



Genesee County Health Department

Mark Valacak, M.P.H., Health Officer
Gary K. Johnson, M.D., M.P.H., Medical Director

<http://www.gchd.us>

Floyd J. McCree Courts & Human Services Building
630 S. Saginaw Street, Ste 4
Flint, Michigan, 48502-1540
Phone: 810-257-3612
Fax: 810-257-3147

Community Health
Phone: 810-257-3612
Fax: 810-257-3147

Environmental Health
Phone: 810-257-3603
Fax: 810-257-3125

Personal Health
Phone: 810-257-3132
Fax: 810-237-6162

Burton Branch
G-3373 S. Saginaw St.
Burton, Michigan 48529
Phone: 810-742-2255
Fax: 810-742-2561

Release Date: For Immediate Release **End Date:** May 20, 2010
Date: May 18, 2010
Contact Person: Tonya M. French-Turner
REACH US Coordinator
Genesee County Health Department
Phone: (810) 257-3194
RE: "A Healthy Baby Begins With You" Event featuring Tonya Lee

Tonya Lee, spokesperson for the National Office of Minority Health's campaign, "A Healthy Baby Begins with You" and wife of movie producer Spike Lee, will be in Flint beginning Thursday, May 20, 2010 for a 2-day event to talk about national efforts to reduce disparities in infant mortality.

Mrs. Lee will speak with students and educators at 10:30 a.m. on May 20, 2010 at the Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD). Following the GISD meeting, Mrs. Lee will tour the city of Flint to observe firsthand the assets and deficits in Flint that contribute to poor health outcomes. On Friday, May 21, 2010, Mrs. Lee will speak to legislators and physicians, beginning at 7:30 a.m. at the Flint Golf Club. Topics will include policy and system changes needed to take place for all babies to thrive, before and after birth. Afterwards, Mrs. Lee will speak at a community-wide event to be held at 10:30 a.m. at the Ella Owens Activity Center, New Jerusalem Full Gospel Church located at 1035 East Carpenter Road, Flint, MI 48502. Mrs. Lee will discuss the community's role in helping to reduce the disparities and solicit the community's support for the initiative. Activities already underway in Genesee County to eliminate infant mortality will be highlighted as well.

Better Life Through Better Health

These events are sponsored by Genesee County REACH US and Healthy Start projects, coordinated by the Genesee County Health Department in partnership with Hurley Medical Center, Genesys Regional Medical Center, McLaren Regional Medical Center, University of Michigan-Flint and University of Michigan-School of Public Health, Greater Flint Health Coalition, Mott Children's Health Center, Flint Odyssey House/Health Awareness Center, Your Center, and Catholic Charities. These collaboratives have been working to reduce disparities over the past 10 years with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Health Resources and Services Administration. When the projects began in 2000, African American babies were dying at a rate of 22.8 per 1,000 live births. The county has seen a drop in infant mortality; however, there is still an unacceptably high disparity between black infant deaths and those of white infants (3:1).

We invite the public to attend the community event at Ella Owens Activity Center, New Jerusalem Full Gospel Church and contribute to this conversation. The event is free. Seating is limited. To reserve a seat or to find out additional information, call Tonya French-Turner, REACH US Coordinator at (810) 257-3194.

Better Life Through Better Health