

North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation

Report to the Community : 2009



*Celebrating 20 years of dedication
to improving the health of women and
young children in North Carolina*







[First Step Campaign](#)

[Ana María Latino Campaign](#)

[Back To Sleep Campaign](#)

[Health Check – NC Health Choice for Children Campaign](#)

Dear Friends:

As we celebrate 20 years of service, we are proud of the great strides made in reducing infant mortality and improving the health of women across our state. We are also mindful of the struggles we experienced this past year. **The North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation**, like so many nonprofit organizations, was not immune to the recession and state budget cuts. Sadly, the Foundation was faced with the difficult task of downsizing staff. We are a leaner organization as a result, but no less dedicated to building on our legacy as a leader in promoting the health of women and young children in North Carolina.

While this was a challenging year financially, programmatically we can point to many accomplishments. Focus groups conducted across the state yielded a wealth of information on health-related messages and practices. New educational messages were created and disseminated on topics such as HIV/AIDS, safe fish consumption and appropriate weight gain during pregnancy.

Our Women's Health Initiative received a big boost thanks to a generous three-year grant from the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation. This will allow us to build upon our previously established RICHES (Resources In Communities Help Encourage Solutions) network of community-based agencies. The long-term goal of this project is to improve the health of women of reproductive age, especially those in low-wealth communities, by improving the capacity of community-based organizations to educate, encourage and support women to adopt healthy lifestyles.

An exciting new partnership with the North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund has resulted in two years of support for the Foundation to research, develop and implement a social marketing and media campaign to increase the initiation of breastfeeding in eastern North Carolina.

Our anniversary allows us to reflect on our many accomplishments, but it also reminds us of the work that still needs to be done. While it has been a privilege to serve our state for the past two decades, we pledge to continue to work tirelessly to educate, provide and lead the way in improving the health of our state's citizens.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Bacon, Dr.P.H.
Chairman, Board of Directors

Janice A. Freedman, M.P.H.
Executive Director

Celebrating 20 Years

Our Mission:

To reduce infant mortality and morbidity and to improve the health of women and young children in North Carolina.

For twenty years, the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation has worked tirelessly to improve the state's infant mortality rate and the health of women of childbearing age. North Carolina once had the dubious distinction of having the highest infant mortality rate in the country. However, since the Foundation was established in 1990, the state's infant mortality rate has decreased 33 percent. For the past two decades the Foundation has provided vision and leadership contributing to this significant reduction.

The Foundation's success would not be possible without our dedicated partners, and for that we are extremely grateful. From the outset, the Foundation was established as a nonprofit to coordinate the activities of the Governor's Commission on Reduction of Infant Mortality in a public/private partnership with the state of North Carolina. This unique relationship has resulted in unprecedented collaboration with state government agencies, community-based organizations and local and statewide coalitions.

Through our statewide campaigns, educational materials, trainings, Web sites and emerging social media strategies, the Foundation has grown into a nationally recognized, private nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing infant death and illness and improving the health of women and young children in North Carolina.



“Thank you for all your hard work to promote healthy beginnings for North Carolina families. Best wishes on your 20th Anniversary!”

— Joseph Halloran, MPH, RD, LDN Nutrition Program Consultant,
NC Division of Public Health

Healthy Beginnings

Promoting better health through public education is the Foundation's primary focus. When the Foundation was initially established there was only one campaign: First Step. Today the Foundation has several, all focused on promoting ways to reduce infant death and illness by addressing the underlying causes and by ensuring that children have access to health care.

■ **First Step/Women's Health Initiative:**

The Foundation's charter campaign, First Step is the cornerstone of our outreach efforts to promote healthy lifestyles for women of reproductive age including those who are pregnant. Starting in 1990 this pregnancy-related campaign has addressed specific pregnancy-related topics, giving women the knowledge and tools they need to have healthy pregnancies. In addition, the campaign now promotes healthy lifestyles for women before, during and after pregnancy because more than half of all infant deaths can be attributed to the mother's health. In 2009, the Foundation created messages and materials on HIV/AIDS prevention and testing and on maintaining a healthy weight during pregnancy.

