

UNDERSTANDING



MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH
AND THE CORRELATION TO BREASTFEEDING

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I, Kay Matthews, declare that I have no conflicts of interest regarding the content of this presentation. All information presented is based on current research, data and community voice aimed at promoting the health and well-being of Black mothers and birthing persons.

ABOUT US

VISION

Our goal is to support the women and birthing individuals we serve who seek help before pregnancy with education readiness, and during pregnancy so that they are aware of potential issues in the postpartum period and after child-birth with maternal mental health advocacy, treatment and support.

MISSION

We are dedicated to helping women of color and birthing persons before, during and after child-birth with community resources, mental health advocacy, treatment and support.

VALUES

We respect every person and their birth story no matter the outcome, we all have a story and no one experience is the same





INTRODUCTION

A INTRODUCTION TO HOW THE LACK OF BREASTFEEDING
SUPPORT IMPACTS MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH.



UNPACKING THE ISSUE

The lack of lactation support can significantly impact maternal mental health, leading to increased stress, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy among new mothers. Without proper guidance and resources, mothers may struggle with the physical and emotional challenges of breastfeeding, which can exacerbate existing mental health issues or contribute to the development of postpartum depression and anxiety. The absence of culturally competent support further compounds these challenges for Black mothers, who may already face systemic barriers and disparities in healthcare. Providing comprehensive breastfeeding support is crucial in promoting maternal well-being, enhancing the mother-infant bond, and fostering positive mental health outcomes.

MOST COMMON MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

BABY BLUES

Typically, the baby blues do not require medical treatment. Support from partners, family, and friends, along with reassurance and help with the baby and household tasks, can be sufficient for most.

POSTPARTUM ANXIETY

Therapy, particularly cognitive behavioral therapy, is effective, along with medication and mindfulness practices.

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Typically involves counseling or psychotherapy, medication, and support groups. Early intervention is crucial to prevent long-lasting effects on both the mother and the child.

COMMON MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OFTEN **NOT** DISCUSSED

OBSESSIVE- COMPULSIVE DISORDER POSTPARTUM

Intrusive, repetitive thoughts (often about harm coming to the baby), compulsions (actions performed to alleviate the distress caused by the thoughts), excessive cleaning or checking behaviors.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER POSTPARTUM

Re-experiencing the traumatic event (which could be a traumatic birth), avoidance of reminders related to the trauma, heightened reactivity (e.g., jumpiness), and anxiety.

POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS

Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there), delusions (strongly held false beliefs), extreme agitation, confusion, and disorientation. This condition can lead to life-threatening behaviors and requires immediate attention.

COMMON MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OFTEN **NOT** DISCUSSED

ADJUSTMENT DISORDER

Emotional or behavioral symptoms in response to a stressful event, such as becoming a new parent, which are disproportionate to the event and cause significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

POSTPARTUM RAGE

Sudden, intense bouts of anger or irritability that may seem disproportionate to the situation. This rage can manifest as yelling, throwing things, or overwhelming feelings of frustration and helplessness.

