HEALTHY START

The Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) Healthy Start (HS) program invests in communities to improve health outcomes before, during, and after pregnancy. Local HS projects tailor services to the needs of their communities to help reduce differences in rates of infant death and maternal health outcomes, so that *all* moms and babies can be healthy.

Funding goes to communities experiencing high rates of adverse outcomes, including:

- infant mortality rates **at least 1.5x** the U.S. national average, or
- high rates of preterm birth, low birth weight, and maternal illness.

The HS program began in 1991 as a demonstration, providing funding for 15 HS projects. **As of 2024, there are 115 projects providing services in 37 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.**

PROGRAM FOCUS AREAS

- Offering solutions tailored to each community's specific needs
- Connecting families with high quality and comprehensive health services
- Providing access to community health education
- Ensuring that social and health services are well coordinated
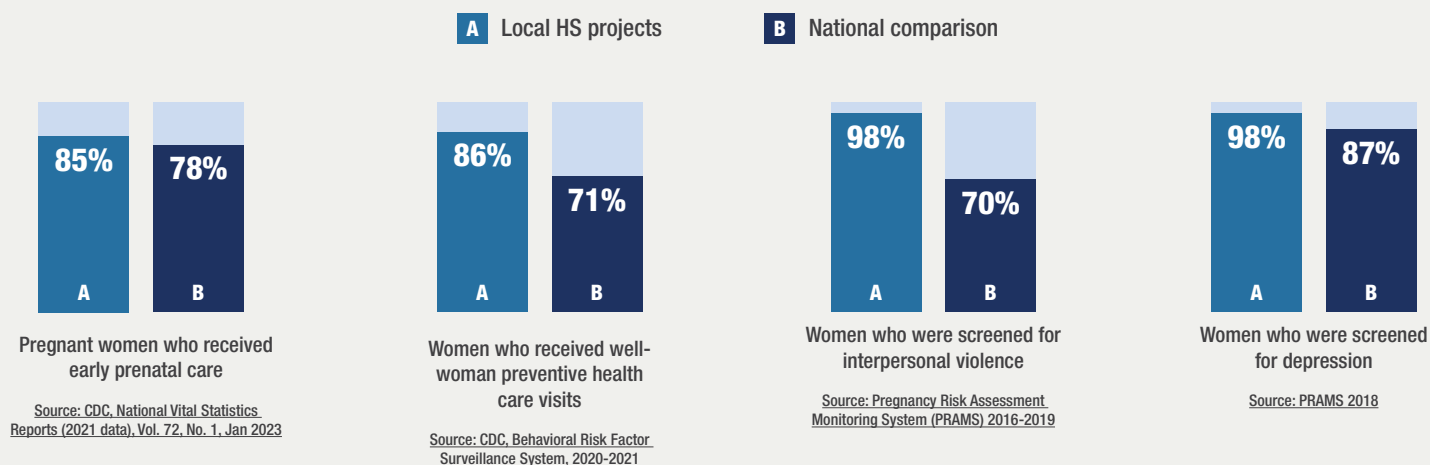
POPULATIONS SERVED AND SERVICES PROVIDED

Local HS projects enroll pregnant women, other women of reproductive age, new parents, children from birth to 18 months, and fathers/partners.

The HS program served about **85,000** participants in **2022**, with services that include:

- **Outreach and case management** to link parents with social services and **educational programming** such as parent skill building
- Prenatal and postpartum **care, screening**, and **referral** to services for depression and interpersonal violence
- **Public health services** such as health education
- **Continuing education and training** on best practices for HS staff and community partners

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A Local HS projects   **B** National comparison

Pregnant women who received early prenatal care
A: 85%   B: 78%

Source: CDC, National Vital Statistics Reports (2021 data), Vol. 72, No. 1, Jan 2023

Women who received well-woman preventive health care visits
A: 86%   B: 71%

Source: CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2020-2021

Women who were screened for interpersonal violence
A: 98%   B: 70%

Source: Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) 2016-2019

Women who were screened for depression
A: 98%   B: 87%

Source: PRAMS 2018

Learn more at https://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs-impact/healthy-start

