

**HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES
Coalition of Broward County, Inc.**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**GROUNDBREAKING NATIONAL HIV/AIDS INITIATIVE
LOOKS TO BROWARD COUNTY**

Broward County, FL - Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies of Broward County is excited to announce its participation in the FIMR/HIV project in coordination with the Broward County Health Department, and the Children's Diagnostic & Treatment Center to study HIV Prevention Methodology. The program is aimed at improving Perinatal HIV prevention systems by utilizing the methodology of HMHB's recognized Fetal Infant Mortality Review process. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identified Florida as having the third highest number of AIDS cases (3,961) in 2007. Also, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) 2007 Vital Statistics reports 47.1 HIV cases per 100,000 people in Broward County, compared to the 31.9 average for Florida, and 6.0 in the US. The 2007 Florida HIV/AIDS Annual Report shows Broward ranking highest in the rate of AIDS cases in the state. Additionally, According to the People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) study, 15,784 HIV/AIDS cases have been reported in Broward as of June 30, 2009, an increase from last year.

Broward County is a unique community, and the ethnic diversity of HIV/AIDS in Broward is significant to service delivery. Of the Reported PLWHA, 49.7% of Black, 35% White, 12.7% American Indian, 12% Hispanic. Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies of Broward is one of 9 other organizations throughout the nation participating in this initiative to target the issues in their unique community, some of which include Philadelphia, Newark, New Orleans, Washington D.C. and Chicago.

There are unique challenges for HIV/AIDS infection and perinatal exposure in particular for Broward County's moms. In a Survey by the Health Planning Council in 2002 (the latest available by gender) only 7% of women with HIV/AIDS in Broward County reported having private health insurance, compared with 17% of men. Medicaid was reported to cover 46% of the women, while 41% reported having no coverage at all. The complexity of the disease, lack of any insurance for assistance with medications, hospitalizations and diagnostic tests as well as significant changes in Medicaid that continue to take place in Broward County, make it extremely challenging for infected women and the Perinatal HIV service providers. The Broward County Health Department's HIV/ADS Surveillance report indicates there are 4,702 women in Broward County living with HIV/AIDS, with 61% of them being of childbearing age. Last year, 100 infants were born last year to infected mothers. While the number of newly infected newborns has decreased, the problem and solutions to reduce HIV infection and Perinatal exposure and transmission are still of paramount importance for adolescents, women and children in Broward County.

Since 1991, Children's Diagnostic & Treatment Center, Inc. (CDTC), a community based agency dedicated to serving infants, children and women infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, has provide care to hundreds of families through the Comprehensive Family Aids Program (CFAP-Ryan White Part D). Currently, CFAP serves 4,773 women and children, with 1306 HIV positive women and 166 exposed children less than 2 years of age. In 2009 to date, there are 110 HIV positive pregnancies and so far 9 are not receiving prenatal care. While achieving great success in reducing perinatal transmission through early identification, testing, treatment and case management, cases are still falling through the cracks.

Through quantitative & qualitative data collection gathered from medical case abstractions and interviews with mothers in Broward County, the FIMR/HIV project will work to streamline systems to prevent the transfer of HIV from mom to baby during pregnancy. Additionally, a Case Review Team made up of experts from Broward County will identify issues and create recommendations to improve the systems already in place to prevent the transmission of the infection to Broward's babies.

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Broward County, Inc. is a not-for-profit, community-based 501 (c) (3) organization whose mission is to reduce infant deaths by providing resources and education to pregnant women, parents and their families. Since 1987, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Broward County has provided access to prenatal care, education, advocacy and public awareness for all

families. Through these initiatives we are encouraging Broward County to deliver healthy babies and enriching the lives of families by improving parent-child relationships.

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