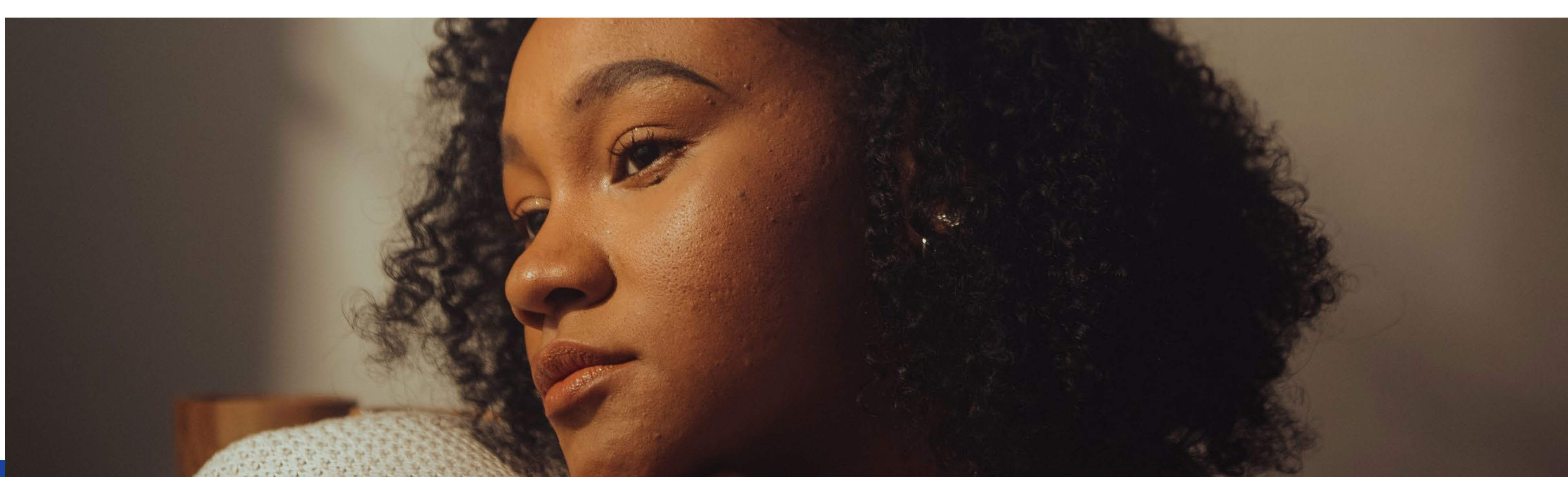


HISTORICAL CONTEXT: HEALTHCARE DISPARITIES AND SYSTEMIC RACISM

The historical context of healthcare disparities and systemic racism in the United States is deeply intertwined with the broader narrative of racial inequality that has pervaded the country's history. These disparities are not just relics of the past but ongoing issues that continuously affect the health and wellbeing of Black communities today, including significant impacts on adverse maternal mental health and the lack of lactation support outcomes.

UNDERSTANDING THE LINEAGE

- Addressing the Issue
- Historical Stressors & Improvement Efforts
- Current Challenges and The Legacy of Trauma
- Call To ACTION



ADDRESSING THE ISSUE

Recognizing and addressing the enduring impact of past and present stressors on Black maternal mental health and lactation is essential for creating a more equitable and supportive healthcare environment for Black women and birthing persons.

CURRENT CHALLENGES: MENTAL HEALTH DISPARITIES AFFECTING BLACK MOTHERS AND BIRTHING PERSONS

Understanding these statistics highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions and support systems that address the unique challenges faced by Black mothers and birthing persons.

- **Maternal Mental Health:** According to the CDC, Black women are 2-3 times more likely to experience postpartum depression compared to white women.
- **Breastfeeding Rates:** CDC data shows that 64.3% of Black mothers initiate breastfeeding, compared to 81.9% of white mothers.
- **Impact of Breastfeeding on Mental Health:** Studies indicate that breastfeeding can reduce the risk of postpartum depression by up to 50%.



CALL TO ACTION: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN ADDRESSING THE ISSUE

As we acknowledge the dual crises of maternal mental health and lactation support, it is crucial to implement comprehensive strategies aimed at improving outcomes for mothers and birthing persons, especially within Black communities. Here are essential strategies for improvement:

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

- 1. Increase Awareness and Education:** Educating healthcare providers and the public about the specific mental health needs of Black mothers can help reduce stigma and improve diagnosis and treatment.
- 2. Improve Access to Culturally Competent Care:** Enhancing the availability of culturally competent healthcare professionals who understand the specific experiences and needs of Black women can lead to better care outcomes.
- 3. Community-Based Health Initiatives:** Investing in community-based programs that provide support and education about maternal mental health can help reach women in comfortable and familiar settings, potentially increasing engagement and decreasing stigma. •Efforts to implement paid maternity leave and workplace accommodations for breastfeeding mothers.
- 4. Policy Reform:** Advocating for policy changes that aim to improve healthcare access, increase funding for mental health services, and ensure that these services are equitable and inclusive can also address the systemic barriers affecting Black mothers. Training healthcare providers in culturally competent care and breastfeeding support.

MAKE SHIFT HAPPEN

RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

- Objective: Enhance research on maternal mental health and lactation to better understand and address the crisis.
- Action: Support academic and clinical research on maternal mental health and lactation disparities and treatment efficacy. Ensure that research includes diverse populations and addresses specific needs of Black mothers.

INTEGRATED CARE MODELS

- Objective: Promote integrated care models that address both physical and mental health needs.
- Action: Advocate for healthcare systems to adopt integrated care pathways that seamlessly include mental health checks within standard maternal care protocols.

MAKE SHIFT HAPPEN



PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

BLACK MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH WEEK JULY 19-25

Objective: Increase awareness about the maternal mental health crisis to reduce stigma and promote understanding that maternal mental health is a part of every aspect of childbirth and the postpartum period.

Action: The campaign has been launched nationally and has become a community-level campaign for the past six years that educates on the signs, symptoms, and realities of maternal mental health issues specifically in black women and birthing individuals.

IMPORTANT DATES



NEXT WEBINAR

JUNE 14, 2024

Online



BLACK MMH WEEK

JULY 19TH-25TH

Nationwide

2024 Theme: The Art of
Motherhood: Parenting Beyond
Societal Norms



BLACK MMH SUMMIT

JULY 24TH-25TH

Houston, Texas

ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT





THANK YOU FOR HAVING US
LET'S MAKE SHIFT HAPPEN TOGETHER

LET'S STAY CONNECTED

Your support and participation are vital to our mission. Let's continue this important conversation and work together!



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