

CONSORTIUM FOR A HEALTHIER MIAMI-DADE

Healthy Baby Taskforce Meeting

Friday, October 17, 2025

12:30-1:30 p.m. EST

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION NEEDED
Membership Total (16)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Esther Louis, Metro Mommy Agency (Healthy Baby Taskforce Co-Chair) 2. Candice Schottenloher, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County 3. Eunice Mesumbe, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County (Committee Liaison) 4. Dr. Cristina Brito, United Way Miami 5. Neseyah McFarlane, Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade (HSCMD) 6. Talli Menchion, Easterseals/Early Steps 7. Michelle Denise Berkovits, University of Miami (UM) 8. Maria Sol Acosta, Community Care Plan 9. Queen Holden, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County 10. Zadymon Moore, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County 11. Catherine Toms, Green Cars for Kids 12. Suecia Mendez Padilla, Sunshine Health 13. Andrea Hickson, NICU Alumni 14. Manavii Kumar, University of Miami (UM) 15. Simisola Olowodola, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County 16. Juanita Granger, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County 	
Welcome and Introductions	The October 2025 monthly meeting of the Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade Healthy Baby Taskforce was brought to order by Esther Louis at 12:36 p.m. All members were welcomed and introduced themselves.	
Approval of Minutes	There was a motion to approve the August 2025 Healthy Baby Taskforce meeting minutes by Neseyah McFarlane, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Cristina Brito.	
Previous Action Items	During the Taskforce meeting, Esther went over the previous Taskforce action items on community concerns related to conversations held in August as the September meeting was cancelled to ensure that members were able to attend the 22nd Annual Consortium event and work Site Wellness Awards, held on Friday, September 19, 2025, at the Milander Center for Arts and Entertainment in the City of Hialeah. A total of 93 attendees were present at the event, with Tenesha Avent as the Worksite Wellness presenter and panelist on paid family leave and breastfeeding in the workplace. Conversations were made on the update and current funding landscapes on the different executive orders now in place and so making sure that members are updated and aware of funding updates on surrounding programs. Collaboration is welcomed to	

<p>Community Concerns Conversation & Health Observance Updates</p>	<p>any organizations that may be working with or on related initiatives that link community residents to needed services, to reach out to the Taskforce team to help support the work of their partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Cristina Brito, (Children Issues/ Oral Health Committee Chair) shared that Quest Foundation selected the Food and Nutrition for All Collaborative to be one of their grantees as they move into Miami-Dade County. It was noted the Black Mothers Care Plan with Florida International University (FIU) will be part of this collaborative. The grant will be utilized to address food insecurity in Miami-Dade, and as part of it, will be looking at a mini grant process. More information will be shared going forward into the grant. • Andrea Hickson, NICU Alumni, shared that every third Wednesday of the month a virtual support group, meets on Zoom that's available to families anywhere to spread awareness. The last support group was hosted on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, with DOH-Miami-Dade WIC and partners from Early Steps. NICU Alumni raises awareness through social media post and emails to the families they support. Virtual Support group Zoom Registration. • Esther Louis, Metro Mommy Agency, shared ongoing breastfeeding support groups relaunching, for all members of the Community as well as continuing their Breastfeeding Why Black Theories on Saturday October 25, 2025, online. With the funding available, she works on providing direct one on one's virtual maternal health consulting to families coming through their MOMCHA Program to helping them to avoid issues like preeclampsia and hypertensive disorders, so that families can get the support that they need to manage any Chronic conditions as well as preventing any new ones from occurring during pregnancy or postpartum. • An additional update shared by Esther Louis was on the MOCHA Family Wellness Fair held on September 28, 2025, at KIPP Miami-Dade College North campus. Over 427 registered, 370 attended, 46 partners who supported the event and 32 vendors. They received 9 sponsors and were able to provide free massages to about 100 families, between 4 massage therapists sponsored by Pascal Pediatrics and their Black Moms Miami Group. Thanking The Children's Trust for their support as well as helping to sponsor this event. The MOCHA fair will be hosted again next year 2026 (more details forthcoming). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the last few months, they have trained 12 doulas to support moms with some more advanced skills to address issues like diabetes, hypertension, preeclampsia, and dehydration. The March of Dimes supported that training and currently at least 40 plus moms have gotten some additional support from those doulas. • Also, with support from the CDC Foundation, their DC hot program, which is their doula climate, health outreach team trained to leverage a model that Dr. Cheryl Holder, created so that there is an understanding on the impact of climate health on climate change on their health. Impact of Climate Health on Climate Change YouTube Webinar recording. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding challenges that the MOCHA program is receiving more referrals than there is funding to support families and so unfortunately, they sometimes turn down some moms. Soliciting help from their partners if awareness of any funding available for moms and Postpartum moms who need support that they are providing. Please email Esther at metromommyagency@gmail.com. The Office of Community Health and Planning (OCHP) shared on behalf of the HIV/STD program looking to engage in speed networking event with different partners and providers in the community that are providing and specializing in HIV services. The HIV/STD Program has reached out to the Consortium to seek representatives of organizations that would be receiving referrals for food, financial assistance, housing, mental health, substance abuse and other support services from HIV test counselors and case managers. This collaboration initiative will be sent out through the listserv for opportunities with any partners in this arena. <p>Other updates were discussed on recent and upcoming health observances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> August was National Breastfeeding Month. The Breastfeed Miami event in Doral had a successful attendance of over 1,200 community members attended. September was National Infant Mortality Awareness Month, NICU Awareness Month, Newborn Screening Awareness Month and Maternal Suicide Awareness Month. On September 19, 2025, ICU Baby hosted the Little Miracles Luncheon for NICU Awareness Month and also their Hope Parade that was hosted on October 12, 2025, at Zoo Miami. October was also National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month, November is Prematurity Awareness Month and World Prematurity Day is hosted on November 17, 2025. December is HIV AIDS Awareness Month. 	
FHB/Healthy Baby Taskforce FY 25-26 Work Plan Development	<p>Candice Schottenloher provided a high-level update on the Florida Healthy Baby (FHB) Healthy Baby Taskforce FY 25-26 Work Plan. The new Florida Healthy Baby FY 25-26 priority areas will include Well Woman Care, Maternal Mortality and Morbidity, Infant Mortality, Dental or Oral Care, and Children's Medical Homes.</p> <p>The Taskforce will focus on Infant Mortality and Children's Medical Homes. The current work plan was reviewed with the current strategies and which SMART objectives were associated with strategy it was being reported under. It is important to highlight Children's Medical Homes is a brand-new priority area. During this meeting, the Taskforce discussed further and some ideas for</p>	Send updated draft work plan document to Taskforce members.

