



Baby Business

2, 2023

Healthy Start Launches a Fatherhood Program



Many new fathers struggle to figure out their role when their wife or partner has a baby. Our new fatherhood program offers education, training, and support to help men become the responsible, engaged, and empowered fathers their children need them to be. T.E.A.M. Dad (Teaching, Empowering, Advocating, and Mentoring) will now play a vital role in supporting new and soon-to-be dads in Okaloosa and Walton Counties. This is a free program that equips fathers with the self-awareness, compassion, and a sense of responsibility that every good parent needs. The evidence-based curriculum entitled 24/7 Dad®, from National Fatherhood Initiative, will be utilized during face-to-face home visiting with fathers.

How Does T.E.A.M. Dad Help?

- Improve Parenting and Co-Parenting Skills
- Ability to Recognize your Child's Developmental Milestones
 - Increase Skills to Build Healthy Relationships
 - Provide Tools to Improve Economic Stability
 - Guide to Setting Personal Development Goals
- And much more....

Alfred Holland, our new Fatherhood Coach, is excited to be a part of T.E.A.M. Dad and looks forward to helping fathers on their parenting journey. "My goal is to help educate new fathers on the F.A.C.T.S. of Fatherhood; Faith, Accountability, Commitment, Trust, and Sacrifice."



**CHILDREN WHO GROW
UP WITH INVOLVED
FATHERS EXPERIENCE
BETTER MENTAL,
EMOTIONAL,
EDUCATIONAL, AND
SOCIAL OUTCOMES.**

G.R.O.W. Doula Program
(Guidance, Resource, Openhearted, Wisdom)



Pictured above are the 15 recently trained Doulas

Simply Healthcare, a Medicaid Managed Care Organization, partnered with the Healthy Start Coalitions in the panhandle of Florida, to certify 15 more new doulas through the G.R.O.W. Doula program.

Doulas are professionally trained to advise, inform, and offer emotional and physical support to a mother before, during, and after the birth of her child. Research shows that women who have support from a doula during childbirth were more likely to have better birth outcomes and lower the rates of maternal and infant health complications.

The Coalition of Okaloosa and Walton Counties had three candidates attend this training and they are now **G.R.O.W Doula** certified. Congratulations to **Tanya Gonzales**, **Carlee Anderson**, and **Amarylis Emrick** for their doula certifications. We will soon be referring Healthy Start clients with limited emotional and physical support during their pregnancy. The Coalition plans to increase the number of Healthy Start doulas so we can serve more high-risk clients, with the ultimate goal of lowering our infant and maternal mortality rates.

What does a Doula do?



Supports the birth YOU want



Can decrease time spent in labor



Offers physical and emotional support



Can decrease the use of pain medication



Can decrease the risk of Cesarean



Can be a huge support for your partner

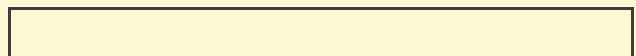
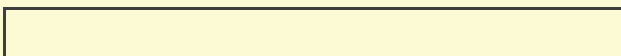


Healthy Start

Okaloosa-Walton

Coalition Staff News

Meet Our Newest Staff





Alfred Holland brings to the T.E.A.M. Dad program a variety of skill sets that he obtained as a teacher, entrepreneur, coach, and most importantly a **father** and **father figure**. Alfred attended North Carolina A&T where he studied Business Education. During his time there he played football and baseball for the Aggies. Alfred is the proud father of his son, who is an active duty member in the United States Navy. To many, Alfred is also known as Coach Holland. He has mentored over 100 youths during his career and has had the opportunity to play an important and positive role in their lives. "I look forward to building the T.E.A.M. Dad program and coaching fathers, in both Okaloosa and Walton County, to be the absolute best father they can be." In his spare time, Alfred enjoys playing golf and all the fishing that life on the Gulf Coast offers.



