

# Building Blocks

for



The Richmond County Health Department's Building Blocks for Baby program is designed to improve birth outcomes by increasing access to appropriate prenatal care, preventative care, case managers, and home visitation. The program is funded in part by a grant from Healthcare Georgia Foundation (Foundation). Created in 1999 as an independent, private foundation, the Foundation's mission is to advance the health of all Georgians and expand access to affordable, quality healthcare for underserved individuals and communities.

The Georgia Perinatal Periods of risk report shows Richmond County's five year infant death rates are more than two times the national average. Some of the contributing factors identified were inadequate prenatal care, prematurity and low birth weight. The goal of the program is to increase the percent of women who attain appropriate weight gain during pregnancy, decrease the percent of low birth weight babies among enrolled women, decrease the percent of infant deaths among enrolled women, and reduce the percent of infants who need NICU services among enrolled women.

In October of 2009, the Richmond County Health Department began a prenatal clinic to address these issues and has served over 100 pregnancies to date. The grant will allow the Health Department to expand its current prenatal services to include risk reduction group education sessions, home visitation, and allow an extra half day to be added to the clinic schedule. The program will also link women and infants enrolled in the program to community resources, WIC, Children 1<sup>st</sup>, and community healthcare providers for any chronic health conditions that may extend past their pregnancy.

Through group classes, participants will be taught signs and symptoms of early labor, the importance of immunizations, the benefits of breastfeeding, car seat safety, nutrition, and interconceptual spacing. The program will also invite community partners to discuss important issues surrounding infant and mother care.

For more information on Building Blocks for Baby or to make an appointment with our prenatal clinic, please contact the Richmond County Health Department at 706-721-5946 or 706-721-5888.