

Healthy Start: Strengthening Maternal and Infant Health in Florida

Accessing quality maternal and infant health services remains a challenge for many Florida families. While investments have helped, barriers persist:



Preterm Births: 74.6% of counties in Florida have a high burden of chronic health conditions and a high rate of preterm births.¹



Inadequate Prenatal Care: 20.8% of mothers received no or inadequate prenatal care.²



Maternity Care Deserts: 1 in 5 (19.4%) Florida counties lack local obstetric services, forcing women to travel long distances for care.³



Data show that Healthy Start services work:

42%

lower infant mortality rate among families receiving services

35%

fewer premature births with full intervention

295k

families linked to critical resources through the **Connect program**

50%

reduction in C-section rates and 72% fewer low birth weight babies through the **G.R.O.W. Doula™ model**

700+

fathers engaged in child development support through the **TEAM Dad program**

Sustaining and expanding Healthy Start funding is critical to improving maternal health outcomes and supporting families. Continued investment will:



Improve outcomes for more at-risk families



Reduce caseloads and expand access to care



Increase availability of well-trained and supported doulas



Empower more new dads today and create stronger families tomorrow

Healthy Start is a cost-effective solution that improves maternal and infant health and strengthens Florida families.

We urge lawmakers to fully fund Healthy Start to ensure that every mother and baby in Florida has access to essential care and support.

1. Where You Live Matters: Maternity Care in Florida, March of Dimes, 2023, <https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/assets/s3/reports/mcd/Maternity-Care-Report-Florida.pdf>, Accessed 3/5/25.

2. STET

3. STET