



Dear Healthy Start Community,

For the past 30 years, the Healthy Start program has brought communities around the country together to tackle the many challenges that shape health outcomes for women, infants, fathers, and families. As the first community-based and community-driven program of its kind, Healthy Start remains a beacon for all who seek to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in infant and perinatal outcomes and understand the importance and value of working in partnership *with* and *within* communities to do so. The Healthy Start TA and Support Center (TASC) is thrilled to bring together the Healthy Start community for the 2021 Healthy Start Virtual Grantees' Meeting (VGM). The VGM is an opportunity to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the program, as well as the unwavering dedication, resilience, and accomplishments of *you*, the Healthy Start workforce.

TASC is committed to supporting you in enhancing and strengthening your Healthy Start project's capacity to serve women, infants, fathers, and families. As part of these efforts, TASC has been honored to work on behalf of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau's (MCHB) Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services (DHSPS) – and in partnership with the National Healthy Start Association (NHSA) – to plan the 2021 VGM. Every aspect of the VGM has been thoughtfully considered, from the selection of a virtual conference platform to maximize participant engagement, to selecting session topics and speakers that are relevant and responsive to grantees' evolving needs and priorities.

Beginning in August, we convened a VGM Planning Committee consisting of TASC staff, DHSPS staff, NHSA staff, and Project Directors representing the diversity of grantees from around the country. This group supported the agenda development process and worked to ensure that the meeting purpose and goals met grantee needs and aligned with the Healthy Start approaches and benchmarks. We are thankful for their many contributions and for their commitment to making the 2021 VGM a success.

We also extend tremendous gratitude to the many speakers who welcomed the opportunity to give their time and share their knowledge with the Healthy Start community, especially in the midst of the continuing pandemic. Each speaker was selected based on their area of expertise, their connection and commitment to the populations served by Healthy Start, and their engaging presence as presenters. We are appreciative to have such an impressive group of presenters, each of whom contribute knowledge that is helping to advance maternal and child health across the nation.

Our hope is that the VGM provides each of you with an opportunity to connect with your peers, receive tangible tools and actionable information, and reaffirm your passion for this program and community. As we continue to navigate these uncertain times, it is more important than ever to recognize and celebrate the incredible array of Healthy Start programs around the country,

including their dedicated staff who tirelessly work on the ground to support and lift up their communities. Without you, this 30th anniversary milestone truly would not be possible.

We hope you are all proud of your contributions to this national initiative, representing three decades of commitment and passion. And we are especially proud of the impact of our collective action to save the lives of infants and women and lift up the importance of fathers in maternal and child health around the country. We appreciate each and every one of you, and hope you enjoy the 2021 Virtual Healthy Start Grantees' Meeting!

All the best,

Kenn L. Harris
Executive Project Director
Healthy Start TA & Support Center
National Institute for Children's Health Quality

Thank you, again, to the 2021 VGM Planning Committee, for your input and support!

Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services

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