



# Urban Baby Beginnings

PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND BEYOND





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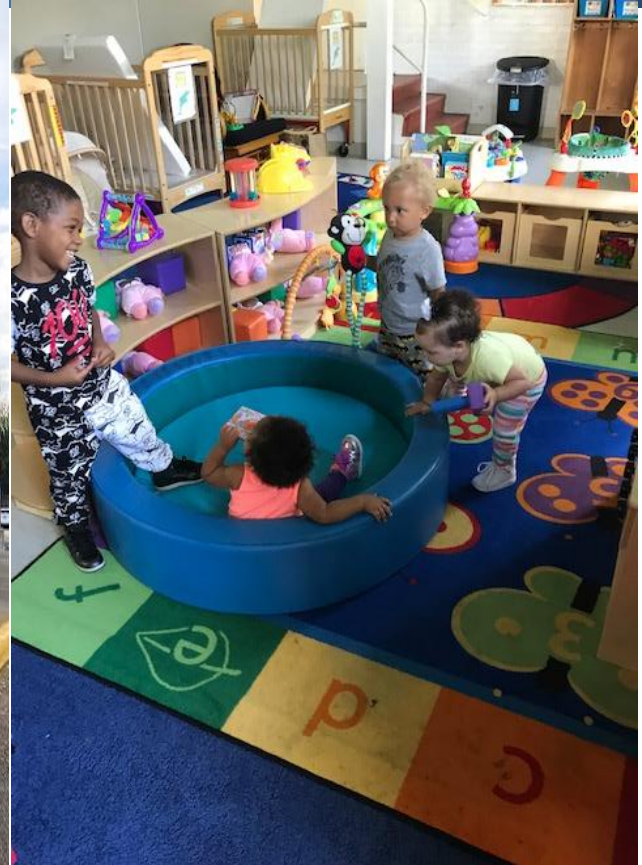
**2021 Presentation**  
**Building Sustainable Community-based Maternal Health Hubs**

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Capital Center of Virginia

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# Our History



- UBB is an accredited perinatal safety leader supported by the National Perinatal Taskforce/Commonsense Childbirth/The JJ Way
- Our collective goal is to to develop and strengthen collaborations between the system-wide perinatal workforce to consistently deliver innovative and evidence-based models of equitable and quality care in order to eliminate racial disparities for mothers and babies.
- Our maternal health hubs, otherwise known as “perinatal safe spots,” support pregnant and postpartum families in communities often located in “materno-toxic” zones
- UBB has supported the Central Virginia and Hampton Roads communities for over 28 years

# Mission

At Urban Baby Beginnings our mission is to reduce adverse outcomes and isolation experienced by families during the prenatal, postpartum and early childhood years by increasing professional and paraprofessional health access, social support, and addressing systemic barriers.

# Collective Vision

Our vision is that every perinatal provider feels supported, empowered and valued while providing safe, unbiased and equitable care for every person, every time AND that every birthing person has the knowledge, access, connection, and empowerment necessary to achieve their healthiest possible pregnancy, birth, and parenting experience.

Jennie Joseph, Commonsense Childbirth

# The Issue





- High maternal and infant mortality rates
- Perinatal disparities
- Maternity care deserts
- Lack of trust often seen within marginalized populations towards hospitals and governmental systems
- “Materno-toxic areas”

# Focus Areas



- Equity
- Dignity
- Respect
- Quality
- Safety
- Community-led collaborations and partnerships

# Targeted Interventions

Social Support



Evidence-Based Educational  
Programming



Workforce Development



Crisis Intervention: Diaper  
Bank/Baby Pantry

# Reducing Maternal Health Disparities: Virginia's Strategic Plan 2021





# Virginia's Strategic Plan: Office of the Governor of Virginia

Recommendations  
UBB has achieved  
based on strategic  
plan analysis

- “Enhance health literacy among pregnant and postpartum women of color and healthcare providers by partnering with organizations led by women of color to develop and implement health literacy education and training
- Implement maternity navigation tools and resources such as peer support, patient navigators, and community health workers for African American, Indigenous, and Latina women
- Expand collaborative that leverages public-private partnership to promote continuous hospital-based quality improvement focused on achieving equitable maternal health outcomes, including reducing maternal morbidity among Black women who are at highest risk for poor outcomes
- Enhance supports for families before, during and after birth - Expand access to home visiting
- Ensure pregnant women have sustainable access to clothing and diapers, healthcare, safe and affordable housing, and nutritious foods
- Expand access to community-led maternal health programs: Invest in community programs that offer one-stop comprehensive services”

