

Reflecting on Maternal and Infant Health Needs and Resources in the Community Served by our Healthy Start Program

Discuss these questions with your supervisor, or ask to schedule some time at a staff meeting to talk as a team about your Healthy Start program's community assessment and what it tells you about maternal and infant health needs and resources in the community you serve. Use this worksheet to keep a record of what you discussed. (Please note the community assessment may be called the "needs assessment" by your Healthy Start program).

1. Looking at the data and information in our community assessment, what are some of the major barriers and challenges faced by women and families in our community that might make it hard to have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby? Or to raise a healthy infant/toddler?
2. What else do we know from our own knowledge and experience of this community about factors that make it hard to have a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby? Or to raise a healthy infant/toddler?
3. Which of these barriers and challenges can our Healthy Start program help address with our participants?



Developed by JSI for the Healthy Start EPIC Center



4. Looking at the data and information in our community assessment, what are some of the programs, resources and assets in our community* that support women and families to help them have a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby? Or to raise a healthy infant/toddler?

5. What else do we know from our knowledge and experience of this community about factors that contribute to women and families having healthy pregnancies and healthy babies? Or being able to raise healthy infants/toddlers?

6. Which community resources, assets, and programs* does our Healthy Start program tap into or collaborate with to support women and families to have healthy pregnancies and healthy babies? And to raise healthy infants/toddlers?

**For another way to learn about community resources and assets, check out the Real World Practice activities in the Outreach module*



Using Data about Birth Outcomes to Help Understand our Community

The questions below encourage you to use important indicators of maternal and child health to give you a better picture of health issues in the community you serve. This discussion may be most effective if everyone on the team participates including your Healthy Start project director and evaluator. The project director or evaluator should make sure that the team has the necessary rates and information on hand before starting this conversation.

(See last page for definitions of rates and a source to get state and national rates.)

7. Looking at the infant mortality rate in our community, how do these rates compare with the infant mortality rate in our state, or in the U.S. as a whole?

8. Looking at the infant mortality rates for different groups in our community, what differences do you see? What might be contributing to these differences?

9. Looking at the preterm birth rate in our community, how do these rates compare with the preterm birth rate in our state, or in the U.S. as a whole?



10. Looking at the preterm birth rates for different groups in our community, what differences do you see? What might be contributing to these differences?

11. Looking at the low birthweight rate in our community, how do these rates compare with the infant mortality rate in our state, or in the U.S. as a whole?

12. Looking at the low birthweight rates for different groups in our community, what differences do you see? What might be contributing to these differences?

13. After looking at these rates, what comes to mind about the importance of Healthy Start in this community? How can the work our Healthy Start program does (for example, in promoting safe sleep or connecting women to prenatal care or helping women stop smoking, etc.) have an impact on low birthweight, preterm birth and infant mortality in our community?



Important Indicators of Maternal and Infant Health in a Community: Definitions

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.*

Preterm birth rate: *Preterm birth is birth too early, before 37 weeks of pregnancy have been completed. The preterm birth rate is the percentage of all live births in a given geographical area that are preterm births.*

Low birthweight rate: *“Low birthweight” is a term used to describe a baby born too small—that is weighing less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces. The low birthweight rate is the percentage of all live births in a given geographical area that are low birthweight.*

Source of State-Level Statistics

Visit **CDC’s *Stats of the States*** for state-by-state listing of important health indicators, including infant mortality rates, preterm birth rates, low birthweight rates and more.

https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/nav_us.htm

