



## Press Release

Contact: Olga Connor

Rosa Oses-Prealoni

Phone: 786-336-1276

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, February 04, 2008

(Miami, FL) – The Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade has been selected to lead the Black Infant Health Practice Initiative (HB 1269) in Miami-Dade County, and will be working in close partnership with the Miami-Dade County Health Department. In response to this mandate from the Governor, the Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade is convening a **CALL TO ACTION** meeting with Black leaders and community stakeholders.

**Where: Jackson Memorial Hospital's Diagnostic and Treatment Center (DTC)**

**1080 NW 19 Street, Room 270**

**Date: Monday, February 11, 2008.**

**Time: 6:00 PM**

This meeting is to address the racial disparities between Black and White mothers and infants in Miami-Dade County. We need to openly discuss community conditions and stressors that may be contributing to the positive as well as adverse outcomes among Black mothers and babies.

Regardless of the amount of care and prenatal education, some fetal and infant deaths are inevitable. However – some of these babies can be saved and in Miami-Dade County babies die needlessly. “We are 100% committed to do whatever it takes to save our babies, ALL of our babies,” said Manuel E. Fermin, Chief Executive Officer of the Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade. “We look forward to working with all of the community leaders to address this urgent issue.”

The “infant mortality rate” is the number of babies who die before their first birthday for every 1,000 live births. Data from the Florida Department of Health shows that the number of Black babies dying in the first year of life increased from 10.7 deaths per live births in 2001 to 11.5 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2006. A black woman living in Miami-Dade County is two and a half times more likely than her white neighbor to see her baby die. Experts say lowering the infant-death rate will require societal and cultural changes that are measured in decades, not years.

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“We are very proud of the work done in our community to reduce the rate of infant deaths. Although we have made such great progress, we are still working toward reducing these numbers even more,” said Lillian Rivera, R.N., M.S.N. “We know there is more work to do as we continue to address the disparities that have created the higher infant mortality rates that impact our minority communities.”

Kalenthia Nunnally-Bain, President of the Board of Directors, said “This call to action is of great urgency. Our Black Babies are dying. We need to plan, mobilize and create a blueprint to better respond to the crisis of Infant mortality, address racial disparities and close the gaps.”

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN THIS CONVERSATION!

RSVP to Mrs. Doris Nazario at (305) 541-0210 or [dnazario@hscmd.org](mailto:dnazario@hscmd.org).

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