

BABY BASICS CLEVELAND INITIATIVE

In 2008, the MomsFirst program of the Cleveland Department of Public Health (a Healthy Start grantee), the Greater Cleveland Family Support Consortium, two neighborhood based health centers (NEON and Neighborhood Family Practice), and the WTEF partnered to create the Baby Basics Cleveland program. This work was supported by the Sisters of Charity Foundation. The focus of the program is on improving health literacy among high-risk pregnant women, enhancing their ability to make health decisions and ultimately decreasing the number of poor birth outcomes experienced by this population. The goal is to: improve health literacy of greater Cleveland residents in order to achieve better health decisions, and ultimately better outcomes; conduct health literacy education and training to help health professionals communicate more effectively; create effective community collaborations to address health literacy, and strengthen the evidence base for health literacy.

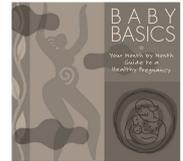
The WTEF Baby Basics staff began by partnering with two MomsFirst provider sites and two neighborhood clinic sites. The target population included women/teens that were at risk for poor birth outcomes and women/teens who were incarcerated. WTEF staff provided the Health Education training to the provider sites and provided a clinical orientation as well. Staff worked with partners to develop a process map to determine how and when to distribute the Baby Basic Books and Planners and then provided technical assistance to the sites regarding program strategy, implementation, expansion and evaluation.

In a short period of time:

- Partners started presenting the Book as gift to the mom to educate and support her during her pregnancy;
- During home and clinic visits, the expectant mom was taught how to use the book, navigate the index, find information in the book about her pregnancy, understand the information, make appropriate health decisions regarding her pregnancy and develop questions to ask her doctor or mid-wife
- The Baby Basics curriculum, Books and Planners have become standard tools in the prenatal home and clinic visits

After only six months, 175 high-risk pregnant women and teens were served. After the pilot's initial success, the initiative was expanded in 2009 to include all nine of the MomsFirst providers, and continued to grow in the two initial clinical sites. In 2010, the program entered its third grant cycle and added three new clinical sites, bringing the total number of clinical providers offering Baby Basics in the MomsFirst network to five. 100% of Moms receiving care at these clinical sites receive a Baby Basics Book and Planner and are all referred to local Moms Clubs. Funding for materials is provided by MomsFirst for the majority of the sites, with two of the clinics having secured funding to purchase their own supplies.

In its fourth funding cycle all partners began to create plans for ongoing growth and sustainability.



Baby Basics in Action

When Baby Basics was fully funded in Cleveland the program looked like this (when noted these activities continue):

MomsFirst: Home-Visiting Programs

Baby Basics materials and curriculum have been integrated into the standard of care offered to clients by all nine MomsFirst Home-Visiting programs. All practitioners are required to use Baby Basics during planned home-visiting sessions and participating clients are asked to complete the Baby Basics Program evaluation by answering survey questions designed to measure changes in knowledge, attitude, and behavior regarding their prenatal care.

Note: This intervention continues as MomsFirst has integrated the costs for materials into their operating budget.

MomsFirst: Clinical Sites

MomsFirst clinical provider sites participating in the Baby Basics Program begin by providing 100% of their pregnant clients with a Baby Basics Book and planner. When time allows, a social worker, Midwife, or Health Educator helps Moms navigate the Baby Basics book to help find answers to questions they may have, and/or use the Baby Basics planner to help them develop questions they may want to ask of their provider. Finally, all clients are asked to participate in the Baby Basics Program evaluation by answering survey questions designed to measure changes in knowledge, attitude, and behavior regarding their prenatal care.

Note: WTEF has created a more extensive implementation program for clinical Quality Improvement that has not been implemented yet in Cleveland. Some of the clinical partners, however, continue to integrate the program as part of their standard of care.

MomsFirst: Moms Clubs

MomsFirst contracts with the Greater Cleveland Family Support Consortium (GCFSC) to offer Moms Clubs at various sites. Moms Clubs offer pregnant women an opportunity to bond with each other and take part in prenatal educational activities. GCFSC provides Literacy Specialists (LS) to facilitate the Moms Clubs. MomsFirst and clinical staff are invited to co-facilitate, but the LS were the primary facilitators. By providing the staff with the necessary to facilitate the Moms Clubs, MomsFirst takes the burden of facilitation off of the clinic staff while still extending the opportunity for their clients to participate in a group support session.

Each Moms Club participant receives a calendar and can attend any Moms Club at any location. Each Moms Club offers a healthy snack/lunch and raffle prizes as an incentive for participation. Bus tickets are made available for interested Moms for whom transportation presents a challenge.