

Sept. 24, 2015

FIRST LADY, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH JOIN FAMILIES TO CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF NEWBORN SCREENING



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Tallahassee, Fla.—Today, the Florida Department of Health joined Florida’s First Lady Ann Scott and several families to celebrate 50 years of newborn screening administered through the department’s Children’s Medical Services. Children and families who have been served by this program shared their stories at today’s event, which took place at Florida’s Historic Capitol. First Lady Ann Scott and Deputy Secretary of Health Dr. Celeste Philip highlighted the achievements of newborn screening in Florida.

“We are committed to ensuring all babies have the best start in life,” said Deputy Secretary of Health Dr. Celeste Philip. “The Newborn Screening Program tests for 53 medical conditions allowing babies and their families to get the treatment they need early on to increase their chances of a healthy, happy life.”

Most babies arrive into the world healthy, but some have rare health problems that are not outwardly visible. With appropriate and timely treatment, newborns identified through the Newborn Screening Program will have the opportunity to grow and reach their full potential.

“Florida’s 50th anniversary of newborn screening is a very special milestone for families in our state,” said First Lady Ann Scott. “Our children are the future, and as a mother and a grandmother, I’m delighted that we are so committed to providing them the best opportunities for long-term health.”

The Newborn Screening Program began in Florida in 1965 with the passage of Section 383.14 of the Florida Statutes. Florida screens for 31 disorders recommended by the United States Department of Health and Human Services Recommended Uniform Screening Panel and an additional 22 secondary disorders. More than 7 million babies have been screened since 1965.

“Newborn screening is an integral part of ensuring that children born into growing Florida families have the best start in life, said Secretary for the Agency for Health Care Administration Elizabeth Dudek. “We are proud to provide Florida Medicaid recipients access to this important service.”

For more information regarding Newborn Screening, please visit our website at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/childrens-health/newborn-screening/index.html>.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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