**Belly Buddies™**

**Prenatal and Birthing Support Program**

**Purpose of Presentation:** The purpose of this presentation is to offer forth a new paradigm for prenatal group education as an added means for improving maternal and infant outcomes.

**Learning Objectives:** The readers of this poster presentation will be able to:

- Evaluate their communities to determine the extra personal stressors that may contribute to poor pregnancy outcomes
- Develop community initiatives to reduce those extra personal stressors
- Foster self-care activities in a pregnant woman's life that will reduce interpersonal and extra personal stress and build resilience
- Individually systems supports and improvements needed to reduce poor pregnancy outcomes

**Comprehensives of Belly Buddies™**

- Prenatal Yoga
- Needle Work
- Positive Parenting
- Child Birth Education including:
  - Infant Health/New Baby Care
  - Nutrition Class
  - Scrapbooking
  - Meditation and Baby Talks
- Birth Visionsing

This an eight-week course with 8-10 first time mothers and mothers with previous poor pregnancy outcomes. These women are around the same gestation age (+/- 3 weeks gestation.)

**The Goals of Belly Buddies™ Are:**

**MOTHERS-TO-BE WILL:**

- Gain awareness, knowledge and skills associated with motherhood and will achieve favorable pregnancy outcomes

**MOTHERS-TO-BE WILL:**

- Participate in group activities strengthening the sisterhood

**MOTHERS-TO-BE WILL:**

- Develop a family planning strategy

**MOTHERS-TO-BE WILL:**

- Acknowledge the value of significant others (partners, parents, friends, other children)

**Belly Buddies™ Dashboard**

**Executive Summary:** Baltimore Healthy Start Incorporated's Belly Buddies™ Program Quality Metrics Dashboard.

In May of 2007, Baltimore Healthy Start (BHS) piloted a prenatal education service for a group of 10 pregnant women who either were first time mothers or had experienced a previous poor pregnancy outcome. The launch of this service was lauded by the group members and was successful in creating a "sisterhood" bringing each one out of isolation, which can be a tremendous cause of stress. The women gained confidence in their own knowledge and skill and reported feeling better about themselves. Each member had a successful pregnancy outcome and one was featured in a Baltimore Sun newspaper article.

In May 2010, The Jewish Women's Giving Foundation funded Baltimore Healthy Start to conduct three cohort groups for Healthy Start Clients. The result from the group and interest from Community has prompted BHS to move this service to the "program and policy level." This decision requires a critical look at performance measures. Therefore, the dashboard will serve as a platform in which the anticipated outcomes and the actual outcomes can be viewed. BHS expects that the creation of this dashboard will lead to quieter and better-informed corporate decisions. It is a convenient tool for sharing performance data throughout all levels of the organization and with the community at large. It is essential in order to speak about this program in publications and to funders.

**Metrics:**

1. **Clinical outcomes related to Healthy Start Mission**
   - Infant Mortality
   - Very Low Birth Weight
   - Low Birth Weight
   - Intercurrent Interval
   - Perinatal Depression

2. **Other Clinical Outcomes**
   - Measurement of Stress Levels (corrois)
   - Measurement of Blood Pressure
   - (Healthy) Weight Measurement
   - BMI before pregnancy
   - Pregnancy weight gain

**The Belly Buddies™ Community Program Model Logic**

**Table 1. A Typical 8-Week Belly Buddies™ Session**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>CBE</th>
<th>Knitting</th>
<th>Yoga (Mediation Baby Talks)</th>
<th>Nutrition</th>
<th>Positive Parenting</th>
<th>Scrapbooking</th>
<th>Birth Blessing™</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A sacred ceremony is held at the conclusion of each session series called the Blessingway Ceremony. This is a safe and comforting environment where the mothers can explore challenges and joys that lie before them as they approach the birth. Through the support of women experiencing similar feelings and situations, and who are important to one another, the women join a community of strength, security, confidence and support that help.

**Overland Y., et al. 2006**

**Why Belly Buddies™**

In 2000, African American women living in Baltimore City experienced an infant mortality rate of 18.3 per 1000 live births compared to 3.3 per 1000 live births for whites. These data reflect the racial disparity in poor birth outcomes among African Americans.

- Recent research findings have linked maternal psychosocial stress with a greater risk of preterm delivery.
- Studies suggest that this stress can impact fetal growth and precipitate adverse maternal behaviors such as substance abuse.
- Belly Buddies™ seeks to decrease stress and increase resilience and support among the participants with an anticipation of improved birth outcomes.

