



# WORLD'S GREATEST



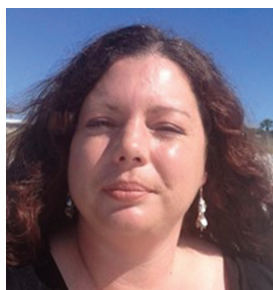
On April 10, 2025 we held our annual World's Greatest Baby Shower at First United Methodist Church on 4th Street. We were proud to provide attendees with an opportunity to meet with 40 community vendors. The vendors included OB offices, pediatricians, lactation services, pregnancy resources, insurance providers, early learning services, Dept of Health services, nutrition specialists, banking services and home visiting services.

We had 348 attendees that included 143 moms, 43 Dads and a myriad of family supporters. Moms and dads participated in fun games and some very lucky families went home with over 55 door prizes and Grand Prizes provided by our sponsors and vendors. This event was packed with support, smiles, and community. We're so thankful to everyone who came out and made it a success. We look forward to holding it again next year!





## Welcome Amanda St. Clair!



Amanda St. Clair joined the CONNECT Program in March. She has a background in social services, administration, and marketing with a bachelor's degree in communication arts. She has one adult son, Donovan, and enjoys traveling and working

on craft projects. She is a local to Panama City and appreciates the beaches and state parks in the area. She is grateful to have joined the Healthy Start team.



If you have a child under the age of 3 and live in Bay, Franklin or Gulf County and are interested in more information about T.E.A.M. Dad, please contact our Fatherhood Coach at: [TEAMDad@healthystartbfg.org](mailto:TEAMDad@healthystartbfg.org) or 850-370-0844.



## Graduating Our First Dad of 2025

By Greg Faulkenberry, TEAM Dad

On Thursday, March 6th, we had our first TEAM Dad graduation of 2025. Several of the dads in the program, along with their families, attended. It was a wonderful celebration.

The theme for the evening was *Super Dad*, so I'm sure you can guess what the decorations looked like: a superhero cape, masks, and WHAM! POW! banners.

Dinner included smoked ribs, chicken, and homemade cupcakes. Thirty people were in attendance, including a Board Member and Healthy Start Staff. Additionally, incredible volunteers were there to serve.

The highlight of the evening was our graduating



Alexander Irizarry and Family

dad's speech. Alexander Irizarry gave a well-prepared, emotional speech that not only encouraged dads, but also made an impact on all present.

If you'd like to watch Alex's speech, go to [facebook.com/profile.php?id=61568682628711](https://facebook.com/profile.php?id=61568682628711). You'll be glad you did.

We are very excited about the growth of our TEAM Dad program. September 2025 will be our next semi-annual graduation event, and we expect to graduate several dads.

If you know of a dad who has a child under three or is an expectant father, let him know that there is a program that offers encouragement and mentorship to dads. And TEAM Dad will do our part to make great dads greater.

## A Place of Rest

By Greg Faulkenberry, TEAM Dad

DADS'

CORNER

DADS, WE'RE IN YOUR CORNER

The first session in the 24/7 Dad Curriculum is called *Family History*. Good or bad, how we were raised follows us into

adulthood and influences the way we raise our own children.

I talk to dads about *Pendulum Parenting*. The idea behind "pendulum parenting" is that parents often try to parent differently from how they were raised, sometimes swinging to the extreme opposite of their childhood experiences. Or, they try to parent exactly the way they were raised. This can be either positive or negative, depending on the parent's experience growing up.

You may have been raised without getting one cent

for doing chores. Your parental reaction is to tell your kids, 'You're not getting money for doing what you should do anyway... I never got a dime for washing the dishes.' Or you might go to the other extreme and promise your kids that they will always have more than enough and will never go without anything they may want or need, regardless of whether they do or don't do chores.

I encourage Dad and Mom to be truthfully aware and honest about the impact of their upbringing on their parenting to avoid extremes. Discover what is healthy. A pendulum, when not swinging by the propulsion of gravity, finds itself in the middle in a resting position. And that's where parenting becomes fun and constructive—that's right, in a place of rest. And, we can all agree that's what parents need more of.

# Children's Day at the Capitol



On Tuesday, April 15, 2025, the Healthy Start Franklin team traveled to Tallahassee to attend Children's Day

at the Capitol. Children's Day is reportedly the largest event held in the state that celebrates and honors its commitment to children, youth and advocates. Children's Day is packed with a variety of hands-on and engaging activities, including opportunities to meet, connect, and network with child-serving agencies and

community partners from across the state.

