

Innovations

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|--|---|
| Healthy Start | 2 |
| Effective Partnerships | 2 |
| A Champion for Children & Families | 2 |
| Building Outreach Through Capacity | 3 |
| Text4baby | 3 |
| The MomCare Program & Florida KidCare-Best Practices | 4 |
| Children's Health Advocacy | 5 |

Right from the Start: Healthy Start & Florida KidCare Enrollment

In 1991, Governor Lawton Chiles and First Lady Rhea Chiles convened a group of community leaders and challenged them to build local coalitions to reduce Florida's alarmingly high infant mortality rate. Out of that test grew the Healthy Start Coalitions, charged with working with communities through building strong local connections to provide high-quality prenatal care for mothers and health care for children.

Florida's Healthy Start (Florida Department of Health, 2013) initiative was signed into law on June 4, 1991. Healthy Start provides universal risk screening of all Florida's pregnant women and newborn infants to identify those at risk of poor birth, health and developmental outcomes. The Healthy Start

services available to pregnant women, infants and children up to age three include:

- Information and referral
- Comprehensive assessment of service needs in light of family and community resources
- Ongoing care coordination and support to ensure access to needed services
- Psychosocial, nutritional and smoking cessation counseling
- Childbirth, breastfeeding and parenting support and education
- Home visiting

Fl♥**rida**
KidCare

Within Florida, there are 31 Healthy Start coalitions and two county health departments that provide Healthy Start services covering all of Florida's 67 counties with over 5,100 community and volunteer members. The coalitions conduct community needs and resource assessments to identify gaps and barriers to effective service delivery.

Healthy Start
Every baby deserves a healthy start



Pinellas County Healthy Start Coalition, Inc.'s Florida KidCare Display

Healthy Start

The mission of Healthy Start encompasses the health and developmental growth of the infant by statute and access to health care. Therefore, Coalitions are committed to ensuring

access to quality health care which includes insurance for the infant and young child. Healthy Start Coalitions understand that navigating the health care system can

sometimes be frustrating and it is important to link families to one-on-one application or technical assistance.

Continued on page two

"First base is our children. The answer to all the pressing problems begins with the child." –Governor Lawton Chiles

A Champion for Children and Families

Governor Lawton Chiles devoted his years of public service to standing up for Florida's children and families. "He dedicated his service to 'building a constituency for children' that promotes the well-being of Florida's children and families." (Lawton Chiles Foundation, 2011) Lawton Mainor Chiles Jr. was born in Lakeland, Florida. He served in the Florida House of Representatives from 1958-1966 and in the State Senate, 1966-1970. He was elected as Governor in 1990.

Governor Chiles established Florida's Healthy Start program to ensure women and their babies received the prenatal and infant care they needed and deserved. Within the first six years of Florida Healthy Start, the state's infant mortality rate dropped nearly 20% and has been declining ever since. During this time, Governor Chiles was also a strong advocate at the state and national level to provide better comprehensive health care for children. His steadfast support helped push for the increase in federal dollars for children's health and when combined with the state's funding, Florida KidCare was able to provide health care coverage for an additional 256,000 children.

Healthy Start *Continued*

Interpersonal relationships make a big difference when it comes to improving program perceptions and understanding.

Community partnerships allow individuals to find local, knowledgeable experts on Florida KidCare. Florida Healthy Start Coalitions utilize their existing network of agencies not only to spread the word about Florida KidCare but to assist in enrollment and

renewal efforts. There are currently 11 Healthy Start Coalitions actively involved in or leading one of the 17 Florida KidCare Coalitions throughout the state. This report looks at this partnership and its impact upon Florida KidCare enrollment and renewal.

The target areas of the state where Healthy Start Coalitions take part in their local Florida KidCare Coalition have

demonstrated quantifiable and consistent increases in Florida KidCare enrollment. County enrollment data from 2010 through 2012 was compared for each county reflecting: Gadsden County Title XIX enrollment is up 3%; Monroe County's Title XXI increased by 4%; Pinellas County's Title XIX has increased by 8%; and Orange County's has increased by 15%.