■ **N.C. Back to Sleep/Infant Safe Sleep:**

Since 1994 the N.C. Back to Sleep Campaign has informed families, childcare providers, health and social service providers and policymakers about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and ways to reduce its risk. Initially, education focused on proper sleep positioning (on the back). That message has since been expanded to include the importance of a safe sleep environment: an appropriate room temperature, use of firm mattress, no items in the crib and having a cigarette smoke-free environment.

■ **Health Check/NC Health Choice:** Started in 1998, this program has been instrumental in increasing the number of North Carolina children with health insurance by promoting enrollment in the state's publicly funded children's health insurance programs. With high unemployment rates in the state, a partnership between the Foundation, the N.C. Division of Public Health and the Employment Security Commission of N.C. assures that families learn about these health insurance options for children when applying for unemployment benefits.

■ **Medical Home Campaign:** This campaign promotes the concept of one consistent place to take a child for his/her preventive, chronic and acute health care needs, thereby reducing dependence on emergency room services. Campaign messages educate parents on the symptoms and treatment of some of the most common childhood illnesses and teach families how to make every doctor's visit count.

■ **www.NCHealthyStart.org:** This award-winning Web site provides a variety of information for health and social service providers and the general public. Internationally certified by Health on the Net (HON) for trustworthy information, the site is routinely updated to include the latest public education messages, statistics, program information and useful resource links. Printed educational materials are downloadable; audio and video recordings play on YouTube. In 2009, *Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby*, an interactive "talking book" for expectant moms, was launched in two languages.

■ **www.MamaSana.org:** This Spanish language Web site addresses the maternal and child healthcare needs of North Carolina's growing Latino population. The Web site provides culturally and linguistically appropriate information and links to resources on women's and infant-health topics.



Our Partners



For two decades the Foundation has fostered a strong relationship with state government agencies and has worked closely with statewide and local organizations to nurture unique public/private partnerships. Through the establishment of advisory groups and strong interagency collaboration, the Foundation has been able to reach out and disseminate important health information in mutually beneficial ways.

- **N.C. Division of Public Health:** The synergy created by this long-term partnership continues to benefit local communities and the statewide public health system. A close working relationship, with mutual respect between the Foundation and N.C. Division of Public Health staff, has resulted in collaboration and efficiency on both statewide and targeted projects.
- **RICHS (Resources In Communities Help Encourage Solutions):** In 2009, the N.C. GlaxoSmithKline Foundation awarded the Foundation a three-year grant to continue this community-based, women's health initiative – initially started as a pilot project in FY 07-08. The goals of RICHS are to: 1) build the capacity of community-based organizations to address the health and health-related needs of the women of reproductive age they serve and 2) engage local groups and the media in creating a community norm of women taking care of themselves.
- **Duke University:** In collaboration with Duke's Nicholas School of the Environment and the N.C. Division of Public Health, the Foundation researched and created print materials and short videos that aired on Spanish language television to educate Latinos about safe fish consumption practices.

"Your organization has saved us thousands of dollars in materials. Most companies charge for each brochure but we have found your (web) site provides our clients with the information they need to have a safe pregnancy and good birth outcome ... We appreciate your organization and feel that you are there to support us in all that we do."

— Lisa Alexander, Nurse Manager, Guilford County

■ **N.C. Folic Acid Council:** The Foundation prints and distributes educational materials for the Council's nationally recognized, award-winning campaign, created to improve infant and maternal health by promoting the benefits and consumption of multivitamins with folic acid.

■ **Latino Advisory Group:** The Foundation's statewide advisory group meets regularly to identify critical health issues affecting Latino women and children and to recommend strategies to educate families, healthcare providers and the public about issues related to healthy lifestyle choices and healthy birth outcomes.

■ **N.C. Child Fatality Task Force:** In collaboration with the Task Force's Perinatal Committee, the Foundation's **Infant Safe Sleep Advisory Group** of healthcare professionals, lactation consultants, parent educators and state program staff serves to identify effective messages, strategies and networks to promote infant safe sleep practices and reduce the risk of SIDS.

■ **Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.:** Members of this international sorority, headquartered in Cary, N.C., join the Foundation every year to share health promoting messages and materials to tens of thousands of African American women attending the annual Women's Empowerment event.



