

North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation

Report to the Community : 2007



Educate. Provide. Lead.







Dear Friends:

With our **Report to the Community**, we reflect on the accomplishments made over the past year, and with excitement and anticipation look toward our future efforts to reduce infant mortality and improve the health of women and children across our great state. Throughout the past year, the Foundation has continued to strengthen its award-winning programs. At the same time we have worked tirelessly to develop and implement new strategies that address women's health issues prior to pregnancy, as one of the most effective means of reducing infant mortality.

The Foundation appreciates the diverse needs of women and children across each of North Carolina's 100 counties, especially among minority populations. We will continue striving to address these issues by engaging directly with women, and the agencies that serve them to better understand the health disparities affecting their communities and how to best address their needs.

Moving forward, the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation will build on its legacy of improving the health of our state's smallest and most vulnerable citizens by promoting the health of women before, during and after pregnancy, educating on reducing the risk of SIDS and connecting eligible children with publicly funded health insurance programs.

From public education outreach and professional training, to coordination with government agencies, community groups, private organizations, and now hospitals, we will continue to educate, promote and lead the way in improving the health and well-being of today's and tomorrow's children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Thomas J. Bacon'.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Janice A. Freedman'.

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

Making a Difference across North Carolina

The Foundation works to prevent infant mortality by disseminating vital health information to North Carolina families and through professional training for health and social service agencies and providers. To ensure that our messages resonate with the state's diverse populations, we continually conduct qualitative research to understand how best to design messages that meet specific needs of the Tar Heel state. In an effort to better understand the specific needs of our State's minority populations and young children, the Foundation also participates on the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities' Hispanic Task Force and the Child Fatality Task Force's Perinatal Committee.

Through our educational materials, statewide education campaigns, web and traditional media presence, we strive to raise awareness and promote change in the public's knowledge, attitudes and practices related to improving infant and women's health.

PROVIDING RESOURCES

- As part of an unparalleled public education outreach program, the Foundation carries more than 50 catalog items and annually distributes more than **4 million education materials**, free of charge, to community organizations, healthcare providers, businesses, and individuals across the state.
- Each year **www.NCHealthyStart.org** continues to expand along with the Foundation. Certified by Health on the Net (HON) for trustworthy health information, the website is regularly updated to include new programs and partnerships. Recently, the website added the Foundation's training calendar, newsroom, streaming video of public service announcements and an online order form to provide greater and easier access to promotional materials.
- **iNCite**, the Foundation's electronic newsletter for health professionals, seeks to provoke change by highlighting emerging health issues and offering relevant data, resources, and tips to help health professionals address these problems. The newsletter reaches hundreds of statewide subscribers.
- **Maternidad Latina** (Latina Maternity) bridges the gap between health professionals and the Latinas they serve by offering insight into Latin culture and health issues. This bi-monthly newsletter (in English) offers such valuable information, that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina makes it available to physicians in its network.



PARTNERSHIPS

- **Hospital Outreach and Partnerships Educating about Infant Safe Sleep (HOPES):** HOPES aims to increase the capacity of hospitals to develop and institutionalize evidence-based infant safe sleep practices in newborn nurseries and neonatal intensive care units (NICUs). In 2006-2007, the Foundation piloted a curriculum with NICU nurses at two hospitals and with 50 nurses at two regional meetings. The Foundation also convened Hospital Advisory Group meetings that included 47 participants from 25 hospitals and representatives from numerous professional health associations.
- **Safe Sleep Advisory Board:** The Foundation brought together health professionals including physicians, nurses, and parent educators to identify core messages for promoting infant safe sleep to reduce the risks of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and accidental infant suffocation and strangulation in the sleep environment. During two meetings, the advisory board reviewed current infant mortality statistics including the recent rise in accidental infant deaths in the sleep environment and the issue of parents sharing a bed with their infants.
- **Latino Advisory Group:** As a means of strengthening existing Latino outreach efforts, the Foundation convened a statewide group devoted to identifying critical health issues affecting Latino women and children and to explore ways to educate families, healthcare providers and the public about issues related to healthy birth outcomes. The 12-member group met three times throughout the year and was instrumental in the development of new Spanish-language materials.
- **Period of Purple Crying (Shaken Baby Syndrome):** As a member of the Leadership Team and Media Committee of this interagency collaboration, the Foundation lends its expertise on developing effective strategies to educate North Carolina citizens about this important issue and best practices for successful prevention.



