

North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation

Report to the Community : 2008

*Dedicated to improving the health of  
women and young children in North Carolina*







[First Step Campaign](#)

[Ana María Latino Campaign](#)

[Back To Sleep Campaign](#)

[Health Check – NC Health Choice for Children Campaign](#)

Dear Friends:

As we begin our 20th year of service, we reflect with pride on our many accomplishments. The **North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation** continues to be recognized as a leader in the state's effort to reduce infant mortality. As an organization, we continue to evolve and grow. We are grateful that additional support from the North Carolina General Assembly in this past year allowed us to add to our staff, allowing us to further expand our reach and strengthen our award-winning programs.

As we look ahead to our next 20 years, we look forward to building on our legacy of improving the health and well-being of women and young children in our great state. We will continue to strive to educate on, and advocate for, the health of women before, during and after pregnancy. We will also work tirelessly to develop new strategies to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and prevent accidental infant deaths due to suffocation and strangulation.

Moving forward, we recognize the challenges we face. Despite many improvements, North Carolina continues to have one of the highest infant death rates in the nation. Too many women lack access to preventive healthcare services or don't receive the timely prenatal care they need. Too many pregnancies are unplanned and too many children are uninsured. We renew our commitment and dedication to educate, provide and lead the way in improving the health and well-being of this and future generations.

Sincerely,

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

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

## Who We Are

The North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation was established in 1990 with a five year, \$5 million grant from Glaxo, Inc. At the time, North Carolina had the highest infant mortality rate in the country. The Foundation was charged with providing leadership to reduce that rate.

Over the past nearly 20 years, through extensive education and outreach strategies, the Foundation has grown into a nationally recognized private, nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing infant death and illness and improving the health of women and young children in North Carolina.

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

From the outset, the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation was established as a nonprofit to work in public/private partnership with the state of North Carolina. This unique relationship has led to unprecedented collaboration with state government agencies, coordination with existing statewide organizations and solicitation of input from local and statewide coalitions.



**“That children link us with the future is hardly news. When we participate in the growth of children, a sense of wonder must take hold of us, providing for us a sense of future.” — Greta Hofmann Nemiroff**

## Public Education

*The Foundation's primary focus is expanding from prevention of infant mortality to addressing the underlying causes. The Foundation utilizes a comprehensive, multi-faceted strategy to confront infant death and disability. Public education campaigns focus on improving the health of women, babies and young children.*

■ **First Step/Women's Health Initiative:**

The First Step Campaign is the cornerstone and charter campaign of the Foundation. Messages promote the importance of healthy lifestyles during pregnancy as well as for all women of reproductive age. More than half of infant deaths in North Carolina can be attributed to the mother's medical issues, many of which existed before she became pregnant. Promoting healthy lifestyles and the use of appropriate health services for women of reproductive age are the most effective ways to reduce infant deaths.

■ **N.C. Back to Sleep/Infant Safe Sleep:**

The campaign leads the statewide effort to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). While earlier messages focused on proper sleep positioning, the campaign also addresses infant safe sleep in a more comprehensive manner to reduce the risk of SIDS by creating a "safe sleep" environment, reducing babies' exposure to secondhand smoke and maintaining an appropriate room temperature.

■ **Ana María Latino Campaign:** This campaign, developed by and for Latinos, provides important Spanish language health information and referrals for Latino families. Messages feature pre-pregnancy and pregnancy health topics, promote publicly funded child health insurance and introduce new immigrants to North Carolina's healthcare system. The campaign is also aimed at helping healthcare providers better understand and communicate with their Latino patients.

■ **Health Check/N.C. Health Choice:** In coordination with the state of North Carolina, the Foundation promotes enrollment in the state's publicly funded children's health insurance programs and has been instrumental in increasing the number of N.C. children with health insurance. A partnership between the Foundation, the N.C. Division of Public Health and the Employment Security Commission of N.C. assures that families learn about these programs when applying for unemployment benefits.

■ **Medical Home Campaign:** This campaign promotes the concept of children having consistent health care for their preventive, chronic and acute healthcare needs, thereby reducing dependence on emergency room services.