The day began with an empowering press conference featuring remarks from state leaders and advocates, followed by uplifting performances by talented youth. Our staff visited the many booths to obtain information on educational games and curriculum and up-to-date information on community resources. Staff then made their way through "Storybook Village" where children's books were brought to life by partnering agencies and organizations, and staff were provided children's books to utilize in home visits to remind families of the importance of early literacy.

For more information on Children's Week visit: [childrensweek.org](http://childrensweek.org)

## Postpartum Depression

Postpartum depression is a mood disorder that can affect women after the birth of a child. It can also be seen in fathers. It can cause both mom and dad to have feelings of sadness, anxiety, and low energy which impacts the ability to take care of a child. It can show up anytime during the first year after giving birth, often within 1-3 weeks. Some women suffer with what is called "baby blues," but those feelings are normally temporary. Postpartum depression and anxiety are more severe, persistent and requires treatment.



**Women and men are at higher risk if there is:**

- A previous history of depression or anxiety.
- They suffer significant stressful life events during pregnancy, during the birth or after delivery
- Have a lack of social support
- Have a difficult relationship with their partner
- Are taking certain medications

**Symptoms in both women and men include:**

- Persistent sadness or low mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure
- Fatigue or low energy

- Changes in appetite or sleep
- Irritability, anxiety and frustration
- Difficulty concentrating
- Thoughts of self-harm or harming the baby
- Difficulty bonding with the baby
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Increased use of drugs/alcohol
- Violent behavior

What can you do if you have a loved one showing signs and symptoms of postpartum depression or anxiety? Encourage them to reach out to their healthcare provider or a mental health professional. Encourage mom to call or text the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline at 1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-

833-852-6262). You can also offer them emotional support, be a good listener, encourage self-care, limit visitors, be patient, provide them with breaks, offer simple affection, give her time to rest and most of all, remember it is a medical condition so offer to go to appointments to ask questions and help be their voice when they cannot express themselves. Reassure them and be prepared to help take care of the baby.

Treatment can include inpatient admissions, psychotherapy, medication, family support and even group therapy.

### Postpartum Mental Health Resources



The 988 Lifeline: Talking about self-harm, suicide, killing or hurting others is an EMERGENCY.  
Call/text - 988 or 911



Nat'l Maternal Mental Health Hotline:  
24/7, free, confidential support before, during & after pregnancy. Call/text- 833-TLC-MAMA



Postpartum Support Int'l: Direct peer support to families and connection to professionals.  
Call/text - 800-944-4773



Help Others: Volunteer, donate & lend support  
Visit: [988lifeline.org/our-network](http://988lifeline.org/our-network) or [postpartum.net/join-us](http://postpartum.net/join-us)

@letmommysleep

# Upcoming EVENTS

- 6/5 Board Meeting
- 6/11 Fatherhood Conference at FSU
- 6/12 Community Action Group (CAG) Meeting
- 6/18 Dad's Comedy Nite
- 6/19 Juneteenth Holiday
- 6/25 Dad Focus Group w/ELC of NW Florida
- 7/4 July 4th Holiday
- 7/25 Women's Symposium
- 8/26 FIMR Meeting
- 9/4 Board Meeting



In June we celebrate Father's Day, but actually every day is Father's Day! Dads are everyday heroes and play such an important role in raising children. So, please take time to thank the father figure in your life.

The Healthy Start Coalition of Bay, Franklin, and Gulf Counties is a private, non-profit maternal and child health organization dedicated to reducing Bay, Franklin, and Gulf Counties' infant mortality rate and improving the health of pregnant women.

The Healthy Start Coalition of Bay, Franklin, and Gulf Counties works with community organizations and individuals with a vested interest in maternal and child health to maximize community resources. We offer a variety of programs to meet the needs of women, children and families.

Visit Us Online!



[www.healthystartbfg.com](http://www.healthystartbfg.com)



## HEALTHY START SERVICE LOCATIONS

### BAY COUNTY

531 Jenks Ave. Suite C • Panama City, FL 32401  
850-215-1320

### ALL ABOUT WOMEN OBGYN

850-785-1517

### EMERALD COAST OBGYN

769-0338

### FRANKLIN COUNTY

139 12th Street • Apalachicola, FL 32320  
850-653-2111

### GULF COUNTY

2475 Garrison Ave. • Port St. Joe, FL 32456  
850-227-1276

### HEALTHY START COALITION

2101 Northside Drive, Unit 101  
Panama City, FL 32405  
850-872-4130

## HEALTHY START BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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