

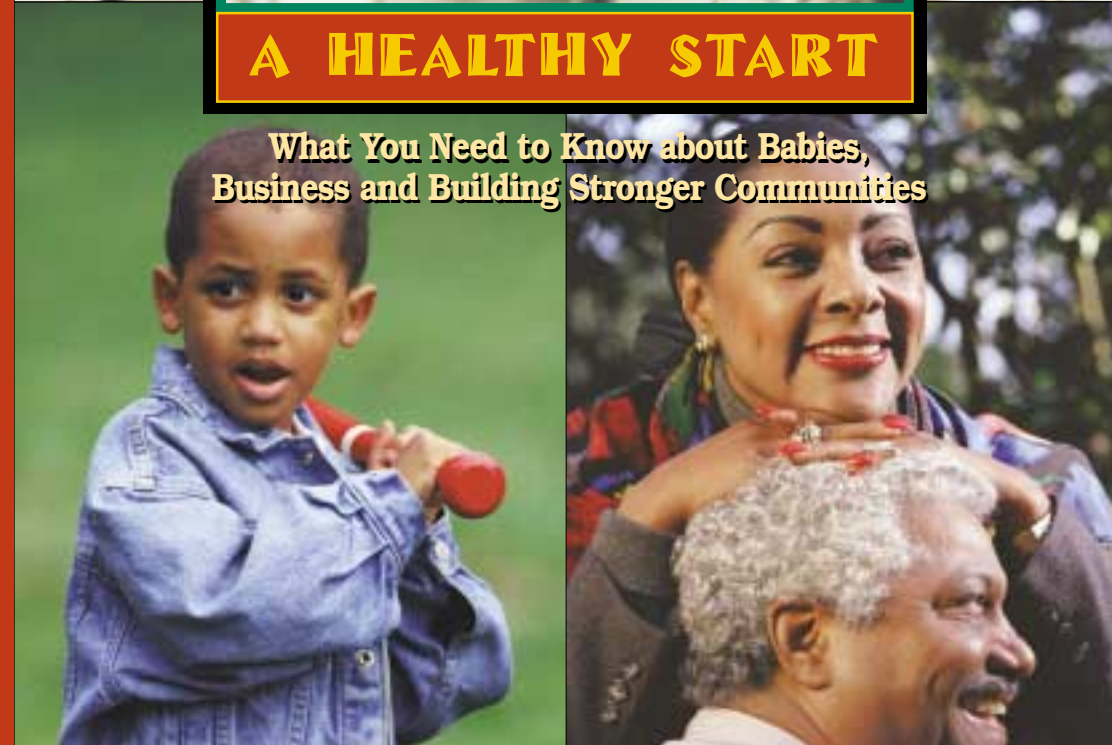


GIVING OUR CHILDREN



A HEALTHY START

**What You Need to Know about Babies,
Business and Building Stronger Communities**



1-800-367-2229
NC Family Health Resource Line

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Giving Our Children A Healthy Start
has been developed as part of an ongoing statewide
initiative to reduce infant mortality.

This initiative is a partnership between the Division of Public Health and
the Office of Minority Health & Health Disparities in the NC Department of Health and
Human Services and the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Giving Our Children A Healthy Start was prepared by the staff of
the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation as part of its
FIRST STEP Campaign. FIRST STEP is a nationally recognized
public education campaign to increase the number of healthy
babies born in North Carolina.

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Cumberland	Edgecombe
Forsyth	Guilford
Halifax	Hertford
Hoke	Lee
Nash	Wake

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Coalition to Improve The Quality of Life in Lee County Sanford, NC
Today's Woman Health and Wellness Center.....Winston-Salem, NC
Laurinburg District Youth CenterRaeford, NC
Community Enrichment OrganizationTarboro, NC
Hertford County QUOLAMurfreesboro, NC

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completing this booklet.*



HIS BOOKLET IS FOR PEOPLE LIKE YOU

Across North Carolina people like you want to help improve the health of African American babies in their community but need more information about how this challenge can be met.

Giving Our Children A Healthy Start explains how the health of babies in your community affects you and people that live in your community. The booklet also gives you the facts about the health of African American babies. You'll also learn about easy ways to get people in your community involved in giving babies a healthy start.

We all have a role in giving children a healthy start, so don't keep what you learn in the following pages a secret. Share this information with your friends, neighbors, and coworkers.





KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

We all have heard the saying that “knowledge is power.” Well, it’s true. Currently, in North Carolina too many African American babies die before their first birthday or are born too early to lead normal, healthy lives. But we can change this by working together to give our children a healthy start.