■ **www.NCHealthyStart.org:** Our website provides a wealth of information for health and human service professionals and the general public. Certified by Health on the Net (HON) for trustworthy health information, the website is regularly updated to include new programs and partnerships, new statistics, public education messages, digitized versions of our educational materials and links to valuable resources including the Foundation's catalog of free materials. A new feature added in 2008 is a map which provides county by county women's health statistics for North Carolina.

■ **www.MamaSana.org:** In 2008, the Foundation launched www.MamaSana.org, a site solely dedicated to addressing the maternal and child health needs of North Carolina's growing Latin American communities. Developed as a separate website portal, this website provides Latinos with culturally and linguistically appropriate health information in Spanish.



## Our Partners

*From its inception, the Foundation has developed strong relationships with state government agencies and has worked closely with existing statewide and local organizations to maintain unique public/private partnerships. Foundation staff convene several advisory groups and work closely with community-based organizations in mutually beneficial ways.*



■ **N.C. Division of Public Health:** The Foundation has continued extensive on-going collaboration with the Women and Children's Health Section on a variety of projects. In 2008, there was new collaboration on the creation of messaging and educational materials pertaining to sickle cell disease and the importance of HIV testing. Media outlets used include radio and cinema advertising.

■ **RICHES (Resources in Communities Help Encourage Solutions):** From mid-2007 to late 2008, grant funding from the N.C. GlaxoSmithKline Foundation funded RICHES, a pilot project whose goal was to identify and partner with community-based organizations (CBOs) across North Carolina.

A priority was to engage CBOs working directly with women of childbearing years, especially those serving low income and minority women, including Latinas. More than 250 CBOs were identified, surveyed and included in an electronic resource directory now available on the Foundation website.

Six regional meetings were held in Spring 2008 and Fall 2008 for CBOs to learn about women's health in North Carolina, to network and to learn about available resources. As a result of input from the CBOs, two new interactive publications were developed for use in communities: *My Health Journal* and *Mi Diario de Salud*. An electronic toolkit was also developed, including links to RICHES partnering agencies, statewide resources and health education materials.

**"The future which we hold in trust for our own children will be shaped by our fairness to other people's children." — Marian Wright Edelman**

■ **HOPES (Hospital Outreach and Partnerships Educating about Infant Safe Sleep):** The goal of HOPES is to increase the number of hospitals that develop and institutionalize evidence-based safe sleep practices in newborn nurseries and neonatal intensive care units (NICUs). Training and technical assistance is offered on policy development, staff training and patient education. In 2008, in conjunction with National Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month, the Foundation partnered with 26 hospitals across the state to raise awareness about infant safe sleep practices. More than 2,300 onesies were distributed with the message of “Stomach to Play, Back to Sleep, For Baby’s Safe Sleep.” This was done in conjunction with a statewide radio campaign and local media relations.

■ **Folic Acid Promotion:** As a founding, and currently active member of the North Carolina Folic Acid Council, the Foundation distributes all educational materials for the Council and promotes the importance of women taking a daily multivitamin with folic acid to prevent some birth defects.

■ **Latino Advisory Group:** The Foundation convenes a 12 member statewide group, three times during the year. This group of local health and human service providers is devoted to identifying critical health issues affecting Latino women and children and exploring ways to educate families, healthcare providers and the public about issues related to healthy behaviors and having healthy birth outcomes.

■ **Safe Fish Consumption Project:** This new collaborative between the Foundation, Duke University and the NC Division of Public Health builds on shared interests and unique areas of expertise. The project aims to develop and deliver culturally appropriate advice on safe fish consumption to pregnant or postpartum Latina women. Building on the Foundation’s previous success in gathering qualitative information, Latinos in multiple counties were interviewed to determine fishing and fish consumption patterns. The information will be used to develop a low-literacy brochure, and a video, to be produced in 2009.