Effective Partnerships

The uninsured population is constantly changing and no single outreach event or enrollment campaign can keep pace with this fluid population.

"Community-based enrollment weaves outreach into the very fabric of a community's life so that people have access to information and enrollment assistance when and where they need it." (The Children's Aid Society and Children's Defense Fund, 2005)

Facilitating enrollment, through building relationships with families

and providing hands-on application assistance, keeps families from getting lost along the way to completing an application (Hill, I, 2000). Community-based enrollment is one the most effective forms of facilitated enrollment. It has been overwhelmingly successful in ensuring that people who started the process actually completed the application and obtained health insurance (Hill, I, 2000).

The Center for Disease Control (2012) cites "a rich tradition exists of using

partnerships to pursue health-related goals. The purpose of partnerships is to mobilize members' commitment, talents, and assets to affect change." (p. 32)

Effective Florida KidCare outreach relies upon combined efforts to reach out to the broader community. Agencies and organizations working together can bring about worthwhile community action. This is the strength of the partnership between Florida KidCare outreach and Florida's Healthy Start Coalitions.



Jack Johnson, Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Inc.

Building Outreach through Capacity

Florida's Healthy Start Coalitions are required to create and implement a five-year service delivery plan (SDP). The SDP analyzes maternal and child health needs, identifies gaps in services and proposes strategies to address them within individual communities (Brady, 2013).

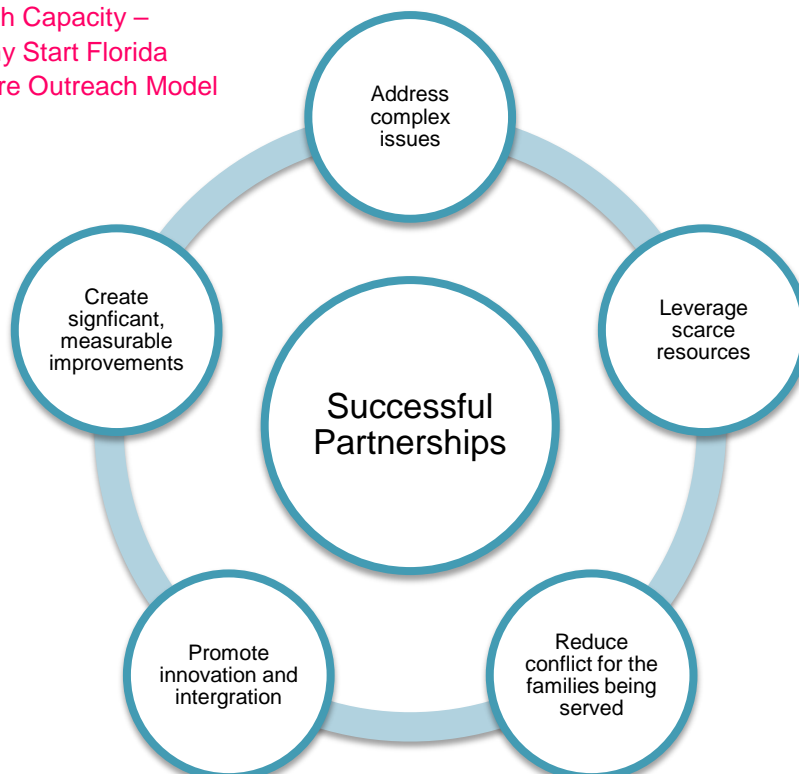
A major component of the SDP is the responsibility for Healthy Start Coalitions to participate in education activities. Depending upon the needs within a community, there are Florida Healthy Start Coalitions that incorporate Florida KidCare outreach efforts into their SDP goals, fostering a mutually beneficial relationship between these two critical programs. The integration of Florida KidCare outreach into the scope of Healthy Start services not only helps to increase awareness about health care for children, but it becomes a priority to provide opportunities for families to receive one-on-one assistance to enroll their children into

health care coverage.