FOCUS ON PREVENTION

- In response to the need for preconception (pre-pregnancy) health education materials, the Foundation launched two magazines for women of reproductive age titled **Choices** and **Mujer Total** (Total Woman). Both are “self-help” publications that motivate women to make healthy choices for themselves prior to becoming pregnant. Topics include smoking cessation, substance abuse, dealing with depression, healthy relationships and a variety of other health topics.
- The N.C. Healthy Start Foundation has become one of the leading voices advocating for women and children’s health and SIDS risk reduction. Using a variety of different media including, television, radio, its newsletters, magazines and website, the Foundation has been very effective in communicating with millions of citizens across the state.
- Since 1998, the Foundation has worked in conjunction with the N.C. Division of Public Health to deliver an outreach campaign to promote publicly funded health insurance to eligible families with uninsured children. The campaign, managed out of the Foundation’s office, seeks to build awareness and increase enrollment of uninsured children across our state. In partnership with WRAL-TV and Univision, the Foundation created and aired ads linking families with free and low-cost health insurance.
- The **Latino Infant Mortality Awareness (LIMA)** initiative is a qualitative research project undertaken to better understand Latina health knowledge, attitudes and practices in North Carolina. The findings help the Foundation, the state of North Carolina and others create educational materials and messages, trainings, and provide effective services for the state’s Latinas.

Providing New Strategies for Health Professionals



Always on the forefront of efforts to reduce infant mortality and improve the health of women, the Foundation provides information, training and a vast number of additional resources to support North Carolina agencies' efforts to help the families they work with live healthier and happier lives.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Baby's Easy Safe Sleep Training (BESST) and toolkit: This two-hour training provides health professionals, educators, parents, caregivers and childcare providers with valuable resources to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The program uses an educational flipchart to provide important tips about infant safe sleep and ways to reduce SIDS. BESST is fully interactive and provides culturally sensitive information in English and Spanish to address an important health disparity among minority populations.

Next Step for Mom: This series of six workshops trains healthcare professionals and provides them with information to educate childbearing aged women on making health improvements that reduce the chance of a poor birth outcome. These regional three-hour workshops equip participants with tools to help post-partum women set personal health goals, manage stress, plan for future pregnancies and better understand the potential affects of tobacco, alcohol and drugs on infants and children. The workshop materials include self-help guides, health management charts and personal pledge cards designed to remind women of their personal commitments to themselves and their unborn children.

A Child's Life Depends on You: Every nine hours an infant in North Carolina dies before reaching its first birthday. This field training module allows Foundation program coordinators to meet face-to-face with health professionals across the state to discuss issues related to infant mortality, women's health and health insurance for children. The initiative also helps Foundation staff better understand the needs of individual communities while sharing free resources and strategies for promoting the health of mothers, children and infants. This exchange of information is then used to inform presentations at regional, state and national conferences on a variety of topics.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OTHER AGENCIES

Health organizations across the state look to the Foundation for assistance in creating new health education materials and enhancing existing information. The following provides highlights of recent efforts.

- **N.C. Division of Public Health: Women's Health Branch:** Building on a 15 year collaboration, the Foundation worked closely with the Women and Tobacco Coalition on Health to update and produce *Counseling from the Heart*, a 25-minute training video that teaches health professionals best-practice strategies to help women quit smoking and limit tobacco exposure for themselves and their families.
- **NC Family Health Resource Line:** Since 1990, the Foundation has taken a leading role in promoting the NC Family Health Resource Line – a statewide, toll-free, bilingual service that provides information and referral services for prenatal care, pregnancy, parenting, child care and child health insurance. Each year, health communication specialists field almost 40,000 calls from across the state to answer questions and provide educational materials requested by callers.
- **N.C. Folic Acid Council:** The Foundation helped to design and print Spanish language materials promoting the benefits of folic acid. The Foundation distributes all educational and promotional materials for the N.C. Folic Acid Council and actively promotes the importance of taking a multivitamin with folic acid daily.
- **N.C. Sickle Cell Program:** This ongoing partnership enabled the Foundation to produce *Hope for a Brighter Future* for the state program. This 10-minute video and discussion guide addresses the diagnosis, detection and treatment of sickle cell disease, which disproportionately affects African-American populations but which can also affect people of other races and ethnicities. These materials are available in both English and Spanish.



Public Education



What began in 1990 with the nationally recognized First Step Campaign, has evolved into one of North Carolina's most successful, and diverse, public health education endeavors. Our commitment to promote healthy lifestyles for women of childbearing age and the utilization of health services, is demonstrated through several culturally and linguistically appropriate statewide public education campaigns.

