

THE BIRTHING PLACE FOUNDATION

The Birthing Place Foundation builds access to **culturally responsive** reproductive **health care**, **perinatal programs**, family **wellness** support, and **community engagement**, with the aim of **improving maternal** and infant health outcomes in underserved communities.

We believe that every individual deserves compassionate, holistic care that honors their unique needs and experiences. Our work is guided by a deep commitment to reproductive justice, health equity, and community empowerment. By supporting The Birthing Place Foundation, you'll be helping us drive meaningful change in the lives of families and individuals across NYC.

Our key **focuses** for **2025**:

1. Maryam Reproductive Health + Wellness - A clinic and dedicated community space located in The Bronx, NY. Here, comprehensive and culturally responsive reproductive health services and clinical care is provided; TBPF supports educational workshops, community engagement, essential resources, and guidance to individuals and families seeking wrap-around reproductive care.

2. Familia Flourish: Breastfeeding and Beyond - We provide prenatal education and postpartum guidance for new parents to thrive in their breastfeeding journeys and share mental health strategies and resources throughout the postpartum for a stronger, healthier start.

3. Womb Bus - A mobile wellness hub available in the warmer months, traveling to communities throughout the Bronx and NYC to run outreach programs that include health and STI screenings, peri-natal health resources, and youth sexual health education outreach programming.

4. Conscious Birth Collective: Together Program - Our mentorship program empowers BIPOC doulas, fostering a more inclusive and supportive birth community. TBPF partners with local doula collectives and this year with HealthConnect One to offer a comprehensive doula training to occur in tandem with our mentorship, and provides pathways for doula certification as well as certifying doula trainers.

5. Youth Uplifting Optimal Health - We educate and inspire young people to prioritize their

health and wellbeing, setting them up for a brighter future. We support their reproductive health project interests and we're thrilled to witness them become resources for their peers.

6. **Mobilize Maternal Health** - We're coalition building by convening long-time New York State advocates and organizational partners dedicated to improving outcomes for mothers and infants and promoting comprehensive healthcare solutions. We aim to reduce maternal and infant mortality, champion legislation for increased access to midwifery and birth centers, and share stories to inspire change.

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Midwifery Birth Center bill in 2021, which was intended to "diversify birth setting options" and deemed the number one priority by the maternal health task force. It's now 2025, zero birth centers have since been licensed in New York State. The original bill, as passed unanimously through the Assembly and the Senate, would have resulted in more birth centers. It's disappointing, yet we have to be forward thinking. As President of NYSBCA, many initiatives deserve support. There's hard work happening in response to our dire shortage of options in NY city and State and in areas that lack maternity care altogether.

Our clinic, Maryam, and our collaborative care team composed of Midwives, an OBGYN, doulas in collaboration with various wrap-around care professionals, is well positioned to open a birth center. We have identified locations. We are presently growing towards our fullest ability to provide clinical care. So far in order to manage the challenging malpractice costs, and until our birth center exists, we only provide well woman care (preconception, first trimester prenatal, and postpartum). It's very difficult for our team and community to manage costs as we have personally sacrificed so much to stay committed to the vision. We propose that established and developing birth centers receive funding to: (1) attain site control of property for our birth centers; (2) purchase malpractice insurance or access to state-based subsidies to help reduce costs, and (3) navigate Certificate-of-Need requirements, which remains a major issue.

As a state, we must also recognize the Certified Professional Midwives (CPM) licensure. 37 states and the District of Columbia recognize Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs), providing a path for CPMs to provide midwifery care (One state has legalized CPMs by statute; Five states are planning for CPM legislation; three states have active CPM bills in the legislative process). New York is overdue to have this valuable option for care. Having experts in out-of-hospital birth is an essential part of growing birth centers.

We hope to open our birth center. Research shows collaborative care models and doula-supported births improve health outcomes for birthing people. Evidence shows that culturally congruent care reduces rates of maternal infant mortality. Let's go beyond the

research and invest in the proven community-based solutions *that work*; Let's empower people living through their reproductive (and post-reproductive) years with person-centered care and share tools for lifelong health and wellness through the generations. With the appropriate resources and support, we can change our maternal health narrative and improve outcomes throughout New York State.

With deep appreciation,

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