The benefit to including Florida KidCare outreach within the SDP is that Healthy Start Coalitions are held accountable for results. The SDP not only ensures that outreach is implemented and executed but also evaluated and adjusted based on that evaluation to ascertain that efforts are making a community impact and increasing the capacity of Healthy Start Coalitions.

"We are held accountable for making sure service delivery plans are implemented, executed, altered; making changes based on local statistics that impact our community. A service delivery plan is how Healthy Starts nurture, execute, implement, and evaluate our ability make positive changes within our communities –Donna Hagen"

Building Outreach
through Capacity –
Healthy Start Florida
KidCare Outreach Model



Text4baby – Connecting Kids to Coverage

Connecting Kids to Coverage, the children's health coverage outreach initiative created by the Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services, is partnering with text4baby, a free national service that provides pregnant women and new mothers with text messages on health care topics that are timed with their due date or their baby's first birthday. As a result of the partnership, text4baby has refined the messages it sends to users about the importance of health coverage and how eligible children can enroll in Medicaid and CHIP.

Text4baby also sends messages about the need for good oral health care and how to care for an infant's gums and teeth. Through these joint efforts, many pregnant women and new mothers will be able to get the health information and the health coverage they need for themselves and their children. We encourage all our outreach partners to consider ways to provide mothers with free text messages on important health care issues when they help families enroll in Medicaid and CHIP. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

The MomCare Program & Florida KidCare – Best Practices

Florida KidCare outreach programs connect families to health services. Healthy Start coalitions are uniquely positioned to conduct Florida KidCare outreach; they build trusting relationships with families that are based on mutual respect and patient empowerment. As Healthy Start Coalitions encourage families to proactively improve their health for the sake of their child, they also recognize that information alone is often not enough to successfully facilitate change. A best practice for Healthy Start/Florida KidCare Coalition has been to integrate Florida KidCare education into the MomCare program. This program engages families with uninsured children throughout Florida on a daily basis.

The MomCare program improves birth outcomes and reduces infant mortality rates through guidance, education, and care coordination. Women within this program receive assistance selecting a prenatal care provider, scheduling initial prenatal visits, and information about state programs for which they may be eligible. One of the primary goals for the MomCare program is to ensure health insurance for the newborn. Therefore, MomCare care coordinators are often the first to identify not only an infant that may qualify for Florida KidCare but are also able to assist if there are any other uninsured older siblings.

There are two variations of Florida KidCare enrollment/retention outreach efforts within the MomCare program. One of the best practices is using the Healthy Start MomCare partners as health mentors. These are the Healthy Start Coalitions that have trained care coordinators on how to assist families with completing the Florida KidCare application or how to

renew their existing coverage. Care coordinators engage families in conversations about the importance of a child's health and the importance of health care coverage; wrapping the conversation up by asking families whether or not their infant has health care coverage, and if there may be siblings at home that are uninsured. For these families, they are able to enroll children into Florida KidCare during a prenatal visit or renew the child's health care coverage during a doctor appointment.

There are MomCare programs with limited resources that cannot do application assistance however these programs incorporate Florida KidCare outreach by doing "warm-hand-off" referrals. These are care coordinators that directly introduce families to community-based Florida KidCare application assistors. The reason behind the "warm hand-off" is both to establish an initial contact between the family and the assistor while conferring the trust and rapport the family has developed with care coordinator.

Other aspects of incorporating Florida KidCare outreach strategies into MomCare and other Healthy Start Coalition programs include offering hands-on application assistance during Community Baby Showers; equipping Healthy Start Care Managers with Florida KidCare information and application/renewal referral contacts. Also, providing education, application/renewal services through Father Services has been effective, as this program often works through the Department of Revenue and

Family Courts. There are also Healthy Start Coalitions that find grant opportunities to support their Florida KidCare outreach. These Healthy Start Coalitions have had funding to conduct Florida KidCare outreach activities during back-to-school; school-based outreach projects; and matching grants through the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation, Inc. for community-based outreach activities.