First Step: First Step promotes healthy lifestyles before, during, and after pregnancy. Starting in 2006, this educational campaign placed new emphasis on women's health and lifestyle choices between pregnancies while maintaining a strong emphasis on having a healthy pregnancy.



N.C. Back to Sleep: N.C. Back to Sleep Campaign leads the statewide effort to reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Campaign messaging expands beyond sleep positioning to include other SIDS risk factors including creating a "safe sleep" environment, reducing exposure to secondhand smoke and maintaining appropriate room temperature. Specialized efforts target high-risk populations, as well as non-traditional caregivers such as grandparents. In 2007, the National Center for Cultural Competence recognized the Foundation's efforts to promote SIDS risk reduction among minorities.

Infant Mortality Awareness: North Carolina's high infant mortality rates are even worse among minority populations, particularly African Americans. The Foundation's "Every 9 Hours" media campaign, combined with printed materials for distribution by health professionals, served to raise awareness among African American and American Indians in the state. From 2006-07 the NC Association of Outdoor Advertisers selected this as a community service campaign resulting in more than \$150,000 in donated advertising (51 posted billboards).

Ana María: The Ana María Campaign, recipient of the 2006 "Impulso a la Comunidad Hispana" award, is a campaign developed in Spanish by Latinos for Latinos. It provides relevant health information and referrals for Latinos. Messages feature prepregnancy and pregnancy health topics, promote publicly funded child health insurance programs and introduce immigrants to North Carolina's healthcare system. This focus supports Latinos and helps health professionals better understand and communicate with the Latino communities they serve.

Health Check (Medicaid)/NC Health Choice for Children: Working in coordination with the state of North Carolina, Foundation outreach efforts promote enrollment in the state's two publicly funded child health insurance programs. Since 1998, the Foundation has been instrumental in raising awareness of these programs and in helping state agencies enroll significant numbers of previously uninsured children.



Looking Ahead



Making inroads to reduce North Carolina's infant mortality rate is largely dependent upon driving individual behavioral change and reducing institutional barriers. Factors affecting this issue range from encouraging individuals to modify lifestyle choices, to more complex social issues such as poverty and access to healthcare and education.



IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Women in North Carolina's low-wealth communities often lack access to vital healthcare services and information. Community-based organizations can play a critical role in helping women gain access to free resources and information. However, many community-based organizations are isolated and may be unfamiliar with the best practices, evidence-based educational materials and resources available to them.

In 2007, the Foundation launched a new program called RICHES (Resources in Communities Helps Encourage Solutions). Funded by a grant from the GlaxoSmithKline Foundation, RICHES will create and convene a network of community-based organizations across the state that serve African American, American Indian, Latina, and other women of childbearing age. The program aims to provide support and access to resources by interlinking these community-based organizations to better meet the needs of all North Carolina women.

INCREASING SAFE SLEEP AWARENESS

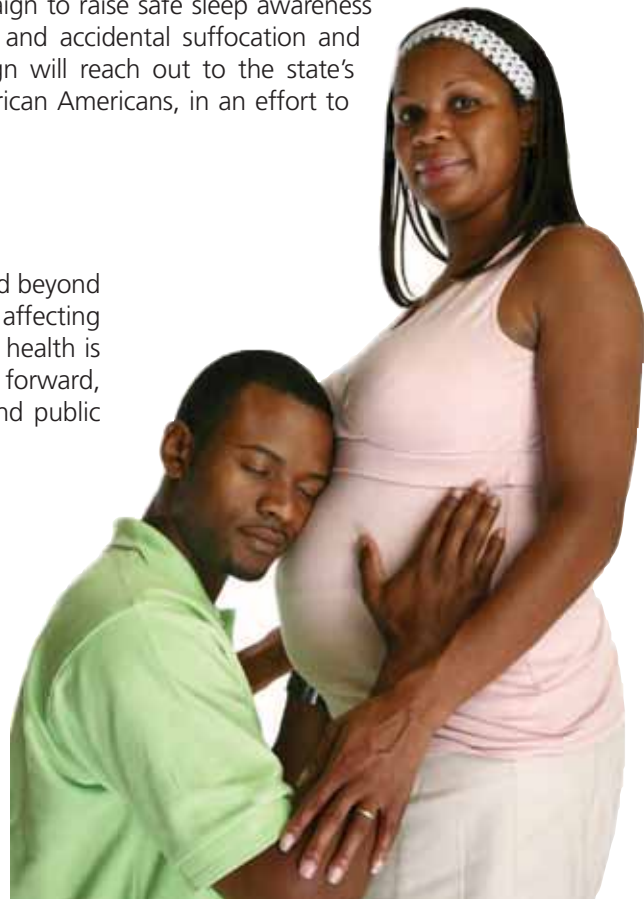
Funding from the North Carolina General Assembly allows the Foundation to continue to raise Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) awareness to key audiences. The Foundation will continue to train health professionals in safe sleep and distribute its BESST (Baby's Easy Safe Sleep Training) flipcharts to health professionals across the state.

