

AFRICAN AMERICAN BABIES COALITION

Addressing barriers to childhood well-being

aabcprojects.org

The African American Babies Coalition (AABC) is a group of African American community stakeholders including educators, nonprofit and civic leaders, researchers, childcare providers, parents and grandparents, and public health professionals from across the Twin Cities who are committed to promoting the healthy development of African American babies. AABC's vision is that African American families and other BIPOC communities claim their cultural heritage so their babies thrive, excel, and lead us into the future.

AABC Healthy Black Pregnancies (IHBP) is a key partner.



Wilder African American Babies Coalition & Projects

The health care system is failing African American mothers, babies, and families

The African American community and other Indigenous and communities of color (BIPOC) face persistent health disparities in birth outcomes, infant mortality, and child development stemming from centuries of unequal access to health care, historical abuses by researchers and providers, and the long-term impacts of toxic stress. The healthcare system is failing African American and other BIPOC families.

The lack of access to high-quality, culturally sensitive prenatal, delivery, and post-partum care contributes to these disparities. African American mothers, especially those living in urban neighborhoods, may have to go far outside their neighborhoods in search of a high-quality provider.¹ In addition, a history of oppression and structural racism leads some health care providers to ignore African American mothers' self-reported needs. Governor Waltz's Black Maternal Health Week Proclamation (April 11, 2022) stated the need to "acknowledge the historical and systemic exploitation of Black bodies within the medical field and to encourage practitioners to listen to and believe Black women seeking medical care." Often mothers are unaware of health care provided locally, or it is perceived to be of lower quality. Traveling outside their neighborhood causes undue stress, time, and providers in many areas may lack knowledge of African American women's specific experiences or needs. Local urban clinics, on the other hand, may be more culturally responsive but are often less resourced.


AABC is working to create an equitable health care system that has the capacity to provide culturally responsive care, so that African American families can thrive.


<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/health-care-system-racial-disparities-maternal-mortality/>


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 **Birthing Fruition Advisory Committee** is a committed group of partners that ensures that practices, care, and systems are methods are challenged and discussed for further quality trainings and practices.


 **Action lunches** engage leaders within the health care system in: recognizing the disparities and challenges of birthing for African American mothers and families, and learning how to partner with the community to reduce disparities. The twice annual luncheons connect AABC and build relationships with key leaders within the health care system so that when other opportunities arise for input at decision-making tables about how to incorporate African American perspectives into the system, AABC is top of mind to be included.


 **Summits and Forums** are large gatherings for networking and gaining knowledge that include trainings, discussions, and speakers. This includes the two-day Black and Brown Birth Summit engages health care workers in discussions on disparities and challenges of birthing for Black, Indigenous and communities of color.


 **My Baby and Me Building Bags** are portable on the go learning kits for postpartum mothers and newborns used to develop minds and brains of children and their caregivers.

 **Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN Moving Beyond Crisis)** training is for licensed and legally unlicensed early child care providers serving children from low-income families, families of color, Tribal communities, or families with limited English language proficiency to promote healthy development, social-emotional learning, early literacy, and school readiness.

 **AABC Host Trainers** provide 15-20 community members with the tools to become a trainer themselves. Focus has been on developing ways to articulate messaging on discipline, historical trauma, and social determinants of health.

 **Cohort Trainings** are a series of trainings related to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma-informed care, cultural home visiting etiquette, CPR and First Aid, and perinatal home visiting.

 **Community clinic health care readiness dialogue** is when AABC staff work with community clinics to help community partners determine their (internal and external) readiness to integrate the HBP model of care into practice.

 **R.A.W. Children's Library** are early childhood library sites for children ages 16 months- 5 years to promote early literacy and nighttime bonding with children and caregivers.

AABC Outcomes and Goals

Short term

African American moms have better access and referrals to specialists and other resources and services they need

Increase access to high-quality services in African American neighborhoods

Clinics and hospitals provide trainings so competency keeps building (not just the bare minimum)

Hospital administrators prioritize Indigenous and African American moms

Healthcare and childcare providers have access to the best scientific evidence to guide their care

Long term

Disparities in perinatal, birth, and early childhood outcomes for African American mothers and babies are reduced or eliminated.



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