COMMUNITY GRANT OUTCOME REPORT

Improving Birth Outcomes in Beloit

Local media and the Beloit LIHF Collaborative increased public awareness about the state’s infant mortality crisis.

► Description: As part of the Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families (LIHF), community stakeholders in Beloit established a collaborative to enhance coordination in service delivery systems and work toward community change at environmental, policy and system levels. The collaborative developed a community action plan that reflects the community’s vision and strategies for improving healthy birth outcomes.

► Relevance: An African American baby born in Beloit is almost two times more likely to die before his or her first birthday than a white infant. Addressing disparities in birth outcomes will lead to improvements in overall community health and well-being.

► Partnerships: The Beloit LIHF Collaborative recruited more than 90 members, including participants from the medical and faith-based communities and representatives from 40 local organizations and agencies. Working with Beloit College, residents created a community pictorial by using cameras to capture snapshots of places that demonstrate how their health is influenced by the social determinants of health, where residents live, learn, work, play and worship.

► Results: Established in 2010, the Beloit LIHF Collaborative participated in a two-year planning process, including a community needs assessment, site visits, discussion groups and the involvement of nearly 200 community residents. After reviewing evidence-based programs and promising practices, recommendations in Beloit’s community action plan focused on three key areas to improve healthy birth outcomes: improve access to health care, strengthen African American families and address social and economic inequities. The collaborative leveraged additional financial resources of $40,440 from local private foundations.

The collaborative will focus its future work on strengthening families through increased father involvement, promoting a culturally competent systems navigator to assist with access to services and strengthening cultural competency among service providers.

The Beloit community action plan is available at www.med.wisc.edu/LIHF.

Regina Hendrix and her daughter Ryann attended the launch of Beloit LIHF’s community action plan in April 2012. Born prematurely at 32 weeks, baby Ryann’s journey to thrive was featured at collaborative meetings and in local publications, and became an inspiration for the Beloit community to support healthy birth outcomes.

BELTO LIFECOURSE INITIATIVE FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

Community Partner: Cheryl Jackson, JD, cafj521@yahoo.com

Award: $250,000 over two years