■ **N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund:** In 2009 the Foundation received a two-year grant to develop a social marketing and media campaign to promote breastfeeding in eastern North Carolina. The campaign's goals are to: increase knowledge of the benefits of breastfeeding, promote positive attitudes about breastfeeding and link people with resources. The 13 member **Breastfeeding Advisory Group** provides expertise and insight on why there are low rates of breastfeeding in eastern N.C., particularly among African American women, and how to address these barriers.

■ **Community Grants Program:** 82 small, one-time grants were awarded to community-based and governmental organizations in 51 counties. The grants supported a wide range of local programs to improve the health of women of childbearing age.



Community Outreach and Training

The North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation is one of the leading voices advocating for healthy babies and healthy moms. Every year the Foundation provides training and educational materials to health and human service providers and community organizations across the state.

In 2009, the Foundation received eight awards for its outreach and information materials. APEX, a national organization recognizing excellence in publications by professional communicators, recognized the Foundation for its RICHES Web pages and interactive audio versions of the Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby publication in English and Spanish. The National Health Information Awards also honored the Foundation with six awards for a variety of posters and pamphlets.

- **Catalog of Education Materials:** Annually the Foundation distributes almost four million education materials—free of charge, to community organizations, healthcare providers, businesses and individuals across the state. More than 50 catalog items are available in English and Spanish. Unfortunately, because of state budget cuts and uncertainty, in 2009 the Foundation was unable to distribute materials from July through November. During that time, the Foundation heard from hundreds of organizations that needed our materials. We are thankful that we were able to resume distribution in December 2009.



- **Latino Outreach:** Since 2000, the Foundation has made a commitment to reach out to the state's growing Latino population by launching North Carolina's first public health education campaign developed solely for Spanish speaking residents. The Foundation provides a variety of culturally and linguistically appropriate health resource materials for women and children. In 2009, the Foundation was involved in a number of projects geared specifically for the Latino community including:



- **Safe Fish Consumption Project** – In collaboration with Duke University and the N.C. Division of Public Health, the Foundation used its qualitative findings from 2008 to develop a brochure about safe fish consumption for pregnant and postpartum Latina women. These brochures were distributed to WIC clinics across the state. In addition, three one-minute videos and a half hour public affairs show were developed and aired on the Spanish language stations Univision and Telefutera in the Raleigh/Durham television market.

"I want to express my sincerest thanks for the years of information, trend setting campaigns, training and media messages targeting families in North Carolina ... North Carolina families have benefited greatly ..."

— Sheila Bazemore, Fatherhood Services Practitioner and Family Involvement Coordinator, N.C. Department of Public Instruction

- **Living The Life In Between – Latina Teens Speak Out About Sex, Relationships and Pregnancy:** Qualitative research was completed on teen pregnancy among Latinas. Five focus groups were conducted across North Carolina to learn more about the social context in which teen pregnancies occur and to guide future programs. Results from the study were presented at the Hispanic Symposium organized by the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of N.C.
- **Child Car Safety Seat Campaign –** A State Farm Insurance Good Neighbor Citizenship grant allowed the Foundation to donate 100 child car seats to Latino families in Durham and Raleigh. With the help of our partners El Pueblo Inc. (a statewide Latino organization) and La Ley 96.9 FM (a Spanish language radio station), four live remote events were held. The seats were raffled and installed in the families' cars by trained bilingual technicians.



Car seat installation in Raleigh, N.C.

- **HOPES (Hospital Outreach and Partnerships Educating About Infant Safe Sleep):** The Foundation continues to build on this innovative and successful outreach effort to increase the number of hospitals that develop and institutionalize evidence-based safe sleep practices and policies in newborn nurseries and neonatal intensive care units. Since 2007, nearly 600 healthcare professionals have been trained as part of HOPES. In 2009, the Foundation partnered with 29 hospitals and distributed 6,000 onesies for newborns with the message, "Stomach to Play, Back to Sleep, for Baby's Safe Sleep". This effort was complimented with a statewide radio campaign and press releases promoting infant safe sleep practices.
- **BESST (Baby's Easy Safe Sleep Training and Toolkit):** In 2009, more than 200 health and human services professionals and community leaders received valuable training to take into their communities to reduce the risk of SIDS. BESST is a two-hour "train-the-trainer" session available in English and Spanish.
- **INCite:** This electronic newsletter for health and social service professionals provides information about emerging women's and children's health issues and highlights important data and resources to help providers talk with their clients and patients about these issues.
- **Maternidad Latina (Latina Maternity):** This electronic newsletter, written in English, offers healthcare professionals insight into Latino culture and health issues. It is designed to help providers better understand and communicate with the Latinos they serve.

