

# Healthy Start Cohort Artifact

Spring 2023 Fourth Trimester Cohort



## INTRODUCTION

The Healthy Start TA & Support Center (TASC) hosted its inaugural Fourth Trimester Cohort from January through May 2023. Cohorts provide a space and place for Healthy Start (HS) grantees to come together to learn about what others are doing, document promising practices, and co-create tools and resources for the broader community around a specific topic (e.g., Evaluation, Fatherhood, Breastfeeding).

## COHORT OBJECTIVES

The Fourth Trimester Cohort focused on the following objectives:

- Identify and develop postpartum education resources that HS Staff can share with HS clients.
- Identify and develop best practices for villages (e.g., fathers/partners, family members, friends) to provide postpartum support.

## COHORT DELIVERABLES

During the cohort, members worked toward developing the following deliverables to be shared with the broader HS community:

- **Deliverable 1:** Intentionally Supporting Fathers Before and During the 4th Trimester
- **Deliverable 2:** Intentionally Supporting Mothers/Birthing People Before and During the 4th Trimester
- **Deliverable 3:** Gaps in Postpartum Support Resources and Considerations When Developing Resources for Fathers
- **Deliverable 4:** Gaps in Postpartum Support Resources and Considerations When Developing Resources for Mothers/Birthing People
- **Deliverable 5:** 4th Trimester Resources for Clients

The deliverables can be found on the following pages. Thank you to the 12 cohort members for their work and commitment to developing these documents for their fellow HS staff members. A full list of the cohort participants can be found on page 7. We encourage all readers to share this information with their fellow HS staff and any others who contribute to HS service delivery.

## Deliverable 1:

# Intentionally Supporting Fathers Before and During the 4th Trimester

This deliverable was created as the result of an activity where cohort members discussed how fathers' villages (e.g., mothers/partners, family members, friends) can intentionally support fathers before and during the 4th trimester/postpartum period.

### STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING FATHERS

- Uplift the role of fathers in maternal health.
- Emphasize the importance of dad's role in the family and promote/encourage father support before, during and after pregnancy.
- Include dads in appointments. If present, they should be a part of the process and receive the same education and information that mom is being provided with.
- Educate men about the risks of pregnancy and birth, and postpartum danger signs.
- Educate fathers about postpartum depression among men and ensure they know resources are available.
- Encourage dads to build their networks, social connections, and support systems (e.g., at barbershops, church, school).
- Create additional spaces to educate and have conversations with men around pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period (e.g., going into schools to speak with teens).
- Encourage men to make a postpartum plan with mom/birthing person. Discuss how dads can support mom/birthing person in the hospital/in postpartum appointments. Discuss things like distribution of chores and other tasks ahead of time.
- Encourage dads to speak up and advocate for mom and baby during pre- and post-natal appointments if needed.
- Share resources, like NHSA Text for Dads program, which provide information on developmental milestones.
- If not in a relationship or co-parenting, encourage dad to not give up and do what he can from where he is (e.g., drop off diapers for the baby).
- Protect our fathers/our men. Create a space where fathers can speak up and not be viewed as being intimidating or aggressive. Allow fathers to speak from emotion without judgement.



## Deliverable 2: Intentionally Supporting Mothers/Birthing People Before and During the 4th Trimester

This deliverable was created as the result of an activity where cohort members viewed the trailer for the documentary *Aftershock*, then discussed how villages (e.g., fathers/partners, family members, friends) can intentionally support mothers/birthing people before and during the 4th trimester/postpartum period.



### STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING MOTHERS

- Participate in prenatal visits with the mom/birthing person. Take notes and help remind them of questions they have.
- Attend prenatal fatherhood courses.
- Take classes on infant safety (e.g., CPR).
- Learn and understand car seat installation and safety.
- Learn about postpartum complications for birthing people and encourage mom to seek medical assistance if something doesn't feel right. Provide support (e.g., accompaniment, transportation).
- Learn about postpartum complications for men (e.g., postpartum depression) and encourage fathers to seek mental health support.
- Create plans for alternative outcomes or worst-case scenarios (e.g., mom or baby does not survive, extended hospital stay for mom, NICU stay for baby).
- Be aware of parents' plan for leaving hospital and transitioning home (e.g., no visitors upon returning home).
- Be aware of birthing person's breastfeeding plan. Help them bottle feed expressed milk, if possible.
- Remind parents that they don't have to be "super parents" and encourage them to ask for and accept help.
- Observe parents to identify ways to support. Assist parents with patience and encouragement.
- Help parents carve out a small amount of time for personal care daily.
- Watch the baby or help complete other tasks (e.g., cooking, laundry).
- Assist with sleep, allowing parents opportunity for rest.
- Listen to the parents and really hear what they have to say.
- Be open to discussing issues that are stigmatized (e.g., mental health, breastfeeding issues).
- Attend postpartum visits with the birthing person. Observe mom in preparation of appointments to help answer doctor's questions and ensure her concerns are being addressed.
- Utilize the [Hear Her Concerns](#) form/conversation guide.

# Deliverable 3:

## Gaps in Postpartum Support Resources and Considerations When Developing Resources for Fathers

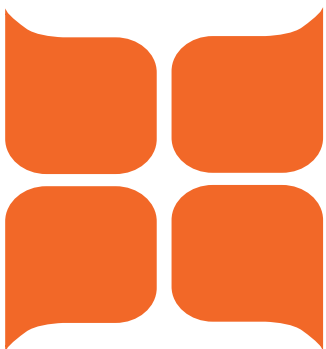
This deliverable was developed as the result of a homework activity where cohort members identified gaps in postpartum support resources and discussed considerations when developing resources for fathers.

