

COPC Fall Newsletter

VOLUME 6 : ISSUE 2

FALL 2008

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- September is National Infant Mortality Awareness Month
- October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- November is Pre-Maturity Awareness Month
- See Page 6 for all upcoming event dates

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

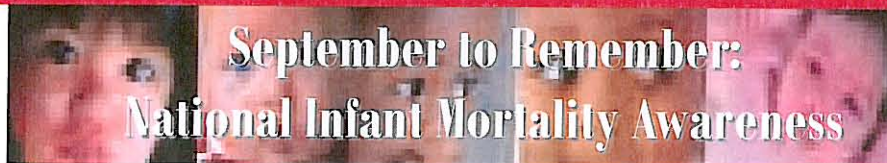
Update from COPC Chair 2

Town Hall Meeting 3

Oklahoma Community Health Services 4

COHSI Update 5

Upcoming Events 6



Infant mortality refers to the death of a baby before it reaches its first birthday. Though infant mortality continues to decline in the United States, the U.S. still ranks 23rd among industrialized nations in the world in infant mortality.

In 1997, the infant mortality rate in the U.S. dropped to 7.1 per 1,000 live births. Despite these encouraging figures, there remains a significant public health issue for African American families, as well as for Native Americans and Hispanics. The rate of infant mortality for African American women is more

than double that of white women. Babies who are low birth-weight weigh 2500 grams (5.5 pounds) or less at birth. Very low birthweight babies weigh 1500 grams (3.3 pounds) or less. The medical and social costs for low birthweight and very low birthweight babies are significant. Low birthweight is a major predictor of infant mortality.

Unlike infant mortality, the rate of low birthweight in the U.S. has not declined significantly during the last decade. Equally important, the rate of low birthweight among African American mothers contin-

ues to be twice that of white women. Even with its success in reducing infant mortality, the United States still ranks poorly in relation to other developed countries. Although comparisons across countries are often difficult, it appears that the high rate of low birthweight in the U. S., when compared to other nations, is the major reason for the country's continued high rate of infant mortality.

This article is from the National Healthy Start Association



Website:
www.healthystartassoc.org

Did you know....?

- Per person, the U.S. spends more than twice the average of other industrialized countries on health care - 16% of our GDP in 2006 - yet has some of the worst health outcomes: worse than 28 other countries in life expectancy (including Jordan) and 29 other countries in infant mortality (including Slovenia).
- College graduates can expect to live at least five years longer than those who have not finished high school, and almost two years longer than those who didn't finish college.

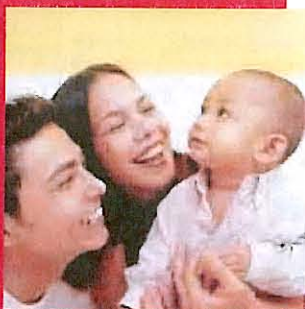
- Racial segregation in many major American cities, including New York, Chicago, Milwaukee and Detroit, approaches that of South Africa under apartheid.

- Former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher and colleagues calculated that in 2002, 83,570 African Americans died who would not have if Black and white mortality rates were equal. That's 229 "excess deaths" per day: the equivalent of an airplane loaded with Black passengers being shot out of the sky and killing everyone on board every single day of the year.

- African American women—of any class—who reported high levels of experience with racial discrimination were nearly five times as likely to deliver underweight babies as those who reported no experience with it.

- Although typically poorer, recent Latino immigrants are healthier than the average American. However, those who have lived in the U.S. five years or longer are 50% more likely to have high blood pressure and almost 40% more likely to be obese.

Read the article on Page 3 to find out how the Oklahoma Health Equity Campaign (OHEC) is addressing the theory "inequality making us sick"



“Action is the catalyst that creates accomplishments. It is the path that takes us from uncrafted hopes to realized dreams.”