- **New Parent/First Time Motherhood Initiative:** This two-year initiative, launched in 2009, focuses resources in six northeastern N.C. counties with the goal of reducing the rate of unplanned pregnancies and promoting lifestyle changes that contribute to having healthier families. The Foundation took the lead in developing and conducting a media campaign and community-based trainings for outreach workers and churches. The initiative is a collaborative between the Foundation, N.C. Division of Public Health, the Center for Health and Healing, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research and the UNC Center for Maternal and Infant Health.



New Parent/Ready, Set, Plan! Training, Nash County

Looking Ahead

As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation is proud of its accomplishments, but mindful of the work still to be done. Tough economic constraints and decisions have limited statewide resources when the local need has increased. More than ever before, an investment in health promotion and disease prevention programs, such as those coordinated by the Foundation, is both critical and cost effective. As we look ahead, the Foundation is committed to educate, provide and lead the way in improving the health and well-being of this and future generations.

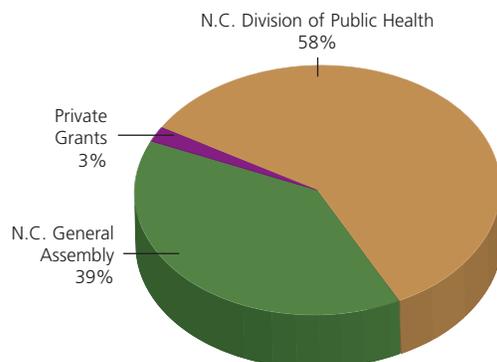
- **Women’s Health Initiative:** Over the next three years, the RICHES project (see page 4) will expand the capacity of community-based agencies to encourage and support health promoting behaviors among the women they serve. This will be accomplished by expanding the existing 250 member RICHES network, providing training and best practice models, creating networking opportunities and sharing information and resources.
- **Breastfeeding Social Marketing Campaign:** Based on consumer input, television commercials will be developed and air in the Greenville/New Bern media market to promote the benefits of breastfeeding. The overall goal of the campaign is to increase the initiation of breastfeeding in eastern North Carolina among women ages 20 to 34.
- **HIV Prevention and Testing:** To better reach young women by using new media strategies, a series of electronic messages about HIV prevention, transmission and testing is being developed. This project will build upon the *Keeping it Real* brochure developed in 2009 by the Foundation and will help educate women about North Carolina’s HIV testing laws for pregnant women.

Funding Profile

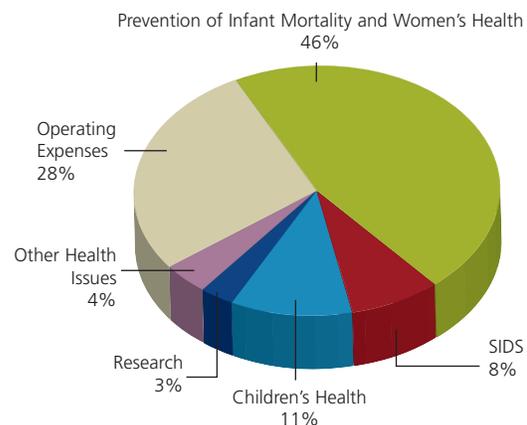
The North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation is a private, 501(c)(3) organization supported annually through:

- A project-based contract with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health.
- Recurring appropriation from the North Carolina General Assembly.
- Private grants. Over the years support from private foundations, institutions and corporations including the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation, Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, Duke University, State Farm Insurance and the C.J. Foundation for SIDS have funded new education and outreach initiatives.

FY 08-09 REVENUE SOURCES



FY 08-09 EXPENDITURES BY TOPIC



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