Updated: February 2025

HRSA Maternal & Child Health

OUR HEALTHY START INVESTMENT

Healthy Start Projects

In 2023 and 2024, funding aims to ensure *all* babies reach their first birthday by focusing on medical and non-medical factors that impact their health outcomes, and those of their mothers (such as transportation, housing, education, and economic stability). Each project forms a "Community Consortium," uniting a variety of stakeholders like program participants, faith leaders, Title V contributors, medical and social service providers, and public health experts to work together to improve systems of care and the factors listed above.
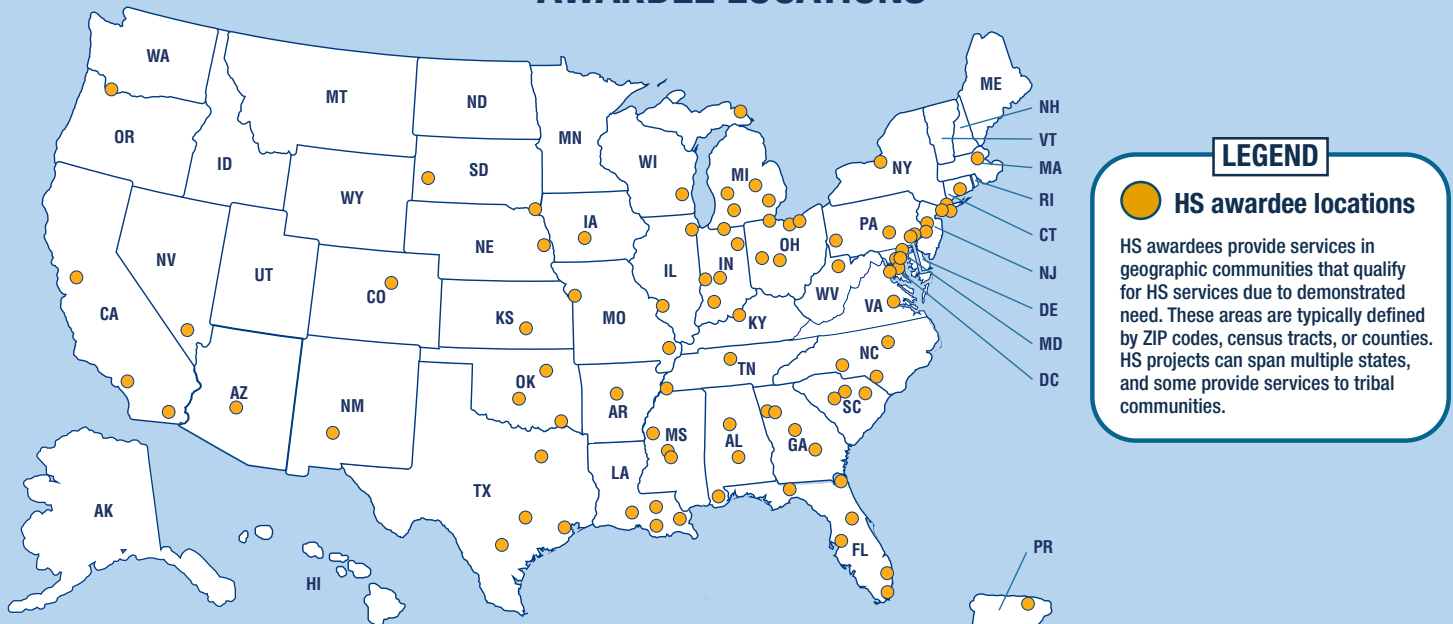
Alumni Peer Navigators (APNs)

Many low-income families struggle to access the support and services they need after having a baby. APNs are former Healthy Start participants who have experienced these challenges themselves. They help current Healthy Start families by providing guidance and information about public benefits like Medicaid, WIC, and SNAP. APNs also address issues such as food insecurity, unstable housing, and lack of transportation, offering support that is comprehensive and respectful. Six sites are providing these navigator services.

HS Projects Employ

case managers, community health workers, social workers, clinical professionals, lactation consultants, nutritionists, doulas, and translators

AWARDEE LOCATIONS

LEGEND

🟠 **HS awardee locations**

HS awardees provide services in geographic communities that qualify for HS services due to demonstrated need. These areas are typically defined by ZIP codes, census tracts, or counties. HS projects can span multiple states, and some provide services to tribal communities.

Find a local HS site: https://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs-impact/healthy-start/locator

Updated: February 2025

HRSA Maternal & Child Health