

# Starting Off Right

A Quarterly Newsletter from  
Healthy Start Coalition of Jefferson,  
Madison & Taylor Counties, Inc.

SPRING 2016



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## We'll Miss Our Great Neighbor!

### Coalition Praises Bright Beginnings

"While the Healthy Start Coalition certainly supports the solid and reluctant decisions behind the closing of the Bright Beginnings Early Head Start Center," Healthy Start Coalition of Jefferson, Madison & Taylor Counties Executive Director Donna Hagan stated, "our closest neighbor and largest partner for the 0-3 population will be dearly missed. The sound of toddlers laughing and the distinct crying of newborns that were often distracting will be a longed-for memory after May 27th when Bright Beginnings closes its doors in Greenville."

Although the center remains open in Madison, and limited home-based services will be available in the Greenville community, an important symbol of resiliency for the most vulnerable population will no longer be visible in the western part of the county. Early Head Start has meant so much to the community and coalition and watching the end of a long history of services in this resource-restricted community is difficult for all who have been touched by this cornerstone of care. Leadership from throughout the community extends their best regards to the lead agency, Kids Incorporated, for this very difficult decision, and pledges continued support for the existing centers and success of the home-based services.

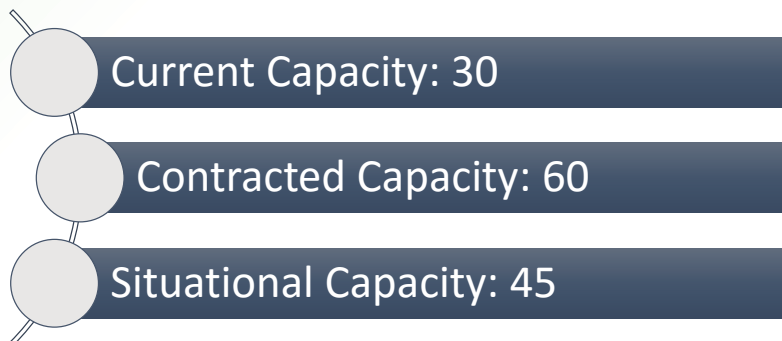


*Donna Hagan (left) and Cindy Hutto (right) will miss their close friends and trusted community partners Bright Beginnings.*



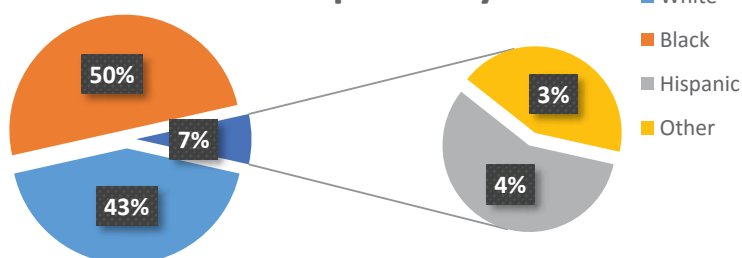
## Healthy Families Seven Rivers (HFSR) Snapshot as of April 2016

50%



### Demographics

#### HFSR Participants by Race



#### COUNTY DISPERSION

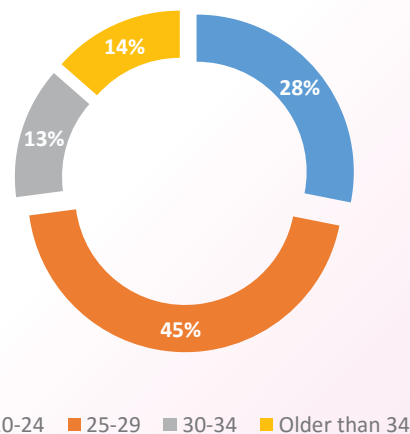
- Jefferson: 2
- Hamilton: 3
- Lafayette: 0
- Madison: 12
- Taylor: 13

83% Not 'First- Time' Parents

73% Never married

65% unemployed

#### HFSR Participants by Age



**Continued on next page**

## Healthy Families Seven Rivers (HFSR) Snapshot as of April 2016 Continued

Healthy Families Seven Rivers (HFSR) continues to tirelessly serve families in our five-county target area. We have reached 50% of our 60-family capacity with Taylor and Madison counties sharing the greatest need. My team has had the pleasure of serving parents and children from a plethora of backgrounds as can be seen from the demographic data displayed on the previous page.

Most of our families are not first-time parents. As with any skill, parenting takes practice and parents in our communities understand that support is necessary when trying to successfully parent. The majority of the families in our program are the most vulnerable; they are the single parents who have suffered unemployment and are usually socially isolated. HFSR staff continues to work hard in making connections with other services in the community

to best serve this vulnerable population. We have grown to be a viable resource in the community through our ability to make connections with other services like Healthy Start, The American Red Cross, HIPPY, Taylor County Recovery Center, and FLCHAIN. While working with these families, we have been able to provide parenting needs, advocacy, and resource linkage during desperate times.

Our Baby Bucks store continues to



**Baby Bucks Store**

grow and is well stocked to provide items that families work to obtain. These are not handouts. The families work weekly through practicing positive parenting techniques, modeling their understanding and striving to change learned, detrimental behaviors. The use of the incentive store has encouraged parents to save to purchase items needed to create a clean and healthy space for their children.