■ **Infant Safe Sleep Advisory Group:** Working with the Child Fatality Task Force, this advisory group is comprised of healthcare professionals, lactation consultants, parent educators and state program personnel. The group meets twice a year to identify core messages and effective strategies for promoting infant safe sleep practices with the goal of reducing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

■ **Community Grants Program:** In 2008 a one-time, small community grants program was established for the purpose of providing much needed resources to community-based and governmental organizations working with women of reproductive age. 121 proposals were received with decisions made from late December 2008 through February 2009. 82 grants were awarded in 51 counties, totaling more than \$143,500.



*The North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation has become one of the leading voices advocating for women, children's health insurance and SIDS risk reduction. The Foundation carries more than 50 catalog items and annually distributes more than four million education materials—free of charge to community organizations, healthcare providers, businesses and individuals across the state.*

■ **INCite:** The Foundation's monthly electronic newsletter for health and human services professionals provides information on emerging women's and children's health issues and highlights important data, resources and tips to help providers understand and address these issues with their clients and patients.

■ **Maternidad Latina:** (Latina Maternity) offers healthcare professionals insight into Latino culture and health issues. The newsletter, which is written in English, is designed to help providers better understand and communicate with Latinos they serve.

■ **NC Family Health Resource Line (1-800-FOR BABY 1-800-367-2229):** Since 1990, the Foundation has taken a leading role in promoting the NC Family Health Resource Line, a statewide, toll-free, bilingual service for information and referral regarding prenatal care, pregnancy, parenting, child care and child health insurance. As an additional service, the Foundation ships educational materials requested by callers.

■ **Baby's Easy Safe Sleep Training (BESST) and Toolkit:** This two hour training provides health and human services professionals and community leaders with valuable information and resources to conduct community education on ways to reduce the risk of SIDS. The program, available in English and Spanish, uses a culturally appropriate, educational flipchart to provide important tips about infant safe sleep practices.

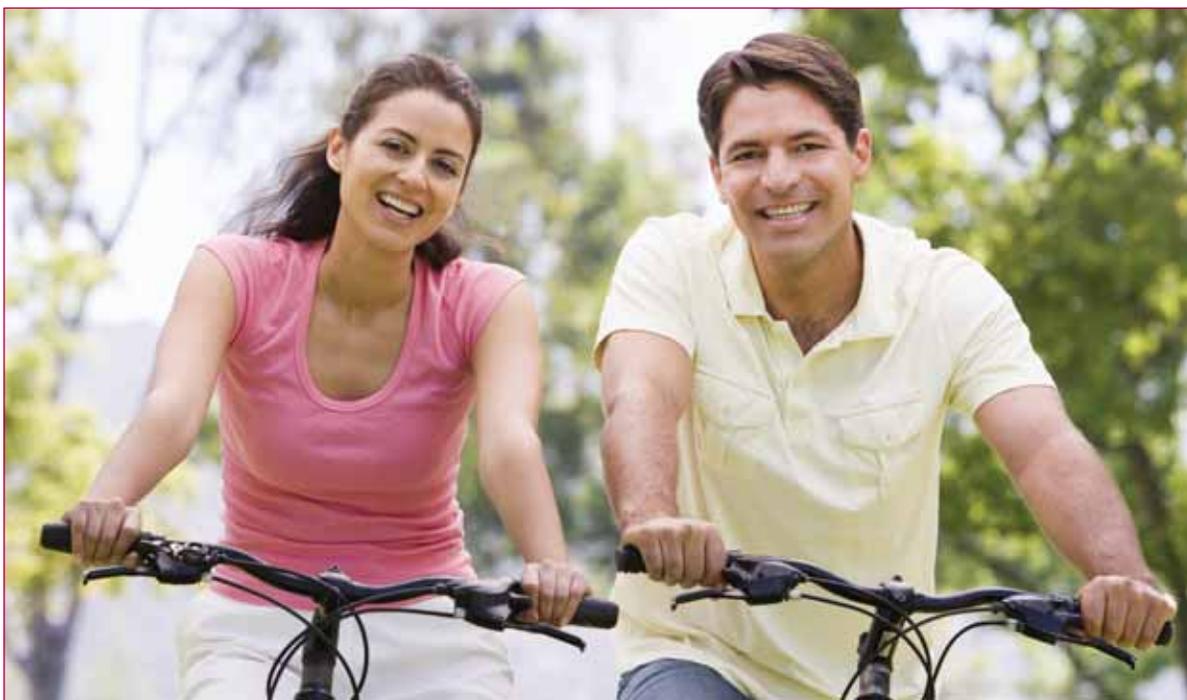


**"A new baby is like the beginning of all things—wonder, hope, a dream of possibilities." — Eda Le Shan**

## Looking Ahead

*As the North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation looks ahead, we foresee a variety of opportunities to make further inroads in reducing North Carolina's infant mortality rate and improving the health of women of reproductive age. We realize it is never enough to talk about change. Real change comes only with dedication, perseverance and a plan of action. The Foundation is committed to exploring innovative messaging and new media strategies to achieve our goal to improve the health of mothers and save the lives of babies across North Carolina.*

- **New Parent Initiative:** In partnering with state and local organizations in eastern North Carolina, this initiative will allow the Foundation to further its work on women's health issues with the faith-based community and outreach workers. The focus on women adopting health-promoting lifestyles and planning future pregnancies is critical; training materials and messages developed for this project are suitable for adapting to use in other regions of the state.
- **HIV Prevention and Testing:** With women's rates of HIV infection increasing, dissemination of the HIV prevention message and North Carolina's HIV testing law for pregnant women is critical. Integration of HIV information into Foundation materials, trainings and messages, combined with partnerships with local HIV programs, will serve to strengthen our efforts.
- **My Health Journal (Mi Diario de Salud):** These valuable tools, developed in 2008 by and for local communities, allow healthcare providers to start the conversation about healthy behaviors and screening tests with the women of reproductive age they see. It gives women a place to record their test results, family history and questions and helps them make a personal plan to be healthier. Already integrated into the New Parent Initiative, the Foundation is committed to rolling out this tool and training in other N.C. communities.

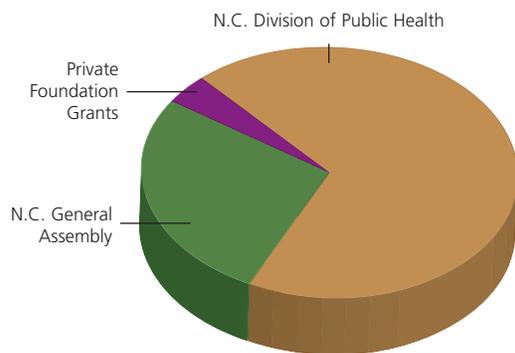


# Funding Profile

The North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation is a private, 501(c)(3) organization supported annually through:

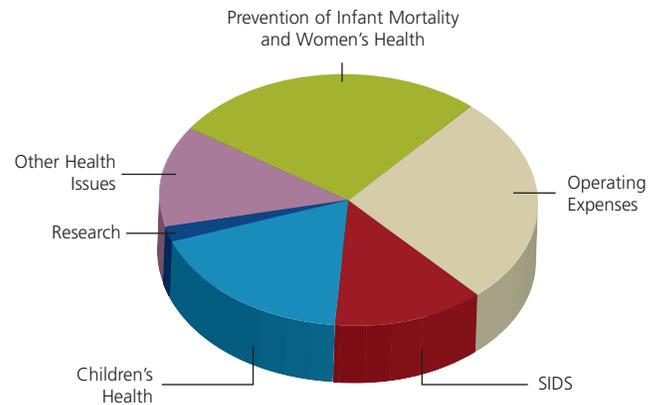
- Project-based contract with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health.
- Annual appropriation from the North Carolina General Assembly. Additional recurring funding was received in 2008.
- Private foundation grants. Over the years private support from private foundations, including the North Carolina 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.

## FY 07-08 REVENUE SOURCES



N.C. Division of Public Health.....	69%
N.C. General Assembly.....	27%
Private Foundation Grants.....	4%

## FY 07-08 EXPENDITURES BY TOPIC



Prevention of Infant Mortality and Women's Health .....	27%
Operating Expenses.....	27%
SIDS .....	13%
Children's Health .....	18%
Research .....	2%
Other Health Issues .....	13%

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