

# Protecting Perinatal Health Outcomes in King County with a Community-based, Culturally Responsive Approach

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*All photos are of Open Arms families and are used with consent*

# Our Mission

**Doulas are trained community health workers who provide skilled support and education before birth, during labor, and postpartum.**

Open Arms provides community-based support during pregnancy through birth and into early parenting to nurture strong foundations that last a lifetime.

Since 1997 Open Arms has served over 4,000 low-income parents during the critical and vulnerable time surrounding the birth of a new baby. We serve nearly 500 parents and 500 children annually.



**Core Programs: Culturally Responsive,  
Community Driven, focus on the pregnant  
person, family AND infant.**

<div>1</div> <div><b>Birth Doula Services (Since 1997)</b></div>	<div>2</div> <div><b>Community-based Outreach Doula Home Visting Program (Since 2008)</b></div>	<div>5</div> <div><b>Family Support Services (Since 2021) referrals to resources to address social risk factors (e.g. material needs, housing insecurity, IPV)</b></div>
<div>3</div> <div><b>Lactation Peer Counseling (Since 2020)</b></div>	<div>4</div> <div><b>Prenatal Support Groups, Childbirth Education (Since 2020)</b></div>	<div>6</div> <div><b>Community Education (Since 2022) Professional development education for birth workers</b></div>



# Our Families

## Open Arms Serves Nearly 500 Clients Annually

- Live within 200% of FPL
- Over 90% are people of color
- 30% are recent immigrants or refugees
- Speak 33 languages
- Majority live within King County
- Face social risk factors: trauma, social isolation, poverty, food and housing insecurity, racism
- Over 11% would have otherwise been unaccompanied at birth
- Over 24% have comorbidities or factors that increase risk such as gestational diabetes, hypertension, preeclampsia, perinatal mood disorders
- 7.6% births are VBAC



*open arms*  
perinatal services

# Key Outcomes

**High Home Visiting Retention:**  
retention rate of 72% compared to  
47% for other WA programs.

**Sustained Lactation:** Most parents  
breastfeed until 6 months or more: 60-94%  
breastfeeding at six months depending on  
ethnicity, vs. 35% for other WA programs.  
Our overall 2019 rate is 100% per HRSA  
measures.

**Improved Infant and Maternal Health:**  
Significantly lower rates of preterm infants  
and interventions compared to King County  
and State population data.  
Fewer children have developmental  
concerns and nearly all concerns  
improved with follow-up.

# Key Outcomes

Significantly fewer pre-term births overall: 4.9% vs. 9% in King County overall.

## AI/AN Indigenous Families

Preterm: 5%

*2022 State of WA = 8.9%, 2020 King County = 9.3%*

Low Birth Weight: 9.5%

Cesarean births: 25%.

*2021 State of WA = 29%, 2019 King County = 34.9%*

BF @ Birth: 100%   BF @ 6M: 64%

## Black/African American Families:

Preterm: 6.4%

*2021 CDC = 14.8% 14.8%*

Cesarean births: 28.6%

*2021 US 35.1% (Planned or Unplanned) C-Sections*

BF @ Birth: 56.5%   BF @ 6M: 71%

**Since 2016, the percentage of clients at OAPS that identify as Black/AA increased by 17.3% (from 27.1% in 2016 to over 44.4%).**



# References

Open Arms collects extensive data from our families during intake, as part of matching with service providers, as well as post partum. All data are aligned with local and national indicators and captured in a customized database. We also disaggregate by race, language, and other demographic information.

[Center for Disease Control: Washington \(2020\)](#)

[CDC Reproductive Health Preterm Birth Outcomes - 2021](#)

[March of Dimes Washington State \(2022\)](#)

[March of Dimes - Low Birth Weight in 2021](#)

[Best Starts for Kids: King County \(2020\)](#)

[Swedish First Hill Hospital: Seattle \(2020\)](#)

[Center for Disease Control: Washington \(2020\)](#)

[United Health Foundation: Washington](#)

[Washington State Department of Health \(2020\)](#)