All children deserve to be loved in an abuse- and neglect-free environment. HFSR works daily to remind parents that, with their love and nurturing, they have the ability to provide this type of environment.

For more information about Healthy Families Seven Rivers, please feel to contact Rebecca Severin, Program Manager, at 850-948-2741 or at [rseverin@healthystartjmt.org](mailto:rseverin@healthystartjmt.org).

## CI&R Launches in Jefferson, Madison and Taylor Counties

The Coordinated Intake and Referral (CI&R) Action Learning Collaborative Team project kicked off on Feb. 26, 2016, at the Madison County Library to the excitement of all present. The Healthy Start Coalition of Jefferson, Madison & Taylor Counties, along with Healthy Families Seven Rivers, hosted the strategic planning session which included local representation from the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting-funded project, Federal Healthy Start Program, Early Head Start, Early Steps, other home visitation programs, consumers, and key stakeholders.

CI&R is a collaborative process that will use the universal prenatal and infant screen as a single point of entry for various home visiting, care coordination, education, and support services. The goal is for families to receive the best services for their needs and preferences, as well as to minimize duplication of services, ensure effective use of local resources, and collectively track what happens to each family. Thirteen counties throughout the state, representing over 50,000 screens annually, are participating in the historic launch.

Local activities will be established to build relationships, understand available services, map current processes, and identify opportunities for change in order to determine the best model, which will then be tested for implementation. Eventually, CI&R will develop business services agreements that outline responsibilities and linkages to each other, allowing for sharing of client information.

"This idea has been out there for some time," noted local

Healthy Start Executive Director Donna Hagan. "The challenges associated with sharing privileged information is an obstacle we'll have to overcome. Once this occurs, however, the elimination of redundancy and client inconvenience will be a great victory that results in enormous cost savings."



**Front Row, left to right: Sandra Auguste (Early Head Start), Wendy Blanton (Early Head Start), Lessie Bolden (Taylor Head Start), Erika Williams (Taylor Head Start), Rebecca Severin (Healthy Families Seven Rivers, Co-Lead), Donna Hagan (Healthy Start Coalition, Co-Lead), and Shanetha Mitchell (Healthy Start Jefferson & Madison Counties).**

**Back Row, left to right: Kim Allbritton (FDOH), Tonya Bell (CCHW Coalition), Pam Davis, CEO Kids Incorporated/EHS, Linda Jones (Early Head Start), Marixa Soto (HIPPY), Tiffany Similien (2-1-1 Help Me Grow), Kristie Lutz (Taylor Healthy Start), and Shawn Seabrook (Early Steps).**





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Sarah Bayes & Linda Murphy

### Healthy Families Seven Rivers Staff

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Rebecca Severin, MPH  
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Erica Brown

Parent Educators  
Elizabeth Gooden, Tonya Cason  
& Lynda Brown

### Board Members

Gladys Roann-Watson President  
Lucile Day Vice-President  
Ernest Bruton Secretary/Treasurer  
Jefferson County Members:  
Lynn Elliott  
Tomica King

Madison County Members:  
Bonnie Webb

Taylor County Members:  
Eric Scott  
Nichole Wilder  
Corrie Willis

## Vital Signs Great Online Information Tool Vital Signs Report on Zika and Pregnancy from CDC

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released this month's Vital Signs report, focused on the threat of Zika to pregnant women and their fetuses and the steps that can be taken by pregnant women, their partners, and communities to thwart this public health threat.

### Vital Signs Issues Special Report on Alcohol and Pregnancy

#### What we know:

1. About 3.3 million women between the ages of 15–44 years are at risk of exposing their developing baby to alcohol. This is because they are drinking alcohol and not using birth control to prevent pregnancy. Furthermore, three in four women who want to get pregnant as soon as possible report drinking alcohol.
2. Exposing a developing baby to alcohol can cause fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs), which are physical, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities that last a lifetime. Some of the behavioral and intellectual disabilities may not be recognized until the child goes to school.
3. Alcohol use during pregnancy is also associated with miscarriage, stillbirth, prematurity and SIDS.
4. About half of all pregnancies are unplanned and, even if planned, most women do not know they are pregnant until they are 4–6 weeks into the pregnancy. This means a woman might be

drinking and exposing her developing baby to alcohol without knowing it.

#### Women can:

- Talk with their health care provider about their plans for pregnancy, their alcohol use, and ways to prevent pregnancy if they are not planning to get pregnant.
- Stop drinking if they are trying to get pregnant or could get pregnant.
- Ask their partner, family and friends to support their choice not to drink during pregnancy or while trying to get pregnant.
- Ask their healthcare provider or another trusted individual about resources for help if they cannot stop drinking on their own.

Visit the Vital Signs web page ([www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns)) to find the fact sheet and other materials.

**Vital**<sup>CDC</sup>**signs**<sup>TM</sup>

## Tonya Bell Featured in Media Makeover

In an effort to increase and improve its preconception health outreach, Healthy Start is performing a makeover on current CDC Show Your Love promotional media. Targeting African American females 18–29, animated and video features which accompany new print and online media are being developed with the participation of prospective and existing clients.



◀ Scan the QR code or visit  
[www.healthystartjmt.org/tonya](http://www.healthystartjmt.org/tonya)  
for a brief message from Tonya.

Hi, I'm Tonya Bell.  
Let's talk for a moment.

