



## *Fall 2020 Newsletter*

**The Healthy Start Coalition of Okaloosa and Walton Counties** is a program dedicated to the health and wellbeing of local pregnant women, infants, and families. The local coalition is part of a statewide consortium of 32 Healthy Start Coalitions who provide services in all 67 counties in the state of Florida. The Healthy Start Coalition is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization led by a volunteer board of directors. Our services are provided by trained professionals known as **Healthy Start Care Coordinators**. Our Okaloosa County Services Provider is **Chautauqua Healthcare Services** and our Walton County Service Provider is the **Walton County Health Department**.

### Program Participants Learn:

- What to expect during pregnancy and child birth
- Baby developmental milestones
- Parenting tips
- Household budgeting
- Strategies to build a strong family foundation

### Care Coordinators Also Cover:

- Safe sleep practices
- Car seat safety
- Healthy nutrition
- Breastfeeding tips
- Smoking cessation techniques
- Continued support during the baby's first year

KNOWS WHAT TO EXPECT DURING PREGNANCY

HAS RESOURCES FOR 2-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER AND BABY-TO-BE

QUIT SMOKING DURING PREGNANCY

BEGAN PRENATAL CARE IN FIRST TRIMESTER

SUCCESSFULLY BREASTFEEDS BABY



In fiscal year 2019 - 2020 Healthy Start served **671** women and infants throughout Okaloosa and Walton Counties!

2019 - 2020 COALITION SUCCESSES

PRENATAL SCREENING RATE: 77.23%

INFANT SCREENING RATE: 98.80%

WOMEN SERVED: 471 Women

INFANTS SERVED: 200 Infants

TOTAL SERVICES: 14,901 Services Provided

VIRTUAL SERVICES: 984 Services Provided (Mar 2019 - Jun 2019)

INFANTS SCREENED FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS: 113

MOTHERS SCREENED FOR DEPRESSION: 801

Thank you to ALL the OB/GYN Physicians and Labor and Delivery Hospitals throughout Okaloosa and Walton Counties for participating in the Healthy Start Prenatal and Infant Screening process!

*Educating the Public through PSAs and Billboards*

Our top priority at the Healthy Start Coalition is to reduce infant mortality and to promote messages of health and safety to pregnant women, parents, and caregivers of small children. With the continued partnership with Cumulus Broadcasting we were able to share the following education in a way that is both creative and effective.

*Much appreciation to the Cumulus Broadcasting team for their continued support in our community education endeavors.*



The following Public Service Announcements were written by the Healthy Start Coalition, recorded by Cumulus Broadcasting, and played over local radio stations throughout the year.

