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## Building Community Partnerships

“Working with the Community to Keep our Babies Safe” was our slogan for the 2006 Children's Summit. This was a great opportunity to continue building community partnerships with focus on our safe sleeping campaign. We joined efforts again with Major Connie Shingledecker of the Manatee County Sheriff's Office to bring the necessary resources to the families we serve. We have distributed close to 400 bassinets for babies to sleep on a safe, comfortable and firm surface. We have also provided to these families the education and information to make sure that parents pay special attention to the risks of having a baby co-sleeping with parents, making sure that babies are not covered with heavy quilts or blankets or over dressed, that babies sleep on their backs and that baby monitors should never replace parental supervision.

Thanks to the support of Charles Clapsaddle of Manatee Educational Television, our board members Dr. Florentina Taylor and Dr. Eduardo Cortes, and our partner Major Shingledecker, we are conveying this very important message to the community through our Healthy Start Series broadcast in English and Spanish on the local Channel 21.



## Project Moses Partner!

Mary Ann Broos is a committed and enthusiastic partner of our Project Moses. She has already made 51 quilts, 39 receiving blankets and 46 liners for the bassinets that have been distributed to moms and babies. Mary Ann has also recruited Karen Wernimont who lovingly sews liners and blankets for our project.

Thank you Mary Ann for embracing this project of love and for partnering with us to make sure that our babies are safe and healthy.

If you would like to volunteer or make a donation for Project Moses, please contact Luz Corcuera, Program Director at 714-7542 Ext. 302 or write to lcorcuera@hsmantee.org



## Thank You Community Partners!

C. J. Czaia and Kevin Gallagher of Czaia & Gallagher, P.A. have been great supporters of Healthy Start since we began our efforts to reach out to underserved families in the Hispanic/Latino and African American communities. Each year they make sure that our traditional Christmas party has enough resources to provide a special moment for those moms and babies that otherwise wouldn't have a chance to enjoy the festivities. This year, they generously donated \$10,000 to help us with our outreach efforts through our successful Community Health Worker Program to continue providing education and support to the families we serve.

We are very grateful for their continued generosity and support of our programs.



## Christmas 2006

Over 250 families attended our traditional Christmas celebration on December 20<sup>th</sup> at the Sacred Heart Church in Bradenton. Once again our generous donors C. J. Czaia and Kevin Gallagher provided a wonderful party filled with great food and entertainment. Fr. Julio Rivero graced us with his presence by getting the party started with his special Christmas blessing.

Miss Candy Kane (Debbie Bottiger) has become so popular with the children that the line of kids wanting to have their beautiful little faces painted did not stop for a moment. Of course Christmas would not be the same without Santa Claus, and the gifts he brings. Greg Hagopian, our traditional Santa came from the North Pole and patiently delivered hundreds of gifts with the help of several elves including C.J. Czaia, Mary Jane and Eddie DeSousa, Jean Gladziszewski, Donald Hodson, Mariella and Daniella Corcuera. Those moments of happiness and wonder were captured one by one by Kevin Gallagher and his staff members Claudia and Joanna with the help of Kristine White. They handed a Polaroid picture to every child who posed with Santa. The tables were beautifully decorated with the poinsettias donated by Manatee Fruit Company. We thank Margie for always responding to our requests.

Christmas began for us when Kristine and Steve White and their daughter Marilyn came to our office with their helpers and loaded our offices with toys. We had more than enough toys to be distributed not only at the party but at the migrant camps and to share some with the children in Arcadia. The members of Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Community once again embraced our Christmas celebration. They generously donated gifts for the parents and babies of Healthy Start and their volunteers gave us many hours collecting the gifts, coordinating the cookie give away, setting up, running and cleaning after the Christmas party ended. Jackie Kelsey, Pat Royer, Nancy Pettit, Luis Corcuera and Ricardo Diaz won the efficiency award for serving the lunch for everyone in less than 20 minutes. Jose Javier "El Rancherito" delighted everyone with his rendition of Christmas songs that provided the background music during lunch.