CHILDREN DESERVE A HEALTHY START

Think of a healthy start as being a puzzle with four big pieces:

- The first piece is **healthy parents** before, during, and after pregnancy
- The second piece is an **extended family** to help deal with the stress caused by pregnancy
- The third piece is a **healthy baby born full term (at 40 weeks) and weighing more than 5½ pounds**
- The fourth piece is a **baby that lives past its first year of life** without any major illness.

When a community helps bring these pieces of the puzzle together, all of its babies have the best possible chance of getting off to a healthy start.



Everyone has a role in helping babies get off to a good start.



HEALTHY BABIES AFFECT YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY



Healthy babies become healthy adults who become tomorrow's leaders.

Healthy babies are good for communities. Healthy babies become healthy adults who become tomorrow's leaders. They grow up to raise families, work in businesses, and help communities keep their identity. When babies are born too sick to live a normal life, or die too soon, we all lose.

Healthy babies are also good for the business community. When businesses get involved with pulling the pieces of the puzzle together it can have real financial benefits. Healthy babies save businesses money in two ways. First, healthy babies save money in health care costs. Second, healthy babies reduce the number of days parents miss from work to care for sick children. So, healthy babies can really affect a business's bottom line.



EARN AND SHARE THE FACTS

It is a fact that African American babies are more likely than white babies to be born too early and too small (less than 5½ pounds). This is important because babies born too early (before 37 weeks) and too small have less of a chance at life than other babies.

We also know that African American babies are twice as likely as white babies to die before they reach their first birthday. African American babies also die from crib death or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) more often than white babies do.

We also know that college-educated African Americans still have twice the risk of their babies dying as white women with the same education.

Remember what you've just learned, then share it with others. Taking this simple step will help bring the pieces of the puzzle together.



The picture formed by this puzzle has more African American babies reaching their first birthday free of any major illness.

If you would like more information, call the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation at (919) 828-1819.

Putting babies on their backs to sleep helps reduce SIDS risk.



HELP YOUR COMMUNITY PULL THE PIECES TOGETHER

In your neighborhood, on the job, in your church, or at the next meeting of a civic group, share what you now know. Explain what causes babies to become sick or die too soon and the effect it has on your community. Here are simple ways to get your community involved:

Individuals and Civic Organizations

- Make sure your own lifestyle is a healthy one; exercise, eat right, and don't smoke
- Donate maternity, infant, and children's clothes to new parents or local agencies
- Organize a fundraiser to benefit the fight against babies being born sick or dying in your community

Churches and Houses of Worship

- Provide transportation for women going to the doctor
- Donate time or money to a local clinic
- Organize a health fair with your local health department focusing on the health of babies

Business and Industry

- Offer prenatal care on site, or offer flexible work schedules so women can regularly attend prenatal doctor's appointments
- Educate your employees about the health benefits they will receive through your company and through federal or state health programs
- Support a charity that focuses on healthy babies with money or employee volunteers

*We all have gifts and talents
that can be used on behalf of
our babies.*





GETTING STARTED IS EASY

The North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation is a good resource for people like you. Take the first step in giving our babies the best possible chance of getting a healthy start. **Call the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation today at (919) 828-1819.** Here's how it can help:

- Provide names of community groups in your area already working on giving babies a healthy start
- Offer information on pregnancy, prenatal care, parenting, and children's health through its statewide toll-free hotline.
(Call 1-800-FOR-BABY to get this information)
- Send free brochures and promotional items in bulk through an effort called the FIRST STEP Campaign
- Locate resources for work-site programs for pregnant women

When you put all the pieces together, the picture is really clear. A commitment from all of us to give our babies a healthy start benefits everyone.



Get these materials and others by calling (919) 828-1819.

MY ACTION PLAN

On My Own:

With A Civic Group:

With My Church:

With My Employer:

Turn page for a list of additional resources



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

NC Minority Infant Mortality Reduction Program

Raleigh, NC (919) 733-7791

NC Office of Minority Health & Health Disparities

Raleigh, NC (919) 715-0992

March Of Dimes:

Eastern NC Chapter

Raleigh, NC (919) 781-2481

Greater Triad Chapter

Winston-Salem, NC (336) 723-4386

Greater Piedmont Chapter

Charlotte, NC (704) 377-2009

Western Carolina Chapter

Statesville, NC (704) 873-2555

For local Health Departments or more information, call:

1-800-367-2229
NC Family Health Resource Line



TTY for hearing impaired: 1-800-976-1922

or **1-800-FOR-BABY**

For extra copies of this booklet contact:

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