**Belly Buddies™ Are:**

- Birth Visioning
- Meditation and Baby Talks
- Scrapbooking
- Positive Parenting
- Prenatal Yoga
- Infant Health/New Baby Care
- Nutrition Class
- Needle Work
- Mediation and Baby Talks
- Birth Visionsing

The following table outlines a typical 8-week session:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Week 8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBE</td>
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<td>Nutrition</td>
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<td>Positive Parenting</td>
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<td>Birth Blessing™</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Baltimore Healthy Start Incorporated’s Belly Buddies™**

The following table outlines a typical 8-week session:
The purpose of this presentation is to offer forth a new paradigm for prenatal group education as an added means for improving maternal and infant outcomes.

Purpose of Presentation:
- Foster self-care activities in a pregnant woman's life that will reduce interpersonal and extra personal stress and build resilience.
- Indentify systems supports and improvements needed to build resilience that will reduce (interpersonal and extra personal) stressors that may contribute to poor pregnancy outcomes.
- Develop a family planning strategy.
- Acknowledge the value of significant others (partners, parents, friends, other children).

The Goals of Belly Buddies™ Are:

MOTHERS-TO-BE WILL:
- Gain awareness, knowledge and skills associated with motherhood and will achieve favorable pregnancy outcomes.
- Participate in group activities strengthening the sisterhood.
- Develop a family planning strategy.
- Acknowledge the value of significant others (partners, parents, friends, other children).

Components of Belly Buddies™

- Prenatal Yoga
- Needle Work
- Positive Parenting
- Child Birth Education including:
  - Infant Health/New Baby Care
  - Nutrition Class
  - Scrapbooking
  - Meditation And Baby Talks
  - Birth Visioning

This is an eight-week course with 8-10 first time mothers and mothers with previous poor pregnancy outcomes. These women are around the same gestation age (+/- 3 weeks gestation.)

The Belly Buddies™ Conceptual Framework

The Child Bearing Model Based On Reilly-Neuman System Model, Conceptual Models for Nursing

Why Belly Buddies™

In 2009, African American women living in Baltimore City experienced an infant mortality rate of 18.5 per 1000 live births compared to 5 per 1000 live births for whites. These data reflect the racial disparity in poor birth outcomes among African Americans.

Recent research findings have linked maternal psychosocial stress with a greater risk of preterm delivery.1,2

Numerous studies suggest that this stress can impact fetal growth and precipitate at-risk maternal behaviors such as substance abuse.3

Belly Buddies™ seeks to decrease stress and increase resilience and support among the participants with an anticipation of improved birth outcomes.

Belly Buddies™ Are:
- Bible study
- Birth Visioning
- Meditation and Baby Talks
- Scrapbooking
- Positive Parenting
- Child Birth Education including:
  - Infant Health/New Baby Care
  - Nutrition Class
  - Birth Visioning

A sacred ceremony is held at the conclusion of each session series called the Mothering Ceremony. This ceremony is conducted to reinforce the value of several roles to the mothers-to-be: challenger and jazz that face them as they approach the birth. Through the peer support of women experiencing similar feelings and situations, and who are important to one another, the women gain a sense of strength; security; confidence and support that help them rise to motherhood.

*Confident Y, et al. 2006

The Belly Buddies™ Community Program Logic Model

1. Clinical outcomes related to Healthy Start Mission
a. Infant Mortality
b. Very Low Birth Weight
c. Low Birth Weight
d. Intercranial hemorrhage
2. Other Clinical Outcomes
a. Measurement of Stress Levels (cortisol)
b. Measurement of Blood Pressure
c. (Healthy) Weight Measurement

Metrics:
- BMI 6 months after delivery
- Will Baby

3. Procedural Processes
a. Knowledge, skills and ability (pre and post test)
b. Group Attendance by first time mothers and those with previous poor pregnancy outcome
c. Group Attendance of Significant Others
- Adequate Prenatal Clinic Visits
- Breastfeeding Initiation
- SLEEP position of infant
- Contraception Use
- Child Growth And Development Milestones
- High School Diploma/GED
- Job
- Housing (Rent, Own, Living with relative or friend)
- Development of Family Planning Strategy
- Access to health care
- Relationship Status

The Belly Buddies™ Dashboard

Executive Summary: Baltimore Healthy Start Incorporated's Belly Buddies™ Program Quality Metric's Dashboard.

In May of 2007, Baltimore Healthy Start (BHS) piloted a prenatal education service for a group of 10 pregnant women who either were first time mothers or had experienced a previous poor pregnancy outcome. The launch of this service was funded by the group members and was successful in creating a “sisterhood”, bringing each one out of isolation, which can be a trigger of stress. The women gained confidence in their own knowledge and skill and reported feeling better about themselves. Each member had a successful pregnancy outcome and one was featured in a Baltimore Sun newspaper article.

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