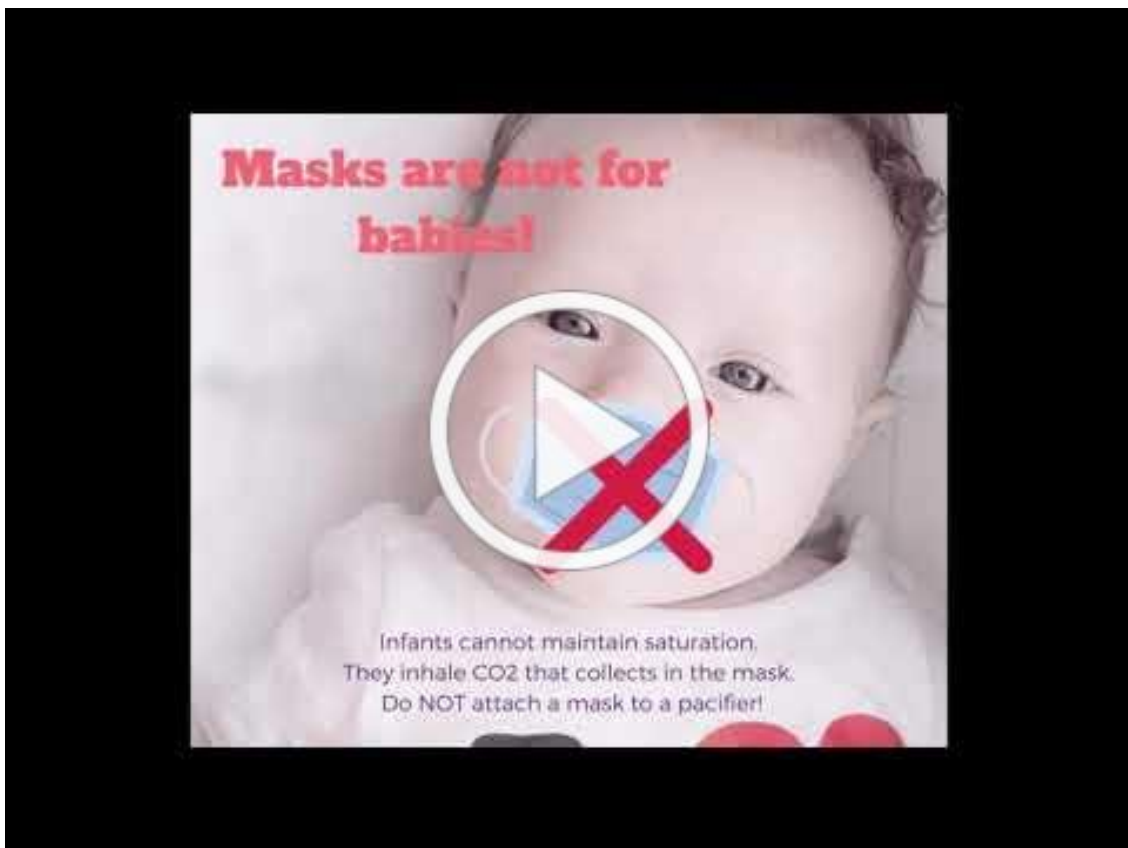
## Safe Sleep PSA



## Shaken Baby PSA



## Babies Should NOT Wear Masks PSA



## Children in Hot Cars PSA



## Water Safety PSA



## Billboards

Another way that we have shared health and safety education through out the two counties is through the use of billboards. The Healthy Start Coalition purchased billboard space in Crestview, Fort Walton Beach and Freeport and shared the following messages.



## *Our Loss is their Gain - Baby Shower Food*

As many of you know, our World's Greatest Baby Shower that was set for March of 2020 was postponed. One big loss we incurred was the event food had already been ordered and received by the Convention Center and would have perished before our rescheduled event. We were fortunate enough to find two nonprofits in our area, Children in Crisis and The Arc of the Emerald Coast, with sufficient freezer space to store the food and many mouths to enjoy it!



The  
Children's  
Neighborhood

*Children in Crisis, Inc.*  
Providing Homes... Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together.



**The Arc**  
of the Emerald Coast

## *Continuing to Provide Client Support Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Since March, 2020 our Healthy Start Care Coordinators have been providing their clients support and services from a distance. To keep our staff and clients safe, all home visiting services are being provided via phone or video conferencing. **Here is one story sharing how Nancy DeJesus, a Healthy Start Care Coordinator, supported her client through the COVID-19 Pandemic.**

On top of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and having a newborn in the home, this Healthy Start Client and her children have fallen on hard times since her husband was detained by Immigration Services. This family has relied on the kindness and generosity of their community. Healthy



Start Care Coordinator, Nancy, helped connect her client with Spanish churches in the community to provide them with support, food, and other necessities. Nancy also helped them to obtain an attorney that specializes in immigration law and spoke their language so that the client could communicate affectively and work to get her husband released. This family is very grateful for the non-judgmental support and help they have received from Healthy Start and their community.

## Fighting the Spread of COVID19 - Update

As mentioned in our Summer Newsletter, we received a large quantity of fabric masks from the Florida Department of Health to help combat the spread of the Coronavirus. We were grateful to receive some of these masks and have shared them with a handful of community partners, as well as all the OB/GYN providers in Okaloosa and Walton Counties.

We still have a large quantity left to distribute. If your organization is in need of masks or is in a position to help distribute these to the community, please reach out to our Community Liaison, Jordyn Autry at [jordyn@hsow.org](mailto:jordyn@hsow.org) or (850)833-9284.



**Remember**, masks should **NOT** be worn by babies under the age of two. Babies have smaller airways and a mask prohibits their ability to breathe and can lead to suffocation. Please do not put a mask or face covering on babies.

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