



Healthy Start

Bay, Franklin, Gulf
Healthy Start Coalition

Summer 2026 Newsletter

A Word From Our Executive Director

As we welcome the sunshine and slower pace of summer, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible impact our Healthy Start Team, partners, volunteers, and families made over the past year. Because of our community support and dedication, we are able to expand services to more mothers, babies, fathers, and families. This past 2025-2026 we provided almost 36,000 services, served 1100 women and children, 26 fathers and 21 women received some form of mental health service.

One of the things I am most proud of is the heart behind the work. Every skill-set taught during a home visit, every emergency phone call answered and every encouraging conversation mattered. Healthy Start is more than a program; it is a community of people committed to helping families thrive. As summer begins and the temperatures continue to rise, we want to encourage everyone to stay safe and healthy by hydrating, never leaving children alone in a vehicle, apply sunscreen regularly and never leave a child unattended near a body of water no matter its size!

Summer is also a wonderful opportunity to reconnect as families whether its sharing meals together, taking evening walks and just simply slowing down and enjoying time with your family and friends. Thank you for continuing to trust and support our Healthy Start mission. Together, we are building stronger families, healthier babies and a better community. Wishing you a safe, joyful, and healthy summer!

Warmly,

Sharon Trainor, Executive Director

Upcoming Events/Meetings

6/19/2026 Juneteenth Holiday - Coalition Office Closed
6/23/2026 June Fetal Infant Mortality Review Meeting
7/03/2026 July 4th Holiday - Coalition Office Closed
7/04/2026 July 4th Holiday
7/30/2026 Annual Service Delivery Plan Renewal
8/20/2026 CIR Home Visiting Advisory Committee Meeting
8/25/2026 August Fetal Infant Mortality Review Meeting
9/10/2026 Community Action Group Meeting

Coalition News and Events



The Healthy Start Worlds Greatest Baby Shower was held April 16, 2026 from 4-6 p.m. at Panama City First United Methodist Church.

Forty plus vendors greeted over 240 attendees and provided them with much needed resources like formula, bibs, shoes, lactation cookies, books, insurance information, early childhood checkups, savings account information, healthy eating guides, breast feeding resources and more.

Over 30 dads and 120 moms were offered newborn and prenatal resources that every family needs and all who attended were entered for door prizes and grand prizes provided by all the sponsors and vendors. Some families were lucky enough to go home with a door prize like a pack n play, a basinet or even a high chair. One lucky mom won a baby bouncer door prize and the grand prize of a Walmart gift card of \$250.

Families also got to get some welcomed Maternal Health education by Madi Berger from Collective Soul Panama City. She talked about healthy ways moms could move and keep healthy while pregnant and into post-partum. Dads were not left out when T.E.A.M. Dad Specialist, Greg Faulkenberry did a presentation on why it is important for dads to be involved in their babies lives.

We would like to give a shout out to all our volunteers and vendors who made this year's baby shower another successful event. Without you, we would not be able to offer our community this event. You each played a large role in making sure Bay, Franklin and Gulf County moms and dads had access to prenatal, postpartum and early childhood resources, safe sleep education and much needed baby supplies!

Newborn Sponsors

Tender Love & Care PPEC and ELC
Nemours Children's Health
All About Women OB/Gyn
Emerald Coast OB/Gyn
HCA Florida Gulf Coast Hospital
Panama City Community Birth & Wellness
Trustmark Bank
PanCare of Florida, Inc.

Third Trimester Sponsors

Tyndall Federal Credit Union
Sunshine Health
Innovations Financial Credit Union
Alignment Bay County
Humana Healthy Horizons in Florida
First Federal Bank
Bundle of Hope Adoption and Family Services
Kiwanis Club of Panama City

Second Trimester Sponsors

Pons Child Care Infant & Toddler Center, LLC
Diana Health
Chrysalis Health
Panama City Women's Club

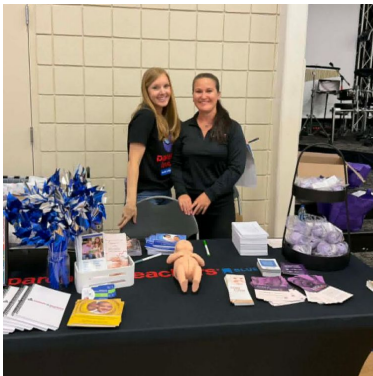
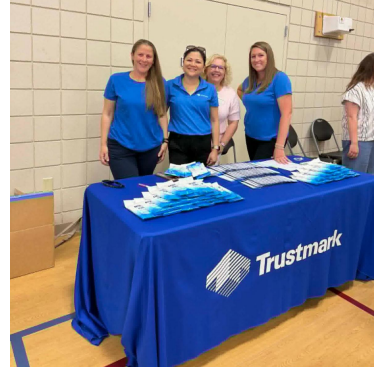
First Trimester Sponsors

Pregnancy Resource Center of Panama City
Pediatric Associates
Samantha Martone, Zinzino Partner

