



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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NEWS RELEASE
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Kalamazoo County's Healthy Babies Healthy Start Program Receives Five-Year \$5 Million Grant

KALAMAZOO, MI— Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department is pleased to announce the recent notice of award for a five-year continuation grant from HRSA (Health Resources Service Administration) for the Healthy Babies Healthy Start program. This is a federally funded grant in the amount of \$1,070,000 per year for five years.

HRSA provides grants to high-risk communities with infant mortality rates at least 1.5 times higher than the United States national average and high rates of other adverse perinatal outcomes such as low birthweight, preterm birth, maternal morbidity and mortality. HRSA is a competitive grant application with only 100 sites in the United States receiving funding. In addition, the Family Health Center's Obstetrics & Gynecology Department will be a partner throughout the next five years in addressing maternal morbidity and mortality.

Healthy Babies Healthy Start (HBHS) is a grassroots program that has 21 years of service in Kalamazoo County. The purpose of the program is to improve health outcomes before, during, and after pregnancy, and reduce racial/ethnic differences in rates of infant death and adverse perinatal outcomes. HBHS provides home visitation services and free educational programming in the community and has shown evidence in improved birth outcomes to mothers and infants enrolled in program services. The program works with community partners to improve access to quality health care and services for women, infant, children, and families through outreach, care coordination, health education, and linkages to community resources.

During the next five-year grant cycle, the HBHS program will expand its service area to serve the Kalamazoo zip codes 49001, 49006, 49007, 49009, 49008, 49002, 49024, 49004, 49048 and fathers. HBHS will serve 300 pregnant women, 300 interconceptual women and children, and 100 fathers through the program services.

HBHS is an active partner of the larger community initiative Cradle Kalamazoo. Cradle Kalamazoo is a multi-agency community led initiative that brings together community leaders and organizations to implement evidence-based and holistic interventions with the goal to reduce infant death and promote respect for families, women and their children.

The Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners voted to accept the funding at their April 16, 2019 meeting. For more information about Health Babies Healthy Start, call 269-373-5279.

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