The Healthy Start Coalitions believe that partnering with Florida KidCare for enrollment/retention outreach efforts is simply "the right thing to do". (Vitucci, J.) Healthy Start Coalitions that have ongoing Florida KidCare Coalition projects also maintain that securing health care coverage for the children of their Healthy Start families is a priority and will support the integration of children's health care coverage into the Healthy Start mission.



*Gadsden County Healthy Start
Florida KidCare Back-to-School
Enrollment Event*

Children's Health Advocacy

Healthy Start Coalitions not only can build one-on-one relationships with families but they are community based groups that have a 20 year history in advocating on behalf of those families. Combining advocacy resources strengthens the bond between Florida KidCare and Florida Healthy Start Coalitions through sharing resources to advocate on behalf of children's health insurance and outreach needs.

Community coalitions can be powerful partners in connecting kids to health care coverage. Investing time and energy into developing positive relationships with community leaders can help Florida KidCare Coalition efforts to learn about the specific needs and challenges of the families.

Carol Brady (2013), Executive Director with the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, shares that within Northeast Florida, the Healthy Start Coalition works within "communities impacted by poverty, racism, poor education and limited economic opportunities." (p. 5). Ms. Brady elaborates on how the priorities of Healthy Start are in alignment with that of Florida KidCare Coalition efforts:

Maternal and child health programs work with families living in the communities at an influential time in their lives. Families during or immediately after pregnancy are motivated to make changes for the sake of their babies. Programs like Healthy Start have a unique opportunity to empower these

families to address community issues that impact their lives as parents.

Healthy Start Coalitions' Florida KidCare Coalition efforts can often times be the front lines for assisting families through common obstacles to getting health care coverage for children, while navigating the application/renewal process, the Healthy Start Coalitions have been a voice for families facing enrollment barriers.

For the past nine years, Healthy Start Coalitions have utilized their grassroots support to talk with elected officials and community/state leaders about the positive impact healthy children have upon Florida. Healthy Start Coalitions have had a lead role ensuring Florida KidCare has been sustained by the state. The Healthy Start Coalitions work with other child advocates throughout Florida, Healthy Start clients, and Florida KidCare families to advocate for the expansion of Florida KidCare outreach efforts.

These strong advocacy relationships continue to try to break down the challenges to enrollment families are facing today. These hurdles include the lack of knowledge about the Florida KidCare program, especially within the rural areas of Florida; the need to utilize Low Income Pool dollars to ensure families with uninsured children are being reached and assisted through the application process; and helping families understand and promote health care and the concept of medical homes. The partnership between Florida KidCare Coalition and the Healthy

Start Coalitions goes beyond completing the Florida KidCare application. The collaboration between these two entities involves innovative strategies such as completing Florida KidCare applications by Healthy Start Care Managers within labor and delivery to bringing Healthy Start/Florida KidCare families to Tallahassee to meet with their state representatives and talk about how each program has positively influenced the family's life.

Few Healthy Start Coalitions within the state receive funding for conducting Florida KidCare enrollment/retention outreach. The resources that are dedicated to helping families to enroll or retain their child's health care coverage through Florida KidCare are viewed by the Healthy Start Coalitions as an investment; an investment into their community's health by doing their part to keep children healthy.



Rep. Kathy Castor, Dawn Steward, Orange County Healthy Start, Inc., and Jodi Ray, FL-CKF



Credits

Agency for Health Care Administration

Carol Brady

Children's Defense Fund

John Dos Passos Coggin

Florida Association of Health Start Coalitions

Florida Center for Health Information and Policy Analysis

Florida Covering Kids & Families

Donna Hagan

Ian Hill

Integrated Behavioral Health Project

Journal of Maternal & Child Health

Lawton & Rhea Chiles Center for Healthy Mothers & Babies

Lucille Packard Foundation

Suzy Nadler

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Dawn Steward

Donna Sogegian

State of Florida

The Centers for Disease Control

The Children's Aid Society

The Magnolia Project, Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition

Urban Institute

USF Health

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