

Plain Language Glossary of Healthy Start Terms

Healthy Start Community Health Worker Course



Abstain: To not do something. For example: “*abstain* from smoking cigarettes” means not smoking cigarettes.

Accountability: Being responsible, doing what you said you would do. For example: A Healthy Start program is *accountable* to provide high quality services to women, infants and families.

Birth spacing: The time a woman waits between pregnancies, the time period between the end of one pregnancy with birth of a baby, and the beginning of another pregnancy. Pregnancies should be spaced at least 18 months apart to reduce health risks for both the mother and the baby.

Care coordination: A process in which members of the Healthy Start team work together in partnership with the participant to assess the participant’s needs for services and supports, and to connect the participant to the range of needed services. Care coordination involves helping the participant to navigate the service system so that they receive the right care at the right place, at the right time, and by the right person.

Collective Impact: A structured approach for community coalitions (such as CANs) to use for solving complex social or community problems. Collective impact occurs when organizations from different sectors agree to solve a specific social problem using a common agenda, aligning their efforts, and using common measures of success.

Community Action Network (CAN): A CAN is a formally organized partnership of agencies, community-based organizations, and community members that work together to achieve common goals for community betterment, and to coordinate services to improve health outcomes for all community residents. Sometimes called a “coalition”, “consortium” or “local action network”.

Community partners: A Healthy Start program’s community partners are other organizations and programs in the community that work with the Healthy Start program in some way to serve Healthy Start participants. Community partners may include health centers,

hospitals, food and nutrition programs such as WIC, mental health and substance abuse services, schools and adult education programs, housing programs, early childhood programs, cultural organizations, churches, local charities and businesses, and others.

Depression screening: A set of questions that can be asked by a health or social service provider to look for signs of depression. (In Healthy Start, we are talking specifically about perinatal depression—see *perinatal depression*).

Health care providers: A professional who provides preventive, curative, or rehabilitative health care services. Can be anyone who provides health care services including physicians, dentists, nurses, social workers, therapists, etc.

Health disparities: Differences in health among different groups of people.

Healthy Start benchmarks: Standards or targets for Healthy Start programs to aim for in their work with women, infants, and families. Each benchmark is based on a factor that has been shown to have a positive impact on women's and infants' health. The Healthy Start benchmarks are a way to assess progress on a group of outcomes and activities that are common to all Healthy Start programs.

Healthy Start five approaches: The five approaches: Improve women's health, Promote quality, Strengthen family resilience, Achieve Collective Impact, and Increase accountability.

Healthy Start participants: People who are enrolled in a Healthy Start program. Includes women of reproductive age, pregnant women, infants and children up to 2 years of age.

Healthy Start team: The Healthy Start team includes everyone who works at a Healthy Start program. The team usually includes a Project Director, program manager(s), community health workers and a program evaluator, and may also include social workers, case managers, nurses, CAN coordinator and others.

HRSA: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. HRSA works to improve health and achieve health equity through access to quality services, a skilled health workforce and innovative programs. HRSA provides the funding for Healthy Start programs.

MCHB/DHSPS: Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) is a subsection of HSRA which leads programs and initiatives to improve maternal and child health. MCHB includes the Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services (DHSPS) which oversees Healthy Start programs.

Father involvement/partner involvement: Father Involvement is the positive and active participation of the father (or mother's partner) in the lives of his children and family, both during pregnancy and as the children grow up.

Infant: Baby under one year of age.

Infant mortality: The death of a child under the age of one year.

Infant mortality rate: The number of deaths of children under one year of age occurring among the children born alive in a given geographical area during a given year. The infant mortality rate is expressed as the number of deaths per 1,000 live births.

IPV (Intimate Partner Violence): Intimate partner violence is physical, sexual or psychological abuse by a current or former partner or spouse.

IPV screening: A health care provider asks a woman a series of specific questions to see whether she may be experiencing IPV. IPV screening is recommended to be done regularly at well woman visits and other visits with a health care provider.

Interconception: The time between the end of one pregnancy and the beginning of the next one.

Low birthweight: Term used to describe a baby born weighing less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces. Babies with low birthweight may be at increased risk for health problems or developmental delays.

Maternal health: The health of women during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum period.

Maternal mortality: The death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days after the end of a pregnancy, from any cause related to or caused by the pregnancy or its management, and not by accidental causes.

Perinatal period: Time period occurring from preconception through the first year of life (for the infant and its family).

Perinatal depression: Mild, moderate or severe depression (and sometimes anxiety) that occurs during pregnancy and in the 12 months after delivery. It is a common condition, affecting 1 in 7 women.

Postpartum: Period of time after childbirth, from birth to the time the child is 6 months old.

Postpartum care/visit: Postpartum care focuses on a woman after giving birth to make sure that her body is healing well after pregnancy. At about 6 weeks after giving birth, a woman should have a postpartum visit with a health care provider to assess how well she is recovering from the delivery, check for postpartum depression, provide birth control, talk about breastfeeding and any other concerns she may have.

Preconception: Period of time before a woman becomes pregnant.

Pregnancy: When a woman is expecting a baby.

Prenatal: During pregnancy, before birth.

Preterm birth: When a baby is born too soon, before 37 weeks of pregnancy have been completed.

Quality Improvement (QI): Identifying problems with service delivery, and taking systematic actions over time with the goal to improve services for participants and ultimately to improve participants' health.

Referral: Sending/directing a participant to another health care provider or social services provider who can give the participant the specific care and services that they need.

Reproductive Life Plan: A woman's individual and personal plan for whether, when, and how to have children. It includes personal goals, and states how to achieve them.

Risk screening: Asking questions using an approved screening tool (questionnaire) to identify a Healthy Start participant's health risks and needs. Based on answers to the screening questions, the Healthy Start program works with the participant to connect them to health and social services, programs and other supports to address their risks and meet their needs.

SIDS: SIDS is the sudden, unexplained death of a baby younger than one year of age that doesn't have a known cause even after a complete investigation. SIDS is the number one cause of death in babies one month to one year of age.

Safe sleep practices: Safe sleep practices are actions parents and other caregivers can take to help a baby sleep safely and reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death. The ABC's of safe sleep are: A: The baby should sleep *Alone* – not with other people, blankets, or stuffed animals; B: The baby should sleep on his or her *Back* – not on the stomach or side; C: The baby should sleep in its own *Crib*, not in an adult bed or on a soft cushion, couch or other surface.

Smoking abstinence: Refraining from smoking cigarettes. Being a never-smoker or someone who has quit smoking.

Social determinants of health: The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. Social determinants such as family income, education, housing and food security, social connections and community environment have a major impact on people's health.

Social service providers: Agencies and organizations that provide services such as housing assistance, food assistance, educational services, counseling, support groups and other services aimed at improving the lives and living conditions of community members.

Usual source of medical care: A place that an individual or family usually goes when they are sick, such as a doctor's office, clinic or health center, but not an emergency room.

Well-child visit: Visits for infants and children with a health care provider that include a complete physical exam, and provision of preventive services such as developmental screening and immunizations. The health care provider checks the child's growth and development in order to find or prevent problems. These visits also give parents a chance to ask questions. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends well child visits at 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 24 months.

Well-woman visit: A healthcare visit for women to review their overall and reproductive health and receive preventive services such as contraception and immunizations. Well-woman visits are recommended annually and often include breast and pelvic examinations and a pap smear.

Women of reproductive age: Women between the ages of first menstrual period and menopause generally defined as women between the ages of 15-49.