Prenatal Sponsors

FDOH Bay County WIC Program
Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida
Early Steps Program
Healthy Families of Bay
Parents as Teachers
Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida
Family Network on Disabilities POPIN
Tobacco Free Florida AHEC Cessation Program
Bay County Public Library (Bay FLOW)
Early Education and Care, Inc.
Family Service Agency of Bay County
FL DOE - Division of Blind Services
FDLRS PAEC
Anchorage Children's Home
Panama City Housing Authority
T.E.A.M. Dad

Connect
Healthy Start
Children's Critical Care Alliance
Collective Soul Panama City





TEAM Dad Corner

Dad's Guide to the Rhythm of Presence

Greg Faulkenberry

TEAM Dad Coach — Fatherhood Program

Being a parent is the most rewarding role in the world. As fathers and mentors, we hold a unique position of authority and influence in our homes. We shape our children's habits from infancy and guide them through the social trials of their teenage years. Our words carry immense weight. Even the family pets seem to know when "Dad" means business!

But with this influence comes profound responsibility. Our duty goes far beyond providing shelter and food. We must invest our most valuable asset: our time. We need to actively engage with our children's interests, listen to their dreams, and practice "Active Parenting."

Children inherently want to connect with their parents. They respond best to presence, not just rules. When we show up, we build a legacy of mutual respect.

What happens when we fail to show up? Consider this story:

A family adopted a pet hamster named Danny. Predictably, the kids promised to care for him, but Mom ended up doing all the work. After two months, she decided Danny had to go. When she told the kids, they were surprisingly calm. Mom explained, "He is too much work for one person, so he goes. Go get the cage."

Suddenly, the children burst into tears of outrage, shouting, "Danny? We thought you said Daddy!"

To truly earn our children's honor, we must be present throughout the daily rhythm of life. This means talking at the dinner table, chatting during the morning commute, unwinding at bedtime, and greeting them at the start of each day. Time is the ultimate gift. The greatest reward of fatherhood is the love and connection our children give us in return.



Celebrating Growth and Community Spring 2026 T.E.A.M. Dad Graduation

**Greg Faulkenberry
T.E.A.M. Dad Fatherhood Program Coordinator**

We are thrilled to have celebrated our **Spring Graduation in March 2026**, marking our third official TEAM Dad graduation ceremony. This milestone event honored **10 dedicated fathers** who successfully completed the program, taking a monumental step forward in their fatherhood journeys.

These exceptional dads consistently showed up, put in the hard work, and committed to growing as supportive parents, partners, and positive role models. It was a true honor to recognize their efforts alongside **Joseph Gerstenfeld, State of Florida T.E.A.M. Dad Program Manager**, who traveled from Tallahassee to celebrate this landmark occasion with our Healthy Start community.

More Than Education: The Core Mission

TEAM Dad is about building confidence, strengthening families, and creating a lasting impact. Through **Teaching, Empowering, Advocating, and Mentoring**, fathers gain the practical tools they need to stay actively engaged and support their children's lifelong success.

Join Our Next Season

If you know a new or expecting father, this program is designed specifically for them. Dads do not have to have everything figured out from the start—they just need a genuine willingness to learn and grow.

TEAM Dad is here to walk alongside you every step of the way.

Learn more at: healthystartbfg.com/services/team-dad/




MEN'S HEALTH MONTH



**Health
Start**
Florida Association of
Healthy Start Coalitions

Men's Health Month is an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of preventive care, healthy habits, and regular checkups for men. Encouraging routine screenings, physical activity, balanced nutrition, stress management, and open

conversations about mental health can help prevent serious health problems and support overall well-being.



Do one item each day in the month of June. Check the box when completed.

☐ Schedule a health-related appointment	☐ Drink a lot of water	☐ Take yourself on a date	☐ Eat more fruits	☐ Walk for at least 15 minutes
☐ Talk to someone about being a parent	☐ Avoid salt	☐ Don't eat processed foods	☐ Laugh and smile	☐ Meditate/sit in silence
☐ Write 3 things you are grateful for	☐ Listen to your favorite song	☐ Try a new exercise	☐ Eat more vegetables	☐ Plan for your future
☐ Cook at home	☐ Write 5 things you like about yourself	☐ Wear Blue Day	☐ Journal/take time to just think	☐ Stretch
☐ Complete an in-home project	☐ Spend time in nature	☐ Take the stairs	☐ Eat a balanced meal	☐ Don't eat refined sugar
☐ Focus on your posture	☐ Take a nap	☐ Go to sleep early	☐ Work on a budget/spending plan	☐ Practice deep breathing



Check out the June Men's Health Month Challenge! When you have checked off every box, we would love to see it fully completed and the reason why men's health is so important to you!

Take a picture and post it on Facebook along with your reason why Men's Health is so important to you and tag "Team Dad of Bay, Franklin and Gulf Counties"!



Infant Safety Tip:

Cover all unused outlets and secure power cords and power strips.



Keeping an infant safe is one of the most important ways we show love and care from the very beginning. Simple daily habits—like using a properly installed rear-facing car seat, placing babies on their backs to sleep in a crib free of blankets and toys, and keeping a close watch during bath time and play—can make a lasting difference. By creating a safe, nurturing environment and staying attentive to a baby's needs, parents and caregivers help give their little ones a strong, healthy, and secure start in life.

 **Let's Celebrate!**

HAPPY
Father's
Day





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

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