

New Beginnings

MomsFirst provides support to expectant mothers living in the City of Cleveland. We are dedicated to helping Cleveland moms deliver and raise healthy babies.

Mauricea Sweet's Journey: MomsFirst Participant to Doula

In October of 2022, Mauricea Sweet sent an email to the MomsFirst program introducing herself as the owner of Ebi Doula Services. She shared that she was enrolled in MomsFirst when she was pregnant with her first child. Later that month, Mauricea met with the MomsFirst Deputy Project Director,



Megan Walsh, to discuss connecting MomsFirst participants to Ebi Doula Services. As Mauricea shared her story of being a MomsFirst participant as a teenager and the services she and her family benefited from, it started sounding familiar to Megan. It became clear that Megan and her MomsFirst colleagues facilitated the Baby FAST program Mauricea's family participated in at

the May Dugan Center in 2006 and that there were photos of Mauricea and her family in a collage of MomsFirst photos!

Of her time in MomsFirst in high school, Mauricea said, "being involved in the MomsFirst program, I found a sense of belonging. MomsFirst was extremely important and beneficial to me as I started my journey to

motherhood". Mauricea was inspired by her Community Health Worker (CHW) to pursue higher education. When she enrolled in MomsFirst, she did not want to go to college but her CHW encouraged her to have an open mind and dream big. Mauricea went on to earn two college degrees and she is currently pursuing a Master's.

Check out the Service Spotlight for Ebi Doula Services!

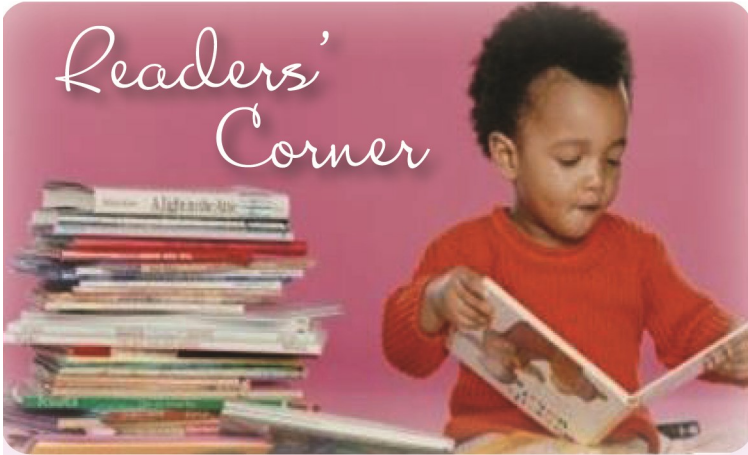
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Join MomsFirst in recognizing
**International Bereaved
Mother's Day**
May 6, 2023
A day dedicated to all
mothers who have lost a
child at any age or gestation.



Readers' Corner



Ready to Read: Literacy Tips for Children

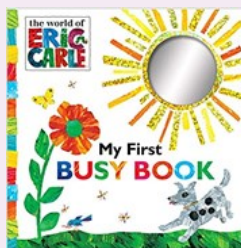
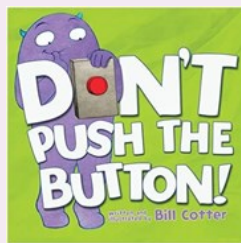
Play is Your Child's Job!

Play is fun, but it's also serious business! Play is essential for physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. Play, along with reading, singing, talking, and writing (scribbling is early writing) are the early literacy practices that will help your child become a reader when it's time and prepare them for kindergarten and beyond!

There are many online resources with tips and ideas for playing! Visit your local library for help and check out these play programs at the Cleveland Public Library: <https://cpl.org/familyspace> and

<https://cpl.org/readtome>

Suggested books for reading and playing:



Contributed by Sandy Nosse, Family Engagement Specialist at Cleveland Public Library

☆ Service Spotlight ☆

Ebi Doula Services



Births Rooted in Love

The mission of Ebi Doula Services is to provide parents with support to aid them on their journey to parenthood with holistic guidance. Founder, Mauricea Sweet, desires to help bridge the gap within the family unit through Full Spectrum Doula Care, Parenting Classes, Life Coaching, etc. Additional services offered include spiritual bath/shower, spiritual detox, parent conflict resolution and breastfeeding support.

Mauricea says, "I became a doula to be a voice for others like me. My services are rooted in Love because everyone deserves to be treated as they are loved and appreciated. My desire for Ebi Doula Services is to be well known because of the great care I provide to the community".

As a former MomsFirst participant, Mauricea is offering special packages for MomsFirst participants to choose from. Contact her at 216-438-1184 or Sistashood21@gmail.com.



Moms First on

MomsFirst represented at the first in-person National Healthy Start Association (NHSA) Conference since 2019 with Community Health Worker Natalie West, Case Managers Tiffany Ashley and Rosalé Ward, Fatherhood Coordinators Ronald White and Richard Woodson and Deputy Project Director Megan Walsh in attendance. Their time in Washington, DC began with the Fatherhood Summit, included the NHSA Spring Conference and concluded with Capitol Hill visits with the offices of Congresswoman Shontel Brown (pictured outside the Capitol building with Natalie, Tiffany, Rosalé and Megan), Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, Senator Sherrod



Capitol Hill

Brown and Senator JD Vance. MomsFirst staff joined with staff from the four other Healthy Start projects in Ohio (Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton and Toledo) to visit Senators Brown (middle photo with Senator Brown's Legislative Correspondent, Francis Goins) and Vance.

The Capitol Hill visits provided the opportunity to educate about the important work of Healthy Start in reducing racial disparities in maternal and infant health. Congresswoman Brown indicated that she recalled the work of MomsFirst from her days as a Cuyahoga County councilwoman. She pledged her enthusiastic support for Healthy Start!

Upcoming Events

MomsFirst Consortium ∞ Thursday, May 25, 2023 ∞ 11:00 am—1:00 pm ∞ Friendly Inn Settlement House ∞ 2386 Unwin Rd. MomsFirst in-person consortia events have returned! Join the MomsFirst staff at Friendly Inn for information on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder, Substance Abuse Prevention, ACEs and Brain Development.

News from Moms First

Welcome to new Community Health Worker Chloe Nace-Rolland (Friendly Inn Settlement House). We are happy you joined the MomsFirst family!

Do you want to help improve birth outcomes?

Join our team! Several MomsFirst sites are hiring. Contact your local neighborhood site today (see back page for contact information)!



Michael's Corner Make Smart Financial Moves

Emergency Rental Assistance

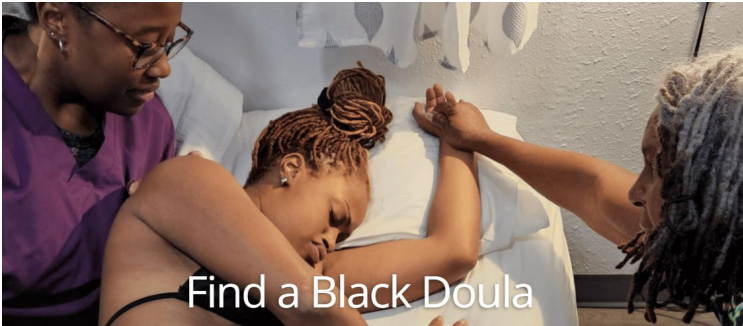
If you're having trouble paying your rent or utility bills, help is available. For Emergency Rental Assistance (also called the Ohio Home Relief program), contact:

1-