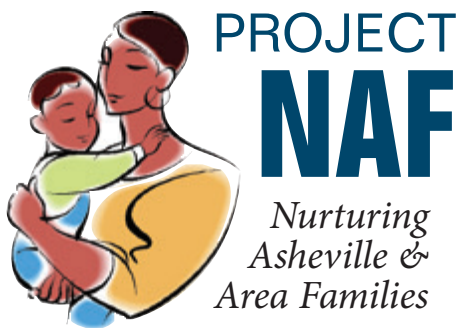


ECHO
HOPE

Enhancing Collaborative Health Options & Opportunities (through)
Hope and Healing Opportunities with Proactive Education



November 2025 is...

Prematurity Awareness Month

Diabetic Eye Disease

National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

THE O'NEIL FAMILY STORY



No mom-to-be should ever think, "My baby isn't going to live."

Imagine waking up from a nap to a nightmare: unexpected bleeding during pregnancy. For Ashley O'Neil, this marked the beginning of a harrowing journey through loss, preterm birth, and unexpected single motherhood. Her story highlights the challenges faced by many moms-to-be in the US and the importance of advocacy and support in maternal and infant healthcare.

Read the full story and watch the video at www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/community/stories/oneil-family.



NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH



Diabetic eye disease, a leading cause of blindness, often has no early warning signs. That's why it's so important for people with diabetes to get regular eye exams to catch problems early—get timely treatment and the right follow-up care.

During National Diabetes Month, join the National Eye Health Education Program in spreading the word about how people with diabetes can protect their vision! Use our educational resources to make sure everyone with diabetes has the facts about diabetic eye disease.

Source: National Eye Institute

Prematurity Awareness Month

Each year in the US, 1-in-10 babies are born preterm.



All of my mom's babies were born premature at 7 months gestation. I think I weighed 4 lbs, 3 ozs. But, with all the family love and care—mama, daddy, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and the community village—we all thrived and were healthy overall.

The overarching goal of Project NAF is to contribute to the reduction of infant mortality and low birthweight births for Black/African American women and their infants in Buncombe, Henderson, and Madison Counties in North Carolina.

Preterm Birth at a Glance

Preterm birth is when a baby is born too early, before 37 weeks of pregnancy have been completed. In 2022, preterm birth affected about 1 of every 10 infants born in the United States.

While many women do have healthy pregnancies, the US is among the most dangerous developed nations for childbirth. Together, let's end preventable preterm birth and help all families have full-term pregnancies and healthy babies.

World Prematurity Day, observed annually on November 17, raises global awareness of preterm birth and its impact on the health and well-being of affected babies and their families. Preterm infants are at increased risk of long-term complications, including problems related to lung development, neurological function, hearing, and vision.

What to Do If You're Experiencing Preterm Labor

Preterm labor is labor that happens too soon, before 37 weeks of pregnancy. If you think you are experiencing signs of preterm labor, see a health care provider right away. Your provider may be able to give you medicine so that the baby will be healthier at birth.

Factors Associated With Preterm Birth

Many times we do not know what causes women to deliver their babies early. Several factors may increase the likelihood that a woman could deliver early.

Below are groups with higher rates of preterm birth.

Demographic or Social Characteristics

- Teens
- Women who become pregnant over age 35
- Black women*
- Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women*
- American Indian or Alaska Native women*
- Women with lower incomes
- Women experiencing stress

Pregnancy and Medical Conditions

- Women who have had a prior preterm birth
- Women with an infection, including Covid-19
- Women carrying more than one baby (twins, triplets, or more)
- Women with high blood pressure conditions during pregnancy
- Behavioral characteristics
- Women who use tobacco
- Women who use drugs

Talk with your doctor about signs of preterm labor and what to do.

* Race is used to describe and categorize groups of people by physical characteristics such as skin color or lineage. It is not a biological driver of differences in preterm birth.

Sources: March of Dimes; Healthy Moms, Strong Babies; World Health Organization; CDC.

MESSAGE FROM MZCD STAFF

Dr. Ronald Caldwell, Kontia Grant, Sapphire De'Bellott, and Barbara Anderson.



Preventing Preterm Birth

- Preventing preterm birth remains a challenge because causes may not always be well understood. However, pregnant women can take important steps to help reduce their risk of preterm birth and improve their general health:
- Quit smoking.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Get prenatal care early and throughout pregnancy.

- Seek medical attention for any signs or symptoms of preterm labor.
- Talk with your doctor if you had a previous preterm birth.

Another step women and their partners can take to reduce the risk is to wait at least 18 months between pregnancies.

Source: CDC Maternal Infant Health

MOUNT ZION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, INC.



Dr. John H. Grant, Founding Chairman, President, CEO of Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.

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Ms. Rosa B. Hearst,
in appreciation of past services

Board of Directors

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MZCD welcomes new board members
Treva Barnard and Rev. Scott Burgess

Project NAF
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Nancy Farmer: Sparc Foundation

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& Former NAF Participant

Project Empower

Education Means Power – in collaboration with initiatives to impact the opioid crisis.

OUR PARTNERS

Our programming is made possible through the support of our generous funders.



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