(Direct quotes from Strategic Plan summarized by the Office of the Governor, 2021)

# Virginia's Strategic Plan: Office of the Governor of Virginia — Why this Strategy

- “The strategy and recommendations of this focus area are aimed at increasing the capacity of community- based services and resources serving pregnant and postpartum women.
- MMRT data concluded there is a lack of coordination of care in maternal health, with many women left to navigate the complicated healthcare system on their own.
- During the listening sessions, women supported by a doula, midwife, or home visiting program during their pregnancy and in the postpartum period reported positive birth outcomes and experiences.
- Community-based program models offer individual support, care coordination, group prenatal and postpartum classes, childcare assistance, and workforce training.
- It is common for these programs to hire individuals from within the community, including many who receive services by the programs, and train them to serve other women and families.
- However, current reimbursement models and regulations can present barriers for increasing the access, capacity and workforce needed for these services.”

(Direct quotes from Strategic Plan summarized by the Office of the Governor, 2021)

# Our Solution



# What is a UBB Maternal Health Hub?





# UBB Norfolk





# Community Co-Design



# UBB Family Events



# UBB Families Speak

- In a 2019 survey, sixty-two UBB respondents discussed ways that the current maternal health landscape could better support families during pregnancy and the postpartum period. Suggestions included:
  - Warm line for perinatal information
  - Social support services such as support groups, lactation educators, and maternal mental health services
  - Earlier connections to support such as community doulas and home visiting
- Families discussed the lack of coordinated services as a predictor to negative birth outcomes and trauma
- One hundred twenty-eight community-based organizations working directly with women and children were interviewed and each expressed frustration regarding the lack of trained professionals, funding, and platforms to support birthing people regardless of socio-economic status

UBB Respondent Survey

# UBB's Maternal Hub

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Access	Provides wrap-around social support services to pregnant and postpartum individuals using an open access policy – no one is turned away
Knowledge	Offers doula support, pregnancy navigation, and care coordination by perinatal specialists
Support	Provides access to maternal and infant clothing, diapers, baby items, and necessities through UBB's Diaper Bank/Baby Pantry
Connection	Integrates UBB's telehealth social support with a ground forces perinatal specialist team comprised of trusted culturally reflective paraprofessionals trained through UBB's workforce development program

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Jennie Joseph, 2021

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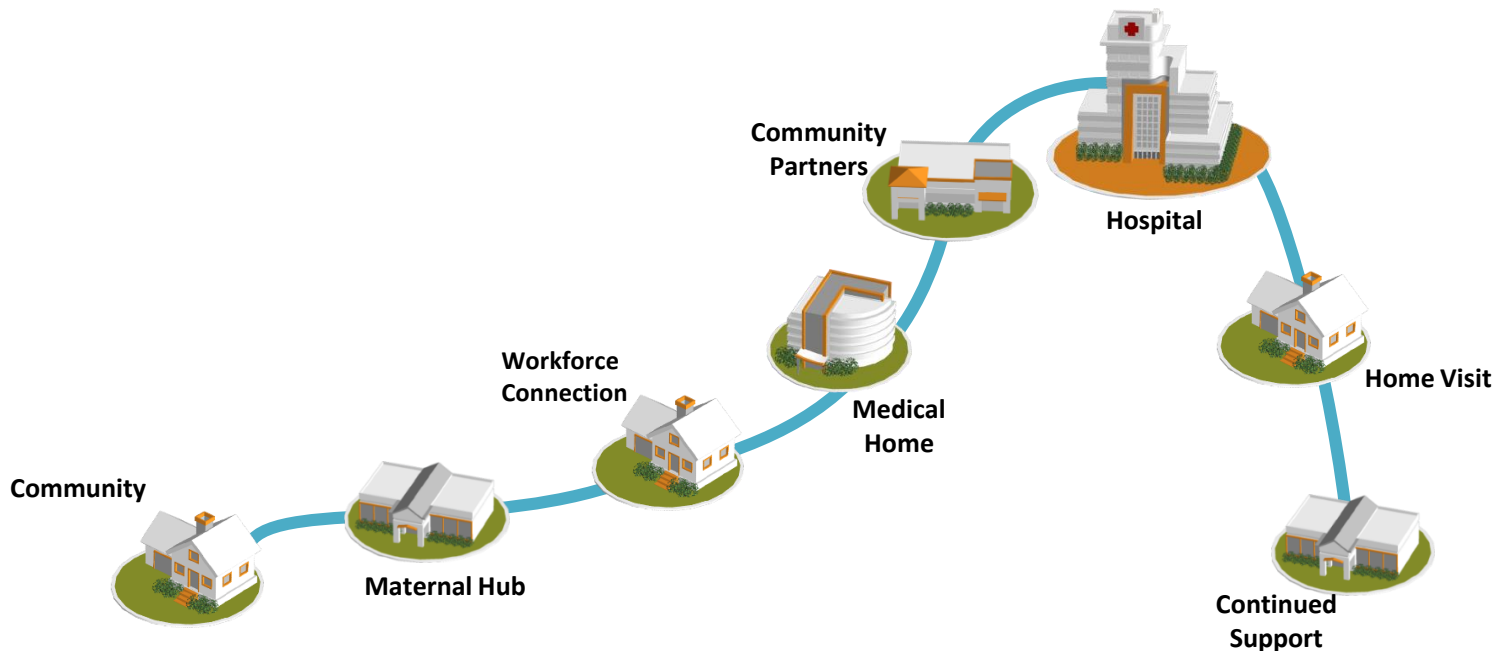
# Who Benefits





