



## Maternal, Child & Family Health ENews

### Insights from National Healthy Start's Regional Meeting

The National Healthy Start's regional conference was held in St. Louis at the Grand Renaissance Hotel this month. Healthy Start program staff, project directors and program participants from ten states attended the plenary and breakout sessions. The conference offered the following key insights:

- ⇒ Father and family involvement is critical to healthy development especially early in a child's life;
- ⇒ Consumer participation enriches and sharpens program delivery;
- ⇒ Engaging community members and state officials to improve maternal/child health outcomes provides consistent messages and maximization of resources;
- ⇒ Establishing sustainability plans early in the Healthy Start process is critical for maintaining services and successes beyond the Healthy Start grant period.

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### What's in the ENews today?

1. Insights from National Healthy Start's Regional Meeting
2. Hot Topics: U.S. receives low rating for newborns' survival
3. Website resources
4. Updates from MCFH Coalition's Quarterly Meetings
5. Meeting Schedule

### Hot Topics: U.S. receives low rating for newborns' survival

According to a new Associate Press article dated May 9, 2006, the United States ranks near the bottom of 33 industrialized nations for newborn survival rates. The survey was conducted by the U.S.-based Save the Children. With a death rate of nearly 5 per 1,000, the U.S. ties with Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovakia. The report quoted Emory University health policy expert Kenneth Thorpe in indicating that the U.S. does not focus on basic primary health care and preventions. For more details see [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/infant\\_mortality](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/infant_mortality).

Potential solutions are focusing on the role of preconception care as a means to lower infant mortality. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* recently released recommendations to improve preconception health and health care. The report was the work of the CDC/ATSDR Preconception Care Work Group and the Select Panel on Preconception Care. The recommendations focus on consumer knowledge, clinical practice and public health programs to name a few. The report includes not only recommendations but also action steps to achieve those recommendations. The report is included as an attachment to this newsletter.



### Website Resources

Check out the Maternal & Child Health Policy Research Center website at <http://www.mchpolicy.org/publications/medicaid.html>. The **MCH Policy Research Center** is a health policy group that provides federal and state policymakers, public health officials, and provider and family organizations with analysis of financing and service delivery issues affecting children and adolescents.

**More news and calendar of events**

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## Maternal, Child & Family Health ENews

### Updates— MCFH Coalition's Quarterly meetings

At our last Quarterly meeting, Katie Plax, M.D. provided us with information about the campaign to increase the tax on tobacco products in the state of Missouri. The Committee for a Healthy Future successfully turned in over 238,000 signatures to the Secretary of states office. The Committee continues to look for endorsers to the campaign. If you are interested in getting involved you can contact Dr. Plax at 454-2468 or look on the web site [www.healthymissouri.org](http://www.healthymissouri.org).

The next Quarterly Coalition Meeting scheduled for **Thursday, June 15, 2006 from 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m.** will offer an opportunity for interactive learning about **literacy and applications to health literacy principles** for maternal and child health populations. The goal of the workshop will be to increase our knowledge of literacy so we can be effective in assessing and developing low literacy applications within our programs. Attendees can expect to experience what it is like to survive with low literacy, discover strategies and techniques for reaching those with limited reading skills, and encounter an organization that engaged program participants in designing materials to address literacy needs and increase health literacy. Presenters include LIFT-Missouri, Redevelopment Opportunities for Women (ROW) and Pediatricians in Community. A flyer is attached to this email!



### Special points of interest:

Mama exhorted her children at every opportunity to "jump at de sun."

We might not land on the sun, but at least we would get off the ground.

-Zora Neal Hurston

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### Coalition Meetings Schedule

June 15 - 9:00-11:30 a.m.  
MCFH Coalition Quarterly Meeting - SBC Library, Telecommunity Room, Harris-Stowe University—3026 Laclede

June 20 - 8:30-10:00 a.m.  
MCFH Coalition Access Work Group—539 N. Grand Blvd., 4th Floor Conference Room

July 25 - 9:00-11:00 a.m.  
FIMR Community Action Team - North Central Community Health Center—4000 Jennings Station Rd.

August 11 - 8:30-10:30 a.m.  
Immunization Coalition—  
Location to be determined