--Thomas Huxley

Contact the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault at 405-524-0700 or visit www.ocadvsa.org to find more ways you can help prevent Domestic Violence

Improving Women's Health in Oklahoma Takes a Coordinated Effort

By: Bonnie Bellah, COPC Chair

Factors associated with maternal and infant morbidity and mortality are multi-faceted. Between 1994 and 2005 Oklahoma's infant mortality rate improved from 8.4 to 7.9. Even with this improvement Oklahoma continues to rank above the national average of 6.9. Oklahoma, along with the rest of the nation, has hit a stand still in improving rates of infant mortality. Over the past two decades maternal and child health advocates have done a good job of promoting early and consistent prenatal care. We now know that access to and utilization of prenatal care is not enough when trying to impact maternal and infant outcomes. The health and well being of a woman, especially her weight prior to conception, greatly impacts her pregnancy and ultimately the health of her infant.

Many women in Oklahoma are not yet connecting their own health with the health of their families. Only 13.5% of women in

Oklahoma received any type of counseling or advice to prepare for becoming pregnant. (PRAMS Gram Winter 2008) Considering rates of uninsured women in Oklahoma and rates of unplanned pregnancies, this statistic is not surprising. According to the Kaiser Health Facts, between 23-28% of women in Oklahoma are uninsured. Over 50% of pregnancies in Oklahoma are unplanned, therefore it is not enough to ask women who are planning a pregnancy to consider their health, we must work toward providing health insurance for more women in Oklahoma and encouraging all women of child bearing age to become healthy. This will have the greatest impact on maternal and infant outcomes.

It seems very simple, but is not an easy task to accomplish. When impacting maternal and infant outcomes, women's health matters!! Yet, several questions remain: How do we engage women and help them to understand the importance of their health? How

do we provide and support families in Oklahoma so that they can concentrate on their health? Many families in Oklahoma are living in poverty, many families in Oklahoma experience more than their fair share of daily constant stress, which we now know also impacts health.

Improving maternal and infant outcomes will take more than offering preconception health care. It will take more than offering early and consistent prenatal care. It will take a coordinated effort to build a system that supports all families in Oklahoma. It starts at the local level. The Oklahoma Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition will be working with our local coalitions like the Central Oklahoma Perinatal Coalition to provide technical assistance and support as they begin their efforts at impacting maternal and infant outcomes in Central Oklahoma. If we will truly impact maternal and infant outcomes it will take all of us.

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month evolved from the first Day of Unity observed in October, 1981 by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The intent was to connect battered women's advocates across the nation who were working to end violence against women and their children. The Day of Unity soon became a special week when a range of activities were conducted at the local, state, and national levels.

These activities were as varied and diverse as the program sponsors but had common themes: mourning those who have died because of domestic violence,

celebrating those who have survived, and connecting those who work to end violence.

In October 1987, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was observed. That same year the first national toll-free hotline was begun. In 1989 the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month Commemorative Legislation was passed by the U.S. Congress. Such legislation has passed every year since with NCADV providing key leadership in this effort.

In October 1994 NCADV, in conjunction with Ms. Magazine, created the "Remember My Name" project, a national registry

to increase public awareness of domestic violence deaths. Since then, NCADV has been collecting information on women who have been killed by an intimate partner and produces a poster each October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, listing the names of those documented in that year.

The Day of Unity is celebrated the first Monday in October. NCADV hopes that events in communities and regions across the fifty states will culminate in a powerful statement celebrating the strength of battered women and their children.

Article from www.ncadv.org

Central Oklahoma Healthy Start Initiative (COHSI) is on the Move



By Janis Williams,
Client Advocate
Central Oklahoma Healthy Start Consumer Advisory Council elected new offi-

cers to serve a two year term. The officers are Keantra Barber, Chair, Katherine Gayman, Co-Chair, Ashley Graves, Secretary, and Shalonda Edmondson, Sergeant of Arms. The officers' responsibilities are to assist COHSI by providing direction and suggestions on recruitment and retention of consumers, and sharing concerns and finding solutions to assist with access to healthcare. The Con-

sumer Advisory Council members assist COHSI with health fairs by setting up and manning the exhibit tables. The Consumer Advisory Council meets the last Thursday of each month at the Healthy Start office from 4:30-6:30 pm.