# Demographic Served

Urban Baby Beginnings has served over 2,000 families in our maternal health program since 2015. 99% of the families served are birthing people of color residing in the Central Virginia and Hampton Roads areas. These families are typically uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid recipients living at or below 200% of the FPL.



# The Evidence



# Maternal Care Program Statistics

(Pregnancy to 1 year postpartum)

**2019-2020**

301 served

PTB Rate	8%
C-Section Rate	16%
Birth Weight	6.9 lbs
Maternal Mortality	0
Infant Mortality	1
% clients supported by Doula	25%
BF at discharge	97%

# Additional Program Statistics

(Pregnancy to 60 days postpartum, Children 3 years and younger)

**2019-2020**

Perinatal Care Coordination Program – 454 served

Diaper Bank – 7,500+ served



# Maternal Hub Expansion





# Challenges

75% of funding received at UBB is based on grants and contracts requiring consistent support from donors to sustain the program

The UBB program turns away hundreds of families per year that could engage in services

Financial support provided to CBOs help to support clients who are often reflective of generations of families who live in the same area

Families who receive high quality care AND community-based supports have better outcomes

Expansion to scale in order to achieve Virginia's maternal health strategic initiatives based on the current reimbursement structure is a challenge

Any intentional focus on reducing maternal health disparities must include investing in community-based maternal health programming to scale



# Federal Legislation





## Build Back Better Act

### Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act Investments

The Energy & Commerce Committee's **Build Back Better Act** legislation includes historic investments from the **Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act** to save moms' lives, end racial and ethnic maternal health disparities, and advance birth equity across the United States:

- Provides **\$175 million** in funding for local entities to address **social determinants of maternal health** like housing, nutrition, and environmental conditions – including a **minimum of \$75 million exclusively for community-based organizations** working to promote maternal health equity.
- Provides **\$275 million** to grow and diversify the **perinatal health workforce**, including nurses, midwives, physicians, doulas, and maternal mental and behavioral health professionals – including **\$50 million specifically for doulas**.
- Provides **\$100 million** for **maternal mental health equity** grant programs.
- Provides **\$85 million** to address the impacts of **climate change-related maternal and infant health risks** through health professional schools.
- Provides **\$50 million** to **advance maternal health research at Minority-Serving Institutions** like Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and AAPISIs.
- Provides **\$50 million** to promote **representative community engagement** in Maternal Mortality Review Committees.
- Provides **\$160 million** to **strengthen federal maternal health programs** like the CDC's Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies program, Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance to Eliminate Maternal Mortality (ERASE MM), Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).
- Provides **\$60 million** to expand access to digital tools and **technologies that promote maternal health equity**.
- Provides **\$25 million** for **bias trainings among health care professionals**.

The Build Back Better legislation also includes a **mandatory** provision that will make federal funds **permanently** available for states to spend on expanded postpartum Medicaid and CHIP coverage to one year in **every state**, with **full state plan benefits** throughout pregnancy and the yearlong postpartum period.

# Our Ask



# Call to Action

- Invest in proven systems which are protective and led by people of color to improve perinatal and postpartum quality and safety
- Support Momnibus legislation to address maternal health disparities and improve outcomes
- Promote perinatal workforce development programs through funding to develop and replicate protective models
- Fund maternal hub expansion to allow for communities to build sustainable, protective solutions



# A Village of Support







# How to Contact

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Thank you for your support!

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