

September 23, 2016

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN LEE COUNTY HOLDS COMMUNITY MEETING ON INFANT MORTALITY TRENDS



Contact:

Kevin Kirkwood

Richard.Kirkwood@flhealth.gov

239-332-9658

Lee County, Fla.—The Florida Department of Health in Lee County held a community meeting about the disparities in infant deaths and the role of social determinants of health.

“We have excellent programs in place that will assist to decrease infant mortality such as Healthy Start, Healthy Families, and the Nurse Family Partnership. We need providers and community programs to promote the benefits to expectant parents and explain that parenting is the hardest job you will ever have, but when done correctly will have a positive global impact. All parents can benefit from the education and support offered from these programs.” said Yvonne McConnell, RN, Executive Community Health Nursing Director for the Department of Health in Lee County.

This meeting is part of the Florida’s Healthy Babies Initiative which provided Lee County with \$10,000 to conduct an enhanced data analysis on infant mortality and host a community action-planning meeting to examine disparities in infant deaths, the role of social determinants of health, and propose local action. In addition to the base funding, many counties will receive additional funding to support the following activities:

- Baby Steps to Baby Friendly: 10 practices proven to enhance hospital maternity care to support and promote exclusive breastfeeding.
- Protective Factors: evidence-based curricula to enhance parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional competence of children that decreases the risk of child maltreatment.

In total, 26 counties received funding to work with 45 hospitals statewide on Baby Steps to Baby Friendly and 29 counties received funding to work on protective factors.

For more information about Baby Steps to Baby Friendly visit:

<http://www.healthiestweightflorida.com/activities/baby-steps.html>

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](https://twitter.com/HealthyFla) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HealthyFla). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.