

Florida Keys Healthy Start Coalition Quarterly Newsletter

October- December 2008



In this issue:

- ~Healthy Babies are Worth the Wait
- ~Gov. Crist signs Midwifery Proclamation



Fall Quarterly Coalition Newsletter - Spread the word!

A newsletter resource designed to benefit those associated with maternal and child health, public health, and the women and children of Monroe County. Please note some important address and email changes in this edition.

Please SHARE this quarterly newsletter with friends and colleagues, and encourage them to subscribe to the newsletter and visit our [Fla Keys Healthy Start Coalition](http://FloridaKeysHealthyStartCoalition.org) website or call 305-293-8424.

Happenings in the Keys!

This edition we will share some of the events and activities that we have been working on in the community. Pictured above, LKMC Labor and Delivery nurses Sarah and Cindy with Coalition Staff Mirine Dye, during our Holiday in August event. The Coalition made deliveries of our own passing out logo items and baked goods to thank our local caregivers for their continued support.

Special thanks and farewell (for now) to our summer intern from University of Florida, Erin Dunn. Erin was a great addition to our team this summer! We wish her the best of luck with her continued studies in Gainesville.

Free Gifts! Prenatal Screening Incentives

We rely on midwives and physicians to screen pregnant women at the first prenatal appointment and send that screening form to our offices so that we can identify who we

need to assist. This is how our program works! It's also required by the state that ALL pregnant women are screened, whether they receive Healthy Start services or not.

In order to encourage women to fill out this screening form we have attached coupons to our screens available in each prenatal care providers office in Monroe county. The coupon allows the pregnant woman to stop by any of our Healthy Start Program offices and pick up a free gifts! Current gifts include her choice of the following:

- Happiest Baby on the Block DVD (Eng/Spanish)
- The Birth Book by Dr. Sears
- Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Newborn by Penny Simkin
- Thinking Woman's Guide to a Better Birth, Henci Goer
- What to do when your child gets sick (Spanish)

What to do when you are pregnant (Spanish)



What's new on our website?

Visit www.KeysHealthyStart.org and find downloads, links, articles and more!

[Direct links](#) for health care providers to instantly check the safety of a drug for a pregnant or breastfeeding patient!

Workplace and Child Care Center [infant feeding presentation!](#)

[Archives](#) of our annual report and newsletters!

List of all active [new mother support groups](#) for the entire Keys!



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Please add these to your address book and spam filters.



Continued thoughts and prayers for Gwen Douglass

Coalition member Keith Douglass and wife Dianne continue to need the well wishes of the community for daughter Gwen. Still recovering from a traffic crash, Gwen will now need surgery to correct a partial blockage in her trachea below the vocal chords (over 25%) she sustained from the intubation tube during her hospitalization. Please let the Douglass family know you care, visit their [Care Page for updates](#) and leave a note of cheer.

Thank you to the Bottle Cap Lounge in Key West!

The [Bottle Cap Lounge](#) Labor Day event went great. Special THANK YOU to Carolyn Sullivan from the Bottle Cap!! We received over \$800 in tips and over \$600 in 50/50 raffle (in which the winner Joe Schumacher donated it all back to the Coalition!) Special thanks to all who came out to support this fundraiser including guest bartender State Representative Ron Saunders, Key West Mayor McPherson, Superintendent Randy Acevedo as well as our Coalition staff and board members. This fun event, of course, was not for our clients, but part of our outreach to the general community about our programs and [ongoing funding needs](#).

Thanks to the band of Tony Roberts & Sam Waite

Shout Outs to Our Volunteers:

Beth Maglione
Don Liestner
Jerian Wynn
Billy Wynn
Beth Doyle
Brian Doyle

Satisfied Smiles for our Food donors:

Hard Rock
Café

Rep. Ron Saunders

Salsa Loca
Conch Republic Seafood Co.
Martin's Restaurant
New York Pasta Café



Congratulations to Coalition Vice Chair Holly Merrill

Holly Merrill was presented with the [U.S. Presidential Volunteer Award](#) at the Business and Professional Women's Political Forum in Key Largo, FL, in August. Former Coalition board member and Florida BPW President Venita Garvin- Valdez was on hand to present Holly with this prestigious award. Congrats Holly, we could not be happier to be among those you volunteer for!



FKHSC Completes Successful Board Retreat



Coalition board members, staff and general members gathered at the Marathon Yacht Club in August.

Non-profit organization, energizing, fund raising and meeting structure were some of the themes and discussions. Thank you to all who attended, your input was valuable! Thank you Keith Douglass for making an appearance as well!

Health Events and Holidays! October

National SIDS Awareness Month

Look for our Annual publication in the Key West Citizen in October!

1-7 Florida Licensed Midwives Week! [Click HERE](#) to read Gov. Crist's Proclamation

9: Lower Keys Health Event, come visit our booth at the Grand Key Resort

November

Prematurity Awareness Month

December

9: *Save the Date!* Coalition Annual Meeting



Maternal and Child Health in the news

Successful Support of Federal Healthy Start Legislation

A few weeks ago we asked our members to write their U.S. House of Representatives and Senators and encourage the passing of the Healthy Start Reauthorization Act . We were happy to learn that the legislation passed, which will continue to promote efforts to reduce infant mortality and morbidity. It is now up to President Bush to sign this important bill into law. Thank you to all who wrote in!

Call for Action! Medicaid Payments for Birthing Centers Threatened

Over the past few years, CMS (the federal agency that runs Medicaid/Medicare) has begun disallowing federal matching funds for state Medicaid payments for freestanding birth centers services. Birth centers have been recognized by CMS (and earlier by HCFA) as a Medicaid provider type in State Medicaid Plans since 1987.