National Healthy Start Association declared the month of September as National Infant Mortality Awareness Month. Central Oklahoma Healthy Start participated with the National Healthy Start Association in the Infant Mortality Awareness month by obtaining a proclamation from the Mayor's office proclaiming September 20, 2008 as Oklahoma City's National Infant Mortality

Awareness Day. In the Oklahoma Herald newspaper an article was published reporting the incidence of infant mortality in Oklahoma County and services provided to reduce infant deaths; a topic on COHSI radio broadcast was National Infant Mortality Awareness, COHSI was one of the co-sponsors at a town meeting which was held on September 18, 2008, and the topic was based on the PBS documentary "Is Inequality Making us Sick", Unnatural Causes, "When the Bough Breaks".

If you would like more information on Central Oklahoma Healthy Start please contact our office at (405)427-3200.

COHSI Community Awareness Day

By: Katherine Gayman, Central Oklahoma Healthy Start Consumer Advisory Council Co-Chair

"A CONSUMER'S VOICE"

Central Oklahoma Healthy Start sponsored, in partnership, with Positive Parent's and other community organizations, a "Community Awareness Day", at the Oklahoma City Zoo in June.

There were over 600 participants in attendance. Attendees had the opportunity to visit seven different community booths. Other booth sponsors

included Mary Mahoney Memorial Health Center (MMMHC), who had a unique display on how much fat was in food products and the importance of choosing healthy foods instead of junk food; WIA Career Counseling had a booth where they checked blood sugar, a screening tool often overlooked. All booths had various information on resources, opportunities and services that benefit the community.

As an added bonus, backpacks filled with school supplies were handed out with a yummy lunch and drinks. Then, participants were able to enjoy free admission to the zoo.



Congratulations Consumer

Advisory Council (CAC) Officers

Keantra Barber, Chair
Katherine Gayman, Co-Chair
Ashley Graves, Secretary
Shalonda Edmondson, Sergeant of Arms

Central Oklahoma Healthy Start
Healthy Babies Begin Before Birth (H4B)
3017 N Martin Luther King Blvd
Oklahoma City, Ok 73111

Weekly Activities

Mondays:
Childbirth Education Classes 4:00-6:00pm

Tuesdays:
COHSI Radio Show 1220am or
www.ktlv.com 3:30-4:00pm

To participate in any activities or for more information call the Healthy Start Office at (405) 427-3200

October Activities

Thursday, October 9th, 2008
Support Group
Healthy Start Office
3:00-5:00pm

Thursday, October 23rd, 2008
Consumer Advisory Council
Healthy Start Office
4:30-6:30pm

Thursday, October 30th, 2008
Tea for Two



Central Oklahoma Perinatal Coalition

3815 N Santa Fe Ave, Suite 122

Oklahoma City, OK 73118

Phone: (405) 524-8100

Fax: (405) 524-8105

Upcoming Events...