The Foundation will continue to convene groups of healthcare professionals in hospitals as part of its HOPES (Hospital Outreach and Partnerships for Educating about Infant Safe Sleep) project. HOPES aims to increase the number of North Carolina hospitals that evaluate their in-house policies, practices and parent education efforts regarding safe sleep.

In addition, the Foundation will launch a media campaign to raise safe sleep awareness and offer families tips for reducing the risks of SIDS and accidental suffocation and strangulation in the sleep environment. This campaign will reach out to the state's diverse population, including Spanish speakers and African Americans, in an effort to reduce health disparities.

IMPROVING WOMEN'S HEALTH

The overall health of the mother, prior to pregnancy and beyond prenatal care, is one of the most significant factors affecting successful birth outcomes. Emphasis on total women's health is the basis for much of the Foundation's efforts moving forward, including the development of educational materials and public awareness initiatives.



In Memoriam
W. Travis Porter (1931-2007)
Founding Director



Dear Friends,

We are deeply saddened by the death of W. Travis Porter who unexpectedly passed away, November 6, 2007. As one of the founders of the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation, Mr. Travis was a committed champion and advocate for North Carolina's babies and a good friend of the Foundation where he served as a board member for many years.

In the late 1980's North Carolina's infant mortality rate trailed the rest of the nation. Travis Porter dedicating himself to addressing this issue by creating a public-private partnership that culminated into the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation. For the first five years, the Foundation served as coordinator for the activities of the Governor's Commission to Reduce Infant Mortality with \$5 million from Glaxo, Inc.

During his tenure on the Foundation's Board of Directors, and later as Director Emeritus, Travis Porter brought tremendous passion to the Foundation's mission to reduce infant mortality and improve the health of women and children across his home state of North Carolina. His unwavering support allowed us to reach out to the state's most vulnerable citizens through education and training.

Travis' death is an enormous loss to the Foundation, many other civic organizations and educational institutions that have benefited from his leadership over the years. He was a wonderful colleague and friend to those of us who had the privilege to work with him and he will be dearly missed. We commit ourselves to honoring his legacy through our continued service to communities across this great state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas J. Bacon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Thomas J. Bacon
Chair, Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janice A. Freedman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janice A. Freedman
Executive Director

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Funding Profile

The North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation is a private, 501(c)(3) organization supported through an annual financial assistance grant from the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (Division of Public Health), an annual appropriation from the N.C. General Assembly and private grants.

Initially funded through a five year, five million dollar contribution from then Glaxo, Inc., the Foundation currently operates in a unique private-public partnership with the state of North Carolina to coordinate statewide public education and outreach initiatives that support local programs. This relationship ensures that up-to-date information and needed resources, supporting the state's maternal and child health program goals, are available in all of North Carolina's 100 counties.

Over the years, grants from private foundations, including the GlaxoSmithKline Foundation, Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation and the C.J. Foundation for SIDS, have funded new education and outreach initiatives designed to enhance existing women's health promotion and SIDS risk reduction efforts.

FY 06-07 REVENUE SOURCES

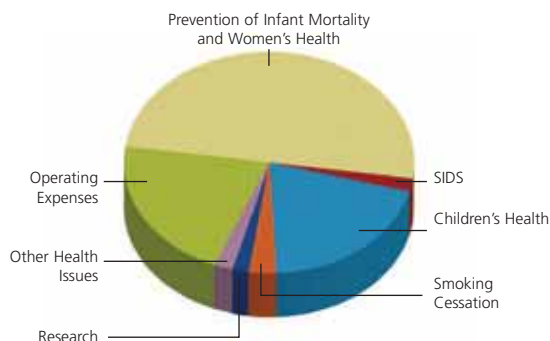
\$1,436,083



N.C. Division of Public Health	68%
Private Foundation Grants	10%
N.C. General Assembly	21%
Other Sources	1%

FY 06-07 EXPENDITURES BY TOPIC

\$1,366,968



Prevention of Infant Mortality and Women's Health	50%
SIDS	2%
Children's Health	20%
Smoking Cessation	3%
Research	2%
Other Health Issues	2%
Operating Expenses	21%





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