The Coalition happily welcomes back Tanya Gonzales to the team. Tanya was hired to perform two important roles as both a Coordinated Intake and Referral Specialist and the Program Manager for our new **G.R.O.W. Doula program**. Being bi-lingual, in both English and Spanish, will be beneficial when communicating with our Spanish-speaking clientele. Tanya received her Associate of Arts degree at Northwest Florida State College. She later received her Bachelor of Arts degree with a focus on Interdisciplinary Social Science of Children and Society through the University of West Florida. Prior to moving to Florida, she lived in Phoenix, Arizona where she worked in nonprofit organizations for 15 years serving families and their communities. "I am passionate about helping others and enjoy connecting, as well as providing resources to individuals and families based on their specific needs." In her spare time, Tonya loves hanging out with her family and enjoying the outdoors.



Correct car seat use for infants reduces the risk for injury in a crash by as much as 71%.



Car Seat Safety



Pictured: (left) Miranda practices installing a car seat base during the CPS course. (right) One of Okaloosa's smallest resident's mom and dad made sure he was buckled up properly at our first Car Seat Safety Inspection event in February.

In November, Miranda Smolen, our community liaison, was certified as a Child Passenger Safety Technician. Miranda attended an intensive 4-day training course and passed both the written and practical exams. This course ensures that the

technicians are familiar with all types of car seats, booster seats, and vehicle restraint systems, as well as the best practices for the use of child passenger restraint systems for children of different ages and sizes.

Since her certification, Healthy Start has held 2 Car Seat Safety events at the Okaloosa County Department of Health and has worked with another community partner in Walton County for an additional event. Healthy Start's goal is to educate the parents and caregivers on the importance of child passenger safety.

Another Excellent Resource Access Meeting



On December 8th, 2022 the Healthy Start Coalition hosted a resource Access Meeting in Niceville, Florida. There were 40+ representatives from organizations and businesses who serve similar clients, being pregnant women and families with young children. The guest speaker was Ashley McDougald, from the [Jo Ann Birge Women and Children's Center](#). The center is a residential substance abuse disorder rehabilitation facility located in Defuniak Springs. Women are allowed to bring their children (ages 3 and under) with them while they are part of the program. While in treatment, the women must qualify for a substance abuse diagnosis, treatment, and training. They also must be able to handle all daily living activities. Program participants can stay up to one year, but the first 90 days are the intensive portion of treatment. The center's counselors work closely with courts and probation officers, hospitals, and other local programs. There also have a 24-hour open hotline available for referrals.

All guests in attendance were provided an opportunity to share about their organizations. The Access Meetings are always very informative, helpful, and full of great networking opportunities!

Our next Access Meeting will be held on June 23

If you are interested in attending or have a work associate that would benefit from learning about helpful resources in our community, please click the link and sign up for [Access Meeting invites](#).

WORLD'S GREATEST BABY SHOWER



It is time again for the World's Greatest Baby Shower! This annual event will be held on Thursday, April 27th at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center, from 5:00pm-8:00pm. This event is a memorable occasion especially designed for new parents, expectant parents, and their family members! Healthy Start looks forward to hosting this exciting affair that will welcome approximately 1,300 participants. The 50+ informative exhibits, numerous prizes, guest Swag-Bags, and refreshments all add to this lively and fun-filled celebration! Our goal with the World's Greatest Baby Shower is to bring resources to new parents that will help them and their baby succeed, while also showering them with support and congratulations!

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Before all the baby talk, let's talk babies

When you choose to deliver your baby at Ascension Sacred Heart Emerald Coast, our doctors and care teams personalize your care plan to deliver the care that's right for you. And with our Baby-Friendly® designation, on-site Level II neonatal intensive care unit, and connection to the Studer Family Children's Hospital in Pensacola, you and your baby have access to the highest level of pediatric care in the region.