Recently CMS has disallowed such payment by several state Medicaid Agencies, including **Alaska, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington State**, claiming that it lacks clear statutory authority and direction to do so. CMS has directed its regional offices to stop federal payments to any state for birth center services.

This is not a Medicaid crisis but a payment crisis for birth centers.

Historically all payers follow the lead of Medicaid. If Medicaid stops paying the birth center facility fee so will other insurers. This will risk existing and future birth centers for Florida women. In Florida, more than 30% of birth center births are paid for by Medicaid.

This action alert courtesy of
[Florida Friends of Midwives](#)



March of Dimes Prematurity Campaign: Worth the Wait!

from www.MarchofDimes.com

Rockville, MD, June 16, 2008

"Preterm birth (defined as birth before 37 completed weeks gestation) is a serious and costly health problem and is the leading cause of death in the first month of life. More than half a million babies - one out of every eight - are born too soon each year in the United States, a 20 percent increase since 1990.

Babies who survive an early birth face serious lifelong health problems, including learning disabilities, cerebral palsy, blindness, hearing loss and other chronic conditions, including asthma.

Even infants born just a few weeks too soon - known as late preterm birth - have a greater risk for respiratory distress syndrome (RDS), feeding difficulties, temperature instability (hypothermia), jaundice, delayed brain development and death." -- The Surgeon General's Conference on Prevention of Preterm Birth

This is where the Florida Keys Healthy Start Coalition comes in to help with this campaign. In August, each one of our prenatal care providers received a free pack of the new March of

Dimes "Brain Card" showing the differences in brain development between a 34 and 37 gestational week baby. Astounding!

We hope that our providers will use these cards as an educational tool with their patients.

Early and consistent health care as well as informed decision making with regard to planned deliveries can reduce the number of late-preterm births in our county.

Prenatal Care needs to begin in the first trimester

For the health of the mother and growing baby, all women are urged to see a doctor or midwife before 13 weeks of pregnancy, in the first trimester.

According to recent statistics, women in Monroe see a provider in the first trimester 78.1% of the time. This is about the same as the average Florida woman who sees a provider in the first trimester 78.7% of the time.

However we have improvements which need to be made to reach the National Goal : 83.7% of our women receiving first trimester prenatal care.

Local barriers include:

- finding a provider (especially in the Upper Keys)
- affording care (25% of our county is uninsured)
- and navigating the Medicaid system

Breastfeeding: Safe, Available and Never Recalled!

The tragedy of the contamination of baby formula in China (Sept. 2008) has brought the number of children sickened in the scandal to nearly 53,000, including four infants who died. This is by no means an isolated international incident. Recalls on a mass scale have occurred in Israel and the U.S.

China's biggest producer of powdered milk, Sanlu Group Co., received complaints as early as December 2007 linking its infant formula to illnesses in babies. Months later, tests revealed the milk was tainted with the industrial chemical melamine, which causes kidney stones and can lead to kidney failure.

While this recall does not affect U.S. infant formula, [U.S. infant formula recalls DO occur](#). For recall information, [visit the FDA website](#). Public Health, Medical and Health organization and leaders encourage breastfeeding as the safe, clean and sustainable choice in infant feeding.

Points to clarify with your clients:

- Breastfeeding is safe and best for baby
- No Chinese baby formula is being sold here
- Typically all milk powders contain more bacteria and chance for contamination than ready-to-feed
- Re-lactation is possible with close management up to 6 months postpartum

- If breastfeeding is being mixed with formula feeding, it is possible to use breastmilk only with guidance on how to boost supply
- Always teach proper handwashing and formula mixing and storage

Continued Thanks To Our Board of Directors

Cheryl Cottrell, Board Chair, Mariner's Hospital
 Holly Merrill, Vice Chair, Representative Ron Saunders office
 Michael Cunningham, Past Chair, Florida Keys AHEC
 Lynn Wintermyer, Secretary, Healthy Families
 Linda Welsh, Treasurer, Child Find Program

Members at-large

Maggie Vogelsang, Lower Keys Medical Center, Maternal/ Infant Care Unit
 Mary Williams, Early Learning Coalition of Miami Dade/Monroe

Liz MacGard, Monroe County Detention Center

Cathy Sembert, Monroe County Schools

Care Coordinator Corner

Meet Marathon Healthy Start Care Coordinator Alicia Newsom!

Originally from Texas, and fluent in Spanish, Alicia has been in the Keys for over 25 years. Aside from her busy work day, she is a mom of two. Her daughter Kayla is a Freshman in College in Fort Myer. Her son Thomas is a Sophomore at Marathon High, who is always testing her "negotiation" skills. Alicia also shares her home with Bailey Bean, a "weenie dog".

Alicia says, "I love my job, I have worked in some type of social work for over 20 years, I have worked for legal Services, Worked/was a volunteer for Guardian ad Litem, worked For DCF in the Economic/Welfare Department, and worked as a case coordinator/assessment worker for Healthy Families for over 7 years, but by far this is my favorite job".



As for a challenge with this job? She says "I enjoy working with the Moms and their babies, one of the great benefits of this job is you are always learning something new ,biggest challenge is the limited amount of resources that are available in the keys."

Coalition Staff:

Arianna Nesbitt, Executive Director

Jody Smith Williams, Administrative Assistant

Ja Good, Contract Manager

Mirine Dye, Community Liaison