Year after year, we are so blessed with the love and generosity of so many people who understand the hardships of the families we serve and give their time, love, and financial support. We thank Martha, Marisol, Eva, Ana, Eliud, Maribel, Rocio, Erika, Alejandra, Roberto and Don Hodson for helping us clean up and leave the facility spotless so that we can continue to enjoy Fr. Julio's trust as he allows us to use the parish hall for our many activities and events. We sure provided a special time and made hundreds of families very happy this year thanks to the love and generosity of our community of supporters and the hard work of the staff and volunteers of our Healthy Start family.



## December General Membership Meeting—Nutrition During Pregnancy

Samantha Kennedy, M.S. with the Family & Consumer Sciences, Manatee County Extension of the University of Florida gave a lively and informative presentation on nutrition during pregnancy. Samantha indicated that poor gestational nutrition and low maternal weight gain are contributing factors to low birth weight babies as well as that the size of the placenta that determines the amount of nutrition available to the fetus. She focused on the nutritional requirements during pregnancy and the additional required energy to support the metabolic demands of pregnancy and fetal growth. Losing weight during pregnancy is not generally recommended, even for severely overweight women. Restricting energy intake can lead to inadequate maternal nutrition and low birth weight babies. She also mentioned that the recommended level of protein for pregnant women is 60g/day and that vitamins are also needed for a healthy pregnancy. She emphasized the need to increase folic acid to prevent neural tube defects and the current recommendation for pregnant women is 400 mcg/day. The food source for this vitamin is in dark leafy greens, citrus fruits, organ meats, legumes and whole grains. Vitamins C,A,D,E,K are also equally important during pregnancy and they can be found in broccoli, tomatoes, strawberries, red peppers, carrots, dark leafy greens, sweet potatoes, milk, fish oils, vegetable oils, nuts and whole grains. As for the minerals,



Samantha Kennedy, M.S.

Samantha mentioned that calcium, phosphorus, iron, zinc, sodium, magnesium and iodine are also equally important and they can be found in food sources such as poultry, yogurt, cheese, nuts, legumes potatoes with skin and fish. Samantha warned against non-nutritive substances such as caffeine that crosses the placenta and affects fetal heart rate and breathing artificial sweeteners and contaminants containing lead and mercury. Food safety was also mentioned as pregnant women are at higher risk of contracting a food borne illness since many

bacterial/viral illnesses are transplacental, affecting the fetus and listeria and nonocytogenes causes an illness called Listeriosis that has been known to cause miscarriage or stillbirth. To prevent food borne illness she recommends to wash all fruits and veggies thoroughly, cook meats to their minimum internal cooking temperatures, avoid unpasteurized milk, cheese and juice products, avoid prepared meats and protein salads, wash hands frequently and clean and sanitize utensils, cutting boards and countertops before and after use.

We thank Samantha Kennedy for taking the time to be with us and to share her expertise. The Family & Consumer Sciences, Manatee County Extension of the University of Florida has been a long valuable partner of the Healthy Start Coalition.

## Keeping Our Children Safe

The Sarasota Sports Foundation has generously awarded a grant to Healthy Start for a second year to support our efforts to keep our children safe and to prevent child abuse.

Using our very successful Community Health Worker model we will use this funding to provide education and support to families and link our existing resources of our Project Moses to prevent SIDS and continue our education efforts on safe sleeping.

We had the pleasure of having Scott Libertore and his family for a site visit. Scott, a member of the board of the Sarasota Sports Foundation personally met some of the families that received services through our “En Familia” program funded by them. We thank the board and the many volunteers that give their time and talent to the Sarasota Sports Foundation and applaud their efforts to prevent child abuse, neglect and abandonment in our community.