October 7th & 8th, 2008

Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy (OICA) Fall Forum

Location: Nigh University Center, 100 University Drive, Edmond, OK

Topic: Let's Talk About the Future: 2009 Legislative Agenda for Children & Youth

For more info: call 405-236-5437 or visit www.oica.org

Friday, October 17th, 2008

Central Oklahoma Perinatal Coalition Meeting

Time: 11:00am-1:00pm

Location: James Farris & Associates, 909 NW 63rd St, OKC, OK

Topic: Finalize COPC Local Health System Action Plan Priorities 2009-11

Thursday, October 23rd, 2008

Central Oklahoma Healthy Start Initiative Consumer Advisory Council Meeting

Time: 4:30pm-6:30pm

Location: Healthy Start, 3017 Martin Luther King Blvd, OKC, OK

Topic: Domestic Violence Awareness

Thursday, November 20th, 2008

Central Oklahoma Healthy Start Initiative Consumer Advisory Council Meeting

Time: 4:30pm-6:30pm

Location: Healthy Start Office, 3017 Martin Luther King Blvd, OKC, OK

Topic: Personal Finance

Friday, November 21st, 2008

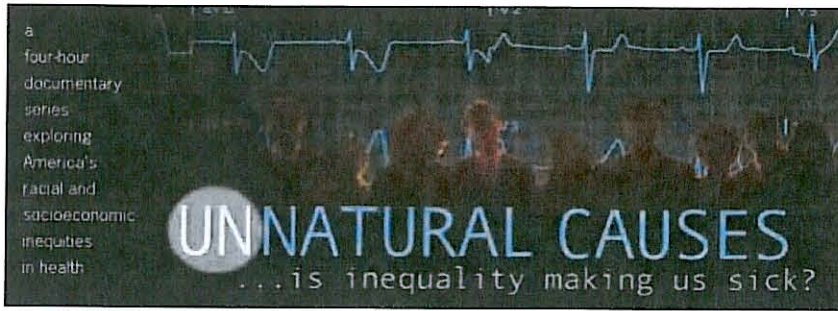
Central Oklahoma Perinatal Coalition Meeting

Time: 11:00am-1:00pm

Location: James Farris & Associates, 909 NW 63rd St, OKC, OK

Topic: Assessment of Educational Needs for 2009

*****Note: October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month & November is Pre-Maturity Awareness Month*****



OHEC Town Hall Meeting is a Success!

The Oklahoma Health Equity Campaign (OHEC) organized a town hall meeting to view and discuss a portion of the PBS series "Unnatural Causes: Is inequality making us sick?" entitled "When the Bough Breaks." This documentary addresses some potential reasons why African American women at every socioeconomic level have higher rates of pre-term birth and infant mortality than white women who haven't finished high school or Black women who emigrated here from other countries. 115 individuals attended including Central Oklahoma Perinatal Coalition (COPC) members and Central Oklahoma Healthy Start Initiative (COHSI) clients.



Within the next two weeks, the

organizers intend to review participants' comments to determine which recommendations should be introduced at the Fall Forum October 7-8 sponsored by the Institute for Child Advocacy. The OHEC will meet at a later date with new statewide partners to receive an overview of how the national public engagement campaign is progressing and review participants comments; more than 50 participants signed up to work on strategies to address these issues.



In addition to viewing "When the Bough Breaks," participants received an Unnatural Causes Toolkit and were directed to the website which houses a wealth of information. For more information see: www.unnaturalcauses.org.

Paraphrased from an update by: Marisa New, Director of Health Equity and Resource Opportunities (HERO) with the Oklahoma State Department of Health (www.hero.health.ok.gov)

Quick Facts: Health Care in US vs the World

For all the rich countries for which there is data, the U.S. has:

- o the highest infant mortality rate
- o the highest homicide rate
- o the highest teenage birth rate
- o the highest incarceration rate (we house one fourth of the world's prisoners)
- o the highest child poverty rate
- o the highest child injury death rate
- o the greatest gap between high and low mortality rates within a country
- o the highest number of people living alone
- o the highest poverty rate
- o the most hours worked (except for New Zealand)
- o the smallest middle class
- o the largest wealth gap between the rich and the rest of the population
- o the lowest voter turnout

***Data from www.unnaturalcauses.org*

Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy (OICA) Fall Legislative Forum

The Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy (OICA) is celebrating a quarter century of leadership as a strong and effective voice for Oklahoma's children!

This fall, OICA will gather child advocates from across the state for the Annual Fall Legislative Forum to examine the current course of Oklahoma's young people, share ideas and develop a legislative agenda to create positive change.

Let's Talk about our Future, the theme of this year's forum, is a celebration of OICA's 25th anniversary and a look towards building a future where our state, our communities and our families can prosper. The forum will focus on the health, education, safety and economic issues that impact the next generation. This two-day event will culminate in the creation of the 2009 Oklahoma Legislative Agenda for Children and Youth.



For more information contact OICA at (405)236-5437 or visit www.oica.org