

Healthy Start Facts



For more than 20 years, Healthy Start has been assisting pregnant women, interconception women, infants, and children up to age three to obtain the health care and social support needed to reduce the risks for poor maternal and child health outcomes.

Healthy Start offers universal risk screening for all Florida Pregnant Women and Infants to ensure that early care is directed to those families where there is the best chance of preventing or minimizing adverse outcomes. During 2014, a total of 180,902 women and 207,331 infants were screened for Healthy Start.



The range of Healthy Start services available to identified women and infants include:

- Information, referral and ongoing care coordination and support to assure access to needed services
- Psychosocial, nutritional, and smoking cessation counseling
- Childbirth, breastfeeding, and substance abuse education
- Home visiting
- Interconception education and counseling

Many health indicators for mothers and children are improving:

- The percentage of 2-year-olds completing their immunizations has risen from 63.2% in 1991 to 85.7% in 2014.
- The infant mortality rate has declined from 8.9 per 1,000 live births in 1991 to 6.0 in 2014, with a decline in the black population from 16.3 in 1991 to 11.0 in 2014.
- Fewer teenagers are having babies with the rate of births to teens, ages 15-17, dropping from 45.3 per 1,000 in 1991 to 9.1 per 1,000 in 2014.
- The percentage of women beginning prenatal care during the first trimester has risen from 74.9% in 1991 to 79.4%. The method for calculating trimester of entry changed in 2004. The new method of calculation brought the rate down, so the improvement in trimester entry rate is actually greater than indicated by these rates.
- The percentage of women reporting tobacco use during pregnancy has declined from 17% in 1991 to 6.4% in 2014.

There are 32 Healthy Start coalitions and one county health department that provide Healthy Start services covering all of Florida's 67 counties. The coalitions conduct assessments of community resources and needs, identify gaps and barriers to effective service delivery, and develop a service delivery plan to address identified problem areas and issues.

The **toll-free Family Health Line, 1-800-451-BABY**, provides statewide information and referral to the general public as a way of increasing access to prenatal and infant care.