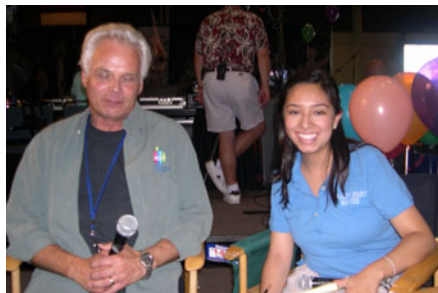


## From the desk of Fred Leonard, Executive Director: Thank You to our High School Volunteers

Daniella Corcuera and Hunter Taylor began to volunteer at Healthy Start when they were in 7<sup>th</sup> grade attending Braden River Middle School. Now they both are in their senior year in high school and have given over 100 hours of their own time each year to our organization. That amounts to 1,200 hours in 6 years.

Their first assignment was to classify and wrap a mountain of Christmas presents for the children, help distribute them at the Christmas party and help us entertain the kids. Their involvement at our Christmas party every year became a tradition for them. They were later asked to help conduct surveys to women at the WIC and East Manatee Family Health Care Centers and help out with the Mother's Day celebrations for the Healthy Start Mom's Clubs. They became regulars helping with the activities at our booth at the Children's Summit every year and Daniella helped Charles Clapsaddle conduct the interviews for METV. They tutored children during the Summer program at Project Light each year and when the Summer Arts Program "Raices" started three years ago they helped with the planning and became the instructors' main helpers.

Daniella is a Senior at St. Stephen's Episcopal School and Hunter is a Senior at Lakewood Ranch High school and they both will be graduating at the end of May with honors. Hunter wants to pursue a career as a Nurse Practitioner and Daniella as a Biomedical Engineer. We will miss their talent, hard work and caring commitment to the families we serve. We wish them both good luck and much success in their young and promising future. We know that they both will continue to make a difference in the world, just the way they made a difference at Healthy Start.



## What You Should Know About Getting a Flu Shot and other Adult Vaccines

At our October General Membership Meeting, Donna Keith, R.N., Senior Community Health Nurse at Manatee County Health Department gave a very informative presentation on the importance of the influenza, tetanus, hepatitis, and pneumonia vaccines and the recommended adult immunization schedule. It was interesting to look at the immunization schedule to realize that we have probably missed most our adult shots. Donna emphasized the fact that pregnant women are a priority group due to the risks involved with their hepatitis B status before delivering a baby to reduce the infection on newborns with Hepatitis B from their mothers.

Donna helped us dispel some of the myths about the flu vaccines. For instance, we hear that the flu shot can cause the flu and in reality flu shots cannot cause the flu. The vaccine is made from killed virus. We also hear that the side effects of the flu shot are worse than the flu when in fact, the most common side effect of a flu shot is a sore arm; but the flu causes fever, aches and pains, and fatigue. We tend to think that only older people need flu shots but in reality flu shots are recommended for children 6 months to 5 years of age, persons with illnesses like heart disease and diabetes and for pregnant women.



If you would like more information on the topic you can contact Donna Keith at: [Donalyn\\_Keith@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:Donalyn_Keith@doh.state.fl.us)

## Understanding Infant Mental Health—Mothers & Infants and Transitional Living Center

Our November General Membership Meeting was graciously hosted by First Step of Sarasota, Inc. They welcomed us in their beautiful facility and offered a delicious luncheon for us. Janice March, LMHC, Registered Play Therapist gave a great overview on Infant Mental Health. She focused on the infant's ability to experience emotions, develop relationships and learn through loving, caring and affirming relationships. She also gave an explanation to the attachment process and patterns and explained the complexity of the brain in relation to early development. Jan's explanation of the effects of substance abuse exposure during prenatal, birth and post natal environment for the baby gave us tremendous insight on the devastating consequences it can have on a baby causing malformations, deficits in learning, attention, memory and sensory and motor skills and also on the attachment process with their caregivers.



Cari Gosnell, M.Ed, Becky McDonough, LMHC, Mary McNeal, B.A. and Bethany Simmons, B.A. from the First Step Clinical Team provided a wonderful tour of the facility and a complete overview of their Mothers & Infants and Transitional Living Center as well as the referral process. We truly appreciated the opportunity to meet their moms and babies and their efforts to provide a substance abuse free life for them. It is remarkable that this program can support moms in their quest to change their lives for a year until they are ready to go back to the community. For more information on this great program you may contact Bethany Simmons at 365-4545.