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Sacred Heart**

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**As you grow your family,
you join ours.**

Just as every baby is unique, so is every delivery. As your partner in care, HCA Florida Fort Walton - Destin Hospital's Women's and Children's Center provides a customized birthing experience that begins long before your first



contraction and continues well after delivery.

Our maternity services are provided in a secure environment and we prioritize your health as much as your baby's. We offer:

- Comprehensive NICU care for babies, including specialist support from Nemour's Children's Health
- Midwifery care with a low-intervention birthing experience
- 24/7 lactation support hotline
- Monthly classes, including birthing, breastfeeding, and infant and child safety/CPR
- Labor and delivery unit tours for expectant moms

Please join us at the World's Greatest Baby Shower!



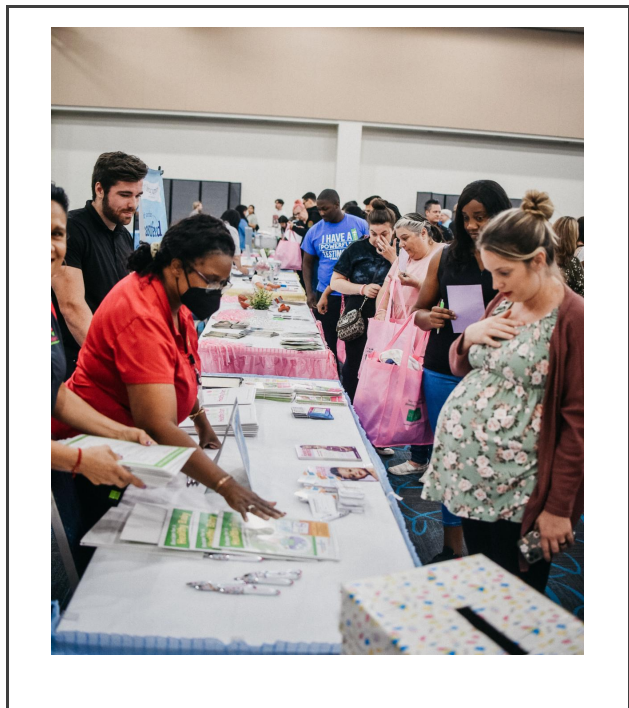
OUR FEATURED PROGRAMS:

PARENTING FOR PREVENTION: Offering evidence-based parenting programs to parents of children birth to teens.

RISE: The Resiliency Increasing Skills and Education (RISE) program provides individual, group, and family support to elementary and middle school students

WFIS: The Women and Family Intervention Services program helps pregnant women ensure their babies are born healthy and drug-free. Services include relapse prevention skill-building.

SERVING ESCAMBIA, SANTA ROSA, OKALOOSA AND WALTON COUNTIES. CALL US AT (888) 994-9944



NEED HELP PAYING FOR CHILD CARE?

Do you work/attend school at least 20 hours a week and have children under the age of 13 years?

Call (850)-833-3627 or scan the QR code to see if you qualify for assistance paying for child care! Our School Readiness Program is for children ages birth to 13 from eligible families. Our VPK Program (free pre-kindergarten program) is available for all children residing in Florida who will turn 4 on or before September 1st of the current school year.

1130 N. Eglin Pkwy · Shalimar, FL
850.853.3627 · elc-ec.org



Thank You

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NORTH OKALOOSA
MEDICAL CENTER



Are you looking for Family Resources?

Click the button below for our Family Resource Directory.

If you would like a physical copy or are interested in being added to our next copy, please reach out to miranda@hsow.org.

[Resource Directory](#)

Healthy Start Coalition of Okaloosa & Walton Counties | 850-833-9284
miranda@hsow.org | <http://healthystartokawalton.org/>

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram!



Healthy Start is a free program that provides education and care coordination to pregnant women and families with children under the age of three.

Healthy Start Coalition of Okaloosa and Walton Counties | 102 Beal Pkwy SW, Suite B, Fort Walton, FL 32548

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