider Issues

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Community Education and Outreach

Subcommittee Contact:

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Race and Community Issues

Subcommittee Contact:

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Disproportionate Minority
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Local Management Board of
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Teenage Pregnancy Prevention

Subcommittee Contact:

Pastor Sheryl Menendez
Executive Director
Restoration Community
Development Corporation
Phone: 410-267-6350
Fax: 410-267-6112
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Upcoming Events and Services for Anne Arundel County Residents

Upcoming Events:

March 8 -15, 2008 - Tobacco Free Kids Week -
Order an Activity Planning Kit Now!; Free;
Contact: Learn To Live Line at 410-222-7979 or
visit www.SmokingStinks-aaco.org, click on TFK
Week. Smoking Stinks is part of Learn To Live,
the Healthy Living program of the Anne Arundel
County Department of Health.



Save The Date!

Healthy Babies Coalition Meeting
Monday, April, 14, 2008, 8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Sojourner-Douglass College, Edgewater, MD

Additional information will be e-mailed to Coalition Members

Community Services:

Girls In Real Life Situations (GIRLS), a mentoring program for pregnant
and parenting teens; Free; Contact: Patricia Butler at 410-761-9272.

Stork's Nest Prenatal Education Program; Free; Contact: Kim Davidson at
410-787-4366

Anne Arundel County Department of Health Services:

Adolescent and Family Services; Mental Health and Addiction Counseling
Services; Free; Contact: 410-222-6785, Monday - Wednesday 8:00 a.m. -
8:00 p.m. and Thursday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Adult Smoking Cessation Classes; Free; Contact: Learn To Live Line at
410-222-7979 or www.aahealth.org/ltl_smokcessation.asp.

Child Car Safety Seat Checks; Free by appointment only; Contact: 410-
222-4223.

Healthy Start Program for high-risk women and infants; Free; Contact:
410-222-7177.

Reproductive Health Services; Free/Sliding Scale; Contact: 410-222-7145.

Substance Abuse Prevention Presentations in all settings for all ages;
Free; Contact: Prevention and Education Services at 410-222-6724.

Substance Abuse Treatment Referral Line; Free; Contact: 410-222-0117,
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Strengthening Families Program: Parenting and Life Skills to Improve
Family Relationships (14 session program); Free; Contact Carolyn
Douglas at 410-222-6724.

**Do you know of any nonprofit events to be included in future issues of
the Healthy Babies Coalition Newsletter?**

E-mail the information to Laurie Fetterman at hdfett00@aacounty.org.