## "Periodontal Disease in Pregnant Women, Risks and Interventions"

Dr. Maria Pardo, Dental Director at Manatee County Rural Health Services, Inc. presented at our September General Membership meeting on periodontal disease highlighting pregnant women. Dr. Pardo focused on oral health in general as prevention for the most common dental diseases such as dental caries and periodontal disease that can cause poor nutrition, compromise the ability to eat and limit food selection.

Dr. Pardo said that nutrition is very important during pregnancy as the baby gets nutrients from the mother's system and that food with calcium and vitamin D are needed in the diet. What a pregnant woman eats during the nine months of pregnancy affects the development of the unborn child including teeth. The baby's teeth begin to develop between the third and sixth month of pregnancy. Dental problems also can be caused by snacking more often. When the snacks are sweet, tooth decay or cavities occur. It is important to snack less often or eat sweets at the end of a meal instead of between meals and that an adequate intake of dairy products- the primary source of calcium- or the supplements the obstetrician may recommend, will help ensure all the calcium needed during pregnancy. It is a myth that calcium is lost from the mother's teeth during pregnancy. The calcium the baby needs is provided by the mom's diet, **not from the mom's teeth.**



Dr. Pardo also mentioned that pregnant women with periodontal disease may be 7-8 times more likely to have a baby that's born too early and too small and that premature delivery and low birth weight are closely associated with infant morbidity, mortality, and long-term health complications. Women with diabetes are at greater risk for periodontal disease associated with cardiovascular problems. Pregnant women who do not have their teeth cleaned before they find out that they were pregnant, should have their teeth cleaned by a dental hygienist or dentist early in the pregnancy to help prevent most gum problems. Dental appointments should be made before childbirth since after birth, it may be several months before a new mom may be able to find the time for an appointment.

## Family Wellness Fiesta

Healthy Start Manatee was one of the organizing agencies of the first Family Wellness Fiesta held at the new Wal-Mart in Palmetto. The purpose of this event was to promote adult immunization across the board and to make community resources available for all the families in Manatee County. Many agencies participated providing on site services such as blood pressure, diabetes and HIV screenings, children's immunization, depression screenings, hearing and eye exams. Our team of Community Health Workers was on site promoting infant safe sleeping practices distributing our Moses bassinets and bringing information on the many programs we have available at Healthy Start. Paula Termini, our community education provider, did a great job at coordinating the entertainment and many other details of the event. Marisol Diaz, Martha Ramirez, Eva Valencia and Jose Javier "El Rancherito" were on site providing authentic Mexican tostadas and helping with the event that was very well attended.

We thank Donna Keith from the Manatee County Health Department for her leadership and support. This event proved once again that building partnerships and fostering collaboration among community agencies are the best ingredients to improve the lives of the families we serve. We also want to especially thank Mr. Al Hartfree of Wal-Mart for his patience and support, and allowing us the use of the parking lot and some other areas adjacent to the store. Our thanks to all the agencies that participated in this great event that has started a tradition for years to come.



## Diabetes Education Through Our Team of Community Health Workers

Manatee County Health Department, Gulfcoast South Area Health Education Center and Healthy Start Manatee join efforts again to prevent diabetes among the Hispanic/Latino families in Manatee County. For the second year, the Community Health Worker Team of Healthy Start attended a training under the leadership of Ansley Mora, Community Coordinator of GSAHEC and Mary Ellen Sagatys, R.N. the Diabetes specialist of MCHD to continue educating families about diabetes encouraging by them to be screened early on and to make healthier choices to improve their lifestyle. Diabetes is a disease that has grown rapidly within this particular population. The materials and language used are culturally and linguistically competent and the Community Health Workers are doing a great job at bringing this information into the neighborhoods.