### GAPS IN POSTPARTUM SUPPORT RESOURCES FOR FATHERS

- Men need to be informed about postpartum depression and other perinatal mood disorders. It is normal for men to experience them, just as it is for mothers/birthing people.
  - 1 in 10 fathers develop paternal postpartum depression (PPPD)
  - Up to 16% of fathers suffer from an anxiety disorder during the perinatal period
- Father figures should be included in postpartum assessments.
- Education is needed about the importance of fathers'/partners' roles and the resources available for them.
- Education is needed about how fathers can support mothers with breastfeeding.

### CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DEVELOPING POSTPARTUM SUPPORT RESOURCES FOR FATHERS

- Share information about postpartum depression with fathers, just as you would with mothers/birthing people.
- Screening for mood disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety) should be standard for fathers.
- Provide information to prepare fathers for the transition into parenting.
- Emphasize and uplift the importance of the fathers' roles, especially in the maternal and child health (MCH) space.
- Provide culturally competent resources for fathers, as fatherhood is viewed differently in different cultures.



## Deliverable 4:

# Gaps in Postpartum Support Resources and Considerations When Developing Resources for Mothers/Birthing People

This deliverable was developed as the result of a homework activity where cohort members identified gaps in postpartum support resources and discussed considerations when developing resources for mothers/birthing people.



### GAPS IN POSTPARTUM SUPPORT RESOURCES FOR MOTHERS

- Lack of postpartum blood pressure monitoring for preeclampsia
- Lack of or inadequate insurance coverage
- Limited access to mental health providers
- Lack of providers who accept Medicaid
- Fear of seeking out resources due to trauma
- Lack of financial support for low-income postpartum birthing people (i.e., birthing people are forced to return to work before fully healing from birth)

### CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DEVELOPING POSTPARTUM SUPPORT RESOURCES FOR MOTHERS

- Provide education and resources for not only the mothers/birthing people, but also for their support system.
- Provide resources to support mental health and address trauma.
- Consider the reader's current level of understanding around postpartum issues when developing resources.
- Ensure that communities affected by adverse birth events have access to resources and support.
- Provide resources to support clients in accessing transportation (e.g., bus or train passes, cab rides) and affordable childcare (especially for those returning to work).
- Provide education around car seat safety and infant/child CPR.
- Provide resources around obtaining postpartum virtual and home visits from medical providers.



# Deliverable 5: 4th Trimester Resources for Clients

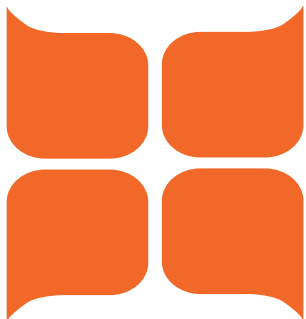
This deliverable was developed as the result of homework activities where cohort members shared available resources for mothers/birthing people, fathers, and family/community members to use before and during the 4th trimester. This information has been distilled into two lists: Resources for Mothers/Birthing People and Resources for Fathers/Partners.

## RESOURCES FOR MOTHERS/BIRTHING PEOPLE

- Local postpartum support groups
- Postpartum support groups, including those offered through [Postpartum Support International \(PSI\)](#)
- Perinatal depression screening (e.g., scale used in HS data collection forms)
- Smoking cessation resources from the [Moms Quit for Two](#) program
- [Hear Her Campaign](#) resources from the CDC
- [Check on Mom](#) resources about building a “mom team” and developing a maternal mental well-ness plan
- [A Mother's Guide to the Fourth Trimester](#)
- The 4th Trimester Project's [Postpartum Toolkit](#) from UNC Chapel Hill
- The TASC's Cuff Kit Pilot Project

## RESOURCES FOR FATHERS

- [Fathers Matter Program](#)
- Perinatal Mental Health resources from PSI, including [Dads Support Group](#)
- Perinatal depression screening (e.g., scale used in HS data collection forms)
- [National Institute of Health Emotional Wellness Toolkit](#)



# Spring 2023 Fourth Trimester Cohort Participant List



Name	Title	Site	State	Site Type	Services
Kristen Alhareedi	Healthy Start Project Director/Healthy Babies Program Manager	County of Sedgwick	Kansas	Urban	Home-based
Zoe Christie	Community Healthy Worker/ Program Assistant	Healthy Start, Inc.	Pennsylvania	Urban	Community-bases
Sara Delacruz	Community Health Worker (Strong Start Healthy Start)	County of Ingham	Michigan	Urban	Community-based
Christopher Gibson	Program Specialist	County of Alameda	California	Urban; Border	Home-based
Jasmonique Jones	Case Manager	Family Road (of Greater Baton Rouge)	Louisiana	Urban	Community-based
Damisha Jones	Senior Manager Community Collaborations & Partnerships	County of Los Angeles	California	Urban; Rural	Clinic-based
Lisa Matthews	Project Director	City of Cleveland	Ohio	Urban	Home-based
Kenya Powell	Case Manager	The Foundation for Delaware County	Pennsylvania	Urban	Community-based
Evelyn Rodriguez	Advocate	Healthy Start, Inc.	Pennsylvania	Border	Home-based
Morgan Taylor-McFadden	Assistant Director	Boston Public Health Commission	Massachusetts	Urban	Clinic-based
Ashley Torres	Father Involvement Specialist	Southern New Jersey Perinatal Cooperative, Inc.	New Jersey	Urban	Community-based
Stephanie Van Roekel	Healthy Start Nurse Consultant	Visiting Nurse Services	Iowa	Urban	Community-based