

HealthVisions Update

HealthVisions Midwest, Inc.—Lake County, IN
Health Ministry Partnership— St. Joseph, Marshall, Elkhart County, IN
HealthVisions Fort Wayne—Allen County, IN
Living for Life—Starke County, IN
Chicago Health Collaborative – Chicago, IL
Healthy Communities of LaPorte County, IN
HealthVisions East St. Louis, IL

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This issue features: HealthVisions Midwest Lake County, IN
Maternal Child Health Network

The Maternal Child Health Network of Lake County was established to consolidate efforts to ensure that all available resources within the County are utilized to coordinate prenatal care services for at risk pregnant women. This network of fifteen agencies is able to concentrate on specific challenges that are the root causes of infant mortality, and low birth weight.

HealthVisions Midwest staffs four offices in Gary and one in East Chicago. Eleven Community Health Workers and five Care Coordinators provide a variety of services to the pregnant women. Some of these services include clothes, furniture, food, baby supplies and most important medical care coordination. In the past two years we have served 725 women. The Indiana State Office of Maternal Child Health funds this program.



Here are more wonderful stories of new life as a result of the work of the Maternal Child Health Network managed by HealthVisions Midwest, which serves pregnant women in Lake County.

N.A.T.A.L.E (*Nurturing Assistance to Assure Life Expectancy*)



My name is AG, I was 18 at the time I became pregnant. I moved from Memphis, TN to Indiana because my mom would no longer support me because I was pregnant. My boyfriend, who is from Gary, IN, encouraged me to come here. Since my farther lives in Gary it seemed like a good idea. When I got to Gary, we stayed with his grandmother for three days and she was ready to kick us out. I called my farther and he told me he had no room for both of us. My farther directed me to my cousin's house. My cousin allowed me to stay but not my boyfriend. He ended up going back to Memphis leaving my unborn child and me. My cousin lives in Ivanhoe project, which was nice but over crowded. My cousin has three children and two bedrooms. My cousin had no transportation and was barely making a living. She did not know how to help me with my situation because she was still trying to better her own life. One day I saw two girls walking with flyers in their hands. The two girls approached the door and put a flyer in the door. I was curious so I immediately grabbed the flyer and read it. It was just what I was praying for. The flyer said, that N.A.T.A.L.E. assisted pregnant women with anything they need while they are pregnant. At the time I was two months pregnant and did not have a doctor, insurance, vitamins, a coat, clothes, shoes, money, or not even a stable place to live. I rushed to the phone and made an appointment.

(NATALE cont.)

I began to explain to the lady on the phone that I did not have transportation to come to the office and she said "that is ok I can come to you, where do you live?" The lady explained the program gave me information. The N.A.T.A.L.E. Program helped me get a doctor, signed me up for Medicaid, helped me get on WIC, food stamps, get a coat, clothes, shoes, baby items for my baby, and last but not least my own place to stay. The N.A.T.A.L.E. Program helped me get on my feet so that I could concentrate on eating and being healthy while I was pregnant. From the time I called to the time that I had my baby boy who was 7lbs 8oz, they have been there for me. I also have furniture a television and even a home phone. When my family turned there backs on me N.A.T.A.L.E. was there and with out them I could have been homeless and depressed. Thank you NATALE for all your hard work.

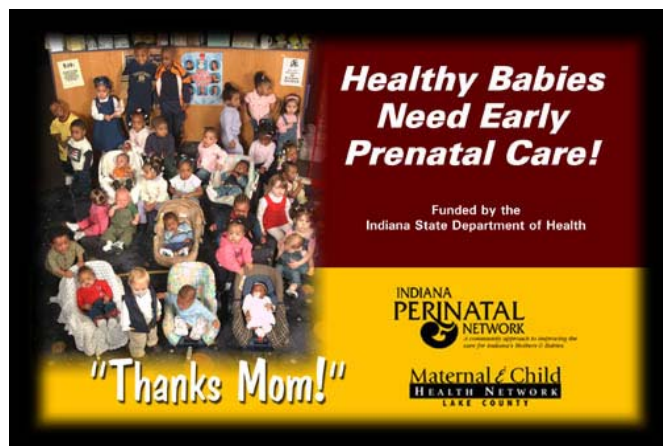
Office: 1021 West 5th Ave
Gary



We Do Make a Difference.....

Sophie is one of our most outstanding and admired clients at **Great Beginnings**. She came to us as a referral from the Sojourner Truth homeless shelter. Sophie came to Gary from Illinois with a young man, who had promised to love, cherish and take care of her. She found herself homeless and in the depths of despair. He was unable to keep his promises and had to desert his family. His departure left Sophie homeless and in the depths of despair. She had no job, no family, no friends, with one child and a second one on the way. She was depressed and hopeless when Sister Peg brought her to our door. Vowing not to lose her children to DCFS she listened to everything we told her. She attended counseling classes, and began to tell her story to others, who often think "if she can survive all she has gone through so can I". She impresses everyone she meets with her willingness to share her story. She is truly one who pulled her self up with no bootstraps. She recently received a round of applause as she told her story to a group of forty participants at a town meeting held at Healthy East Chicago. There was not a dry eye in the house when she finished. She was also the special guest at an awards ceremony given by Sojourner Truth House, where she still volunteers. She now has an apartment and is working at a local grocery store. She is also looking for a better paying job with affordable health benefits.

Office: Great Beginnings - 410 West 13th Ave - Gary



Maternal Child Health Network - advertisement