

March 6, 2012



*Conferences that Inspire Solutions*

Mr. Thomas Friedel  
City Administrator  
City of Racine  
730 Washington Ave., Room 201  
Racine, WI 53403

Dear Tom,

We are requesting permission to present a project update for the Greater Racine Collaborative for Healthy Birth Outcomes (the Collaborative) during a *Committee of the Whole* meeting in April 2012. The Collaborative is funded by a grant from the University of Wisconsin-Madison: Wisconsin Partnership program. Since April is Minority Health Month, it is the perfect time to share the efforts of the Collaborative in reducing the African American infant mortality rate in Racine. This presentation, in addition to a Town Hall meeting scheduled in April, is an update to a Community Briefing held at the Johnson Foundation at Wingspread in June 2011.

The Collaborative has been engaged in creating a Community Action Plan to reduce African American infant mortality in Greater Racine, and we are now in the process of taking steps to implement the plan. During 2006-2008, the African American infant mortality rate was 20 deaths per 1,000 live births. Racine has the highest African American infant mortality rate in the state of Wisconsin, and one of the highest in the country.

Some of the recommendations to reduce this disparity include expanding existing local programs and implementing new evidence-based programs within existing organizations. In addition, the Collaborative plans to review ways to increase coordination of services that will benefit families.

This issue goes significantly beyond health care and the recommendations from our Community Action Plan are important for the city as a whole not only because of potential reductions in healthcare costs for everyone but also in terms of the quality of life for all Racinians. We look forward to the opportunity to provide information to the Common Council.

Sincerely,

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