



# Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies

Summer 2008  
\*REPRINT\*

*Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies is a quarterly newsletter of the Gift of Life Maternity Care Program, which features important program information, as well as articles of interest, for our subcontractors, board members, volunteers, and supporters.*

## 2007 INFANT MORTALITY RATES RELEASED

The Alabama Department of Public Health recently released the 2007 infant mortality rates by county. Alabama's infant mortality rate for 2007 is 10.0 — up from 9.0 in 2006 and 9.3 in 2005. Below are figures for each county in the three Gift of Life Maternity Care Program districts. Listed also are three-year infant mortality rates which are more stable rates because of the relatively small number of births in rural counties. A single infant death in the rural county can cause the one-year rate to be significantly higher. **\*Rates are reported per 1,000 live births.\***

District #6	Clay	Coosa	Randolph	Talladega	Tallapoosa
2004	14.3	18.0	7.6	7.3	4.2
2005	13.6	20.6	16.5	13.0	12.7
2006	0.0	10.1	7.3	11.9	7.8
2007	13.5	9.7	7.7	19.2	7.4
2004-2006	8.7	16.3	10.3	11.1	8.2
2005-2007	8.6	13.4	10.3	14.8	9.2

District #10	Autauga	Bullock	Butler	Crenshaw	Elmore	Lowndes	Montgomery	Pike
2004	7.6	12.6	11.5	0.0	7.3	12.4	7.3	18.1
2005	12.4	5.3	7.5	6.8	7.0	11.0	8.5	21.9
2006	9.3	10.0	13.2	6.0	5.0	14.9	11.8	2.4
2007	8.3	10.5	13.7	17.4	8.5	0.0	13.1	4.6
2004-2006	9.8	9.1	10.8	4.1	6.4	12.9	9.3	13.7
2005-2007	10.0	8.6	11.6	10.3	6.9	9.1	11.2	9.0

District #12	Baldwin	Clarke	Conecuh	Covington	Escambia	Monroe	Washington
2004	6.1	5.9	0.0	6.9	12.2	3.5	10.3
2005	9.1	9.4	16.9	8.4	12.3	16.5	10.2
2006	4.9	24.5	0.0	2.2	10.1	3.8	15.3
2007	4.8	9.6	0.0	16.1	10.8	0.0	5.1
2004-2006	6.8	13.2	6.3	5.8	11.5	8.2	13.6
2005-2007	6.2	14.6	5.7	8.8	11.1	6.8	10.2

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004-2006	2005-2007
Alabama	8.7	9.3	9.0	10.0	9.0	9.5

*Serving Autauga, Baldwin, Bullock, Butler, Clarke, Clay, Conecuh, Coosa, Covington, Crenshaw, Elmore, Escambia, Lowndes, Monroe, Montgomery, Pike, Randolph, Talladega, Tallapoosa, and Washington Counties*



## TEENS GATHER FOR 6TH ANNUAL SURVIVE AND THRIVE

The Montgomery Area Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy hosted its sixth annual *Survive and Thrive*, on March 29, 2008. *Survive and Thrive*, a health and information event for teens, was held at the Joe L. Reed Acadome on the campus of Alabama State University. Approximately 800 teenagers participated in the event, taking away with them valuable health information from more than thirty-five different groups of presenters and service providers.

Attending *Survive and Thrive* were many different organizations such as the Family Guidance Center, the River Region United Way, the Family Sunshine Center, ALL Kids, the Council on Substance Abuse, the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, COPE, Mental Health America, Montgomery Area Wellness Coalition and many others. Michael Burdell of Montgomery Mayor Bobby Bright's office, kicked off *Survive and Thrive*, and Gift of Life's own Monique Laguerre, facilitator of the REAL Program, served as Master of Ceremonies. Musical entertainment from Ole' Pete Key, a nationally acclaimed speaker, thoroughly entertained the teens with a combination of music, dance, and a powerful message.

Special thanks to our major sponsors for their overwhelming support, including Sterling Bank, OBGYN Associates of Montgomery, Alabama Power Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, American Klassic Design, and Wells Printing. Thanks to sponsors, Campaign's Teen Leadership Board, volunteers, and Gift of Life staff, *Survive and Thrive 2008* was an enormous success!

An additional feature to *Survive and Thrive* was a poster contest. A panel of teenagers and adults, including the Campaign's Teen Leadership Board, voted on the posters and selected the winners at the high school and junior high levels.



## Gift of Life Maternity Care Program Did You Know?

Low weight birth infants; that is, infants who are born weighing less than 5# 8oz or 2500 grams, are 20 times more likely to die before one year of age?

- The 2007 infant mortality rate is 4.7 higher for infants born with less than a two year interval of the previous birth?
- Gift of Life processes over 50,000 claims a year for more than 6,500 deliveries in 20 counties.
- More Gift of Life births occurred in the month August, than any other month in 2007.

The winners of the poster contest were announced at *Survive and Thrive 2008*. In partnership with the Montgomery Area Campaign and Lamar Advertising, the winning high school poster has been placed on billboards in the Montgomery area. The Campaign and REAL plan to continue featuring the winning poster designs in a variety of ways throughout the coming year.



## Nurse Family Partnership

The Gift of Life Foundation is currently in the process of implementing a new program called the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP). NFP is a nationally recognized, evidence-based approach to improving the health and life-course of low-income, first-time mothers beginning early in pregnancy and continuing until the child is two years of age. The cornerstone of the NFP is the extensive research on a model conducted over the last three decades. Follow-up research continues today. A 15-year follow-up of one of its randomized trials show positive program effects for the mother and child age 15 to be:

- 61% fewer arrests (for the mother)
- 72% fewer convictions (for the mother)
- 98% fewer days in jail (for the mother)
- 58% reduction in child abuse and neglect
- 59% reduction in arrests (of the child)
- 90% reduction in adjudications as PINS (person in need of supervision) for incorrigible behavior.

Nurse home visitors help mothers improve their health during pregnancy, develop skills to competently care for the baby, access other necessary community services and continue to work toward goals related to self-sufficiency—choosing friends wisely, finishing school and finding work. When the father of the baby is present, nurses engage him in the visits as well, nurturing the family as the primary context for child development and the foundation for a healthy community. For more information go to [www.nursefamilypartnership.org](http://www.nursefamilypartnership.org).

We are excited about the opportunity to provide such a wonderful program in Montgomery County.



### Compliance Officer

To report HIPAA violations to Gift of Life, call Jeanette Gibson at 334-272-1820.

To report Medicaid Fraud and abuse, call 1-866-452-4930.

## District News



### Dale Medical Center Closes OB Services

Effective August 31, 2008, Dale Medical Center and Azalea Physicians for Women will no longer provide maternity services.

In July, Jennifer Logan, MD joined Physicians for Women, Montgomery and Prattville.

In District #12, Dr. Robert Bowen, formerly in Opp, has opened a practice in Andalusia. Welcome Back! Dr. Ralph Neal, Grove Hill has retired from the obstetrical side of his family practice.

### What are Gift of Life Patients Saying?

"I want to thank you for everything you have done."

"I am so grateful for all the care you have given us. Thank you and God Bless."

"Gift of Life was absolutely wonderful and way better than the Medicaid services I received elsewhere. Thank you for the Gift of Life."

"Everything everybody did to assist me was great. Thanks for your help."

"My doctor is an excellent physician. She is very thorough and listens to the patient."

"I was very pleased with all the care and services that were provided to me and my child."

"My doctor and office is the best doctor's office in the State of Alabama.!!!"

—(Comments were taken from the Alabama Medicaid Agency Recipient Maternity Care Program surveys.)

## ~ 2008 Maternity Care Program ~ Bid Canceled

The Alabama Medicaid Agency released a new Invitation to Bid for a 2008 Maternity Care Program (MCP) on June 5, 2008. After many long hours, bids were submitted on July 21<sup>st</sup> for the Gift of Life Maternity Care Program in Districts #6, #10, and #12. Of the 14 MCP districts in the state, the bid opening revealed 2 districts without a bidder, 4 districts with bid amounts over the maximum bid amount set by Medicaid and 8 districts bid amounts within Bid limits. Current and potential Primary Contractors anxiously awaited Medicaid's announcement of contract awards scheduled for July 28<sup>th</sup>. After the bid award date had past, a new schedule was released with a revised contract award date of August 15<sup>th</sup>.

Prior to the new contract award date, current Primary Contractors were ask to a meeting with Medicaid. Commissioner Carol Steckel announced Medicaid was canceling the bid for the 2008-2011 program and asked Primary Contractors to extend the current contract for an additional 15-months. All Primary Contractors agreed to extend their contracts. Commissioner Steckel plans to convene a Maternity Care Review Stakeholder Committee to discuss how the maternity program could better address the issues affecting the increase in infant mortality rates as well as other issues facing Medicaid and the Maternity Care Program. Individuals or organizations that can contribute to the discussions will be invited. A website will be created to store all the Committee minutes and information regarding this issue.

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