

## Sample Letter to the Editor (If site of a Healthy Start Program)

Dear Editor:

I am the (Position Title) of (Name of your Healthy Start Project or coalition), a community based project/coalition making steady progress in reducing infant deaths in our area. I am writing to ensure that the entire community is aware of the issue of infant mortality and to thank our Senator, Representative (Names), for his/her support of the local Healthy Start Project (or coalition focused on infant mortality).

Healthy Start is a federal program funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that is making a dramatic impact on the high rates of infant mortality that are prevalent in many communities with large minority populations, high rates of unemployment and poverty and limited access to safe housing and medical providers. Our community is home to one of 102 Healthy Start Projects nationwide. We were chosen for funding because our area has a high infant death rate and we have a strong, community-based coalition working to address the problem.

Some of our partners include: (list several of your key community partners).

Our program has had great success: (list two or three key achievements).

We are grateful that Senator or Representative XXX recognizes that investing in Healthy Start will reduce overall federal costs associated with the often expensive and frequent medical treatments that low birth weight infants require.

Supporting community-based Healthy Start Projects now will prevent future spending on Medicaid, special education and a myriad of other social services that are needed for infants and children who are born with a low birth weight. (Name of your program) is proud to partner with Senator/Representative (NAME) in helping our community's most disadvantaged children survive infancy and live longer, more productive lives.

Sincerely,

Your name

Title

Contact Information

## **Sample Letter to the Editor (If not a Healthy Start program site)**

Dear Editor:

I am writing to promote awareness of the seriousness of infant mortality (deaths of children before they reach their first birthdays) in Kansas. Infant mortality is an indicator used to assess the health and wellbeing of a community, a state, or a nation. Kansas currently has an infant mortality rate that is 17 percent higher than the national average. In addition, Kansas is ranked number 1 in the nation for black infant deaths. Across race and ethnicity, women in our state who experience the sad tragedy of the death of their babies are primarily single mothers under 20 years-of-age and with less than a high school education.

Infant mortality is a complex issue that is linked to a variety of conditions: employment and economic security, environmental quality, community safety and security, education, social support, access to health care and many other factors.

I ask that our decisionmakers on the City Council and in other arenas to ensure that every woman has a healthy pregnancy, prenatal care, and a healthy baby after delivery. Increasing access to quality care is one aspect of this critical situation. However, it will require steady consideration of the conditions in which we live, learn, work, and play in order to successfully prevent and reduce the deaths of our youngest community members.

Sincerely,  
Your name  
Agency (if appropriate)  
Contact information