	<p>next steps the Children Issues Committee and Healthy Baby Taskforce should take to begin working to address.</p> <p>It was also noted the new 2025-2030 CHIP Priority Areas will include Access to Care, Chronic Disease, Behavioral & Mental Health, Maternal Child Health, and Healthy Weight/Physical Activity/Nutrition. The new priority areas will assist with the development of the new 2025-2030 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).</p> <p>Overall, the Taskforce members reviewed the document with the provided feedback received last month from the Healthy Baby Taskforce partners. The Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade and The Women's Fund Miami-Dade was able to review and provide recommended changes. It was noted the final work plan was submitted to the state. Additionally, it was noted reporting will transition from quarterly to bi-annual and the reporting tool will be updated to match the work plan submitted to the state. Finally, once the tool is developed, this will be shared with the Taskforce partners.</p>	
Partner Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way Miami: Dr. Cristina Brito shared upcoming is the United Way Impact Partner Investment Cycle grantee application process. Applications are due on November 19, 2025. Based on program registrations, about 92 programs have submitted applications already, and will be reviewed for grant funding starting in July 2026. • Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade: Shared by Neseayah McFarlane, Healthy Start received additional funding from Sunshine Health for this year 2025, to be used for purchasing both portable cribs and car seats for families who are enrolled in their home visitation program. Families will receive safety education, and the car seats will be installed by child passenger safety technicians. They are working on a partnership with Molina to support similar efforts. The Healthy Start T.E.A.M. Dad program just had their annual conference and are happy to announce that eligibility criteria have been expanded to fathers in their program, which includes more fathers, dad to child or partners who are enrolled in other home visitation programs like the Nurse Family Partnership or the Jasmine Project. It also now includes dads who are incarcerated or are in local jails under one year. Neseayah, also shared a link to their community needs assessment, to help them improve their services and better support pregnant women and families they serve. The survey is completely anonymous and only takes about ten minutes. For more details, please email nmcfarlane@hscmd.org. • Metro Mommy Agency: Esther Louis shared the 3rd Annual MOCHA Family Wellness Fair was hosted on Sunday, September 28, 2025, at KIPP Academy – Miami-Dade College North Campus. To learn more, please visit here. Upcoming in January is the southern birth justice network that's going to be hosting a doula training on the January 29, through February 2026. 	

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	<p>Visit Website to find the doula training wait list sign up. It is an 18-month program that includes a lot of hands-on support opportunities to engage in the community through the mobile midwife clinic, through the black Mothers care plan activities. Thanks to the funding of the Health Foundation of South Florida, Metro Mommy Agency provides mentorship as well as business development support to the doulas. Members interested are invited to join reducing infant mortality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunshine Health: Suecia Mendez Padilla shared information on the next Diaper Drive Distribution in partnership with Tree of Life Parenting Center, which will be hosted on Friday, October 24, 2025, from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Sunshine Health Community Connections Center (CCC) located at 9552 SW 160 ST. Miami, FL 33157. Flyers and link were shared. Ongoing is their food distribution fair every 3rd Thursday of the month at 9:00 am. The 1st Wednesday of November and December at 10:00 am, they have a Breastfeeding Support Group at the Sunshine Health Welcome Room. Lastly, on December 9, 2025, the next Diaper Distribution will be hosted, and Health Council of South Florida will be present conducting screenings. Open Enrollment period for Medicaid is upcoming from November 1, 2025 to January 15, 2026. • Perinatal HIV: Queen Holden shared updates for the Perinatal HIV Program, stating they have had an increase from three moms to seven moms infected with HIV that have agreed to start breastfeeding. Miami-Dade is currently the only program in the State of Florida that has a protocol in place for the moms that attend the clinic over at Jackson. A couple of them now have surpassed the six-month milestone of breastfeeding. They have available a breastfeeding doula that's assigned to these moms, and she's doing a great job to recruit them to give them education and follow up with them. Once they deliver the baby to make sure that the baby is getting to latch, the nutrition, everything the baby needs, and the mom is encouraged to continue until baby wants to release. • OCHP: Candice Schottenloher shared an update from the internal CHIP Monitoring and Evaluation (MEC) Committee meeting held on October 16, 2025. The update was related to Congenital Syphilis (CS), the HIV/STD program had shared currently this past quarter we are seeing congenital syphilis cases lower than they were last year. It was noted we are trending in the right direction to reduce congenital syphilis cases in our county. 	
Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 1:27 p.m. The next Healthy Baby Taskforce merged with the Children Issues Committee meeting and annual potluck will be held in person at the United Way Miami in the Ansin Building, Ryder Room, on Friday, November 21, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.	