

People Served by Healthy Start in 2009

The Florida Healthy Start Program helps pregnant women and infants obtain the health care and social support they need, in order to reduce infant mortality, reduce the number of low birth weight babies, and improve health and developmental outcomes. Healthy Start identifies women and infants at an increased risk for poor outcomes, provides a professional assessment of their needs, and identifies resources to address those needs. The program provides timely and important linkages, referrals, or services. Services help reduce the risks for poor maternal and infant health outcomes, including infant mortality. The Healthy Start program provides the opportunity for all babies to have the best possible chance for a healthy start in life.

The Department of Health works with the Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions, local county health departments, and other key partners to develop and implement public health interventions that address maternal and child health. The local coalitions provide Healthy Start services statewide.

Section 383.2161, Florida Statutes, requires the Department of Health to compile certain data points annually. The Department of Health collected the following data for the period January 1 through December 31, 2009. Data source: Healthy Start Executive Summary Reports.

Families at Risk – The Healthy Start screening process identified a total of 132,067 women and infants at risk for poor outcomes. This total includes 53,666 pregnant women and 30,008 infants who scored positive on their respective screens, and 48,393 pregnant women who entered Healthy Start based on other factors.

Families Receiving Services – The program provided 2,252,625 services to 124,281 pregnant women and 1,376,469 services to 79,995 infants, which includes families identified prior to 2009, as well as families referred to Healthy Start for reasons other than their screening score. Examples of this type of referral include families experiencing domestic violence, special medical issues, or homelessness.

Demand for Services – The number of pregnant women served by Healthy Start increased by 4.8 percent, as 5,689 more pregnant women received services in 2009 than in 2008. The number of services provided to pregnant women also increased. Healthy Start provided an additional 99,328 services to pregnant women in 2009 (4.6 percent increase). Healthy Start provided services to 28 fewer infants in 2009 than in 2008 and provided 36,177 more services to infants than in the previous year (2.7 percent increase).

Unmet Need – There were 68,022 at-risk families that Healthy Start providers were unable to contact in 2009. Often times families who are the most difficult to contact are experiencing issues that may influence their health outcomes, such as problems with housing, homelessness, or substance use. Healthy Start conducts consistent outreach to try to contact these families and offer services that may help to address their unique situation and improve their health outcomes.