About the Collaborative

An African American baby born in Milwaukee is almost three times more likely to die before his or her first birthday than a white infant. A group of concerned Milwaukeeans—front-line workers and professionals, practitioners and academics, everyday citizens and experts, both black and white—came together in 2010 to learn about the city’s black-white infant mortality gap and decide what to do about it. Generous funding from the Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP) at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health and incalculable in-kind support from participating agencies and individuals led to the formation of a Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families (LIHF) Collaborative in Milwaukee, which works with coalitions in Beloit, Kenosha and Racine on this important statewide initiative.

The Community Action Plan put forth by the Milwaukee LIHF Collaborative envisions a community where all African American families have less stress and experience healthy birth outcomes. The African American Task Force developed the following guiding principles and approved the goals and strategies of three domain task forces to develop the Community Action Plan.

Guiding Principles

• Be culturally appropriate
• Be community-driven
• Be family-centered
• Recognize the unique role of African American organizations
• Address racism
• Integrate the concept of the Lifecourse
• Work toward fulfilling the project vision of reducing stress and improving birth outcomes

For more information, email lvernon@unitedwaymilwaukee.org
**Milwaukee LIHF Collaborative**

**Recommended Approaches to Improve Health Care in African American Families**
- Facilitate access to health care services, including preconception, prenatal and interconception care.
- Reduce financial barriers to African American utilization of medical homes.
- Increase the capacity and quality of medical homes.
- Expand access to specialty care, including behavioral health and dental care.

**Recommended Approaches to Strengthen African American Families and Communities**
- Engage, partner with and fund grassroots and informal efforts in the development of a comprehensive network of fatherhood resources and supports.
- Increase relationship building skills and self-worth among African American men and their families with approaches that are culturally appropriate and community driven.
- Increase the role that African American fathers play in the community.
- Increase access to education and employment opportunities among African American males by providing mentoring, internships and job opportunities.
- Strengthen formal and informal partnerships to address structural barriers including racism and discrimination.
- Recognize that both informal and formal partners have equal value.

**Recommended Approaches to Address Social and Economic Inequities**
- Remove structural barriers to obtaining and retaining jobs.
- Increase family-sustaining jobs for low-income African American men and their families.

**Role of the Collaborative**
- Build broad community buy-in and support for the Community Action Plan.
- Demonstrate strong and strategic leadership to address infant mortality.
- Advance evidence-based policy, community level systems and environmental change strategies that emerged from the Community Action Plan.
- Leverage resources and connections in the community.

**What Can You Do**
Be part of the movement to change the health of the community and join the collaborative! For more information, email lvernon@unitedwaymilwaukee.org

The Milwaukee LIHF Collaborative wishes to recognize Aurora Health Care, the Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin, the City of Milwaukee Health Department, the Greater Milwaukee Committee, Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative, United Way of Greater Milwaukee, the YWCA, and the Zilber Family Foundation for their financial support of this work. Substantial in-kind support has been contributed by the Faith Partnership Network, the Medical College of Wisconsin, the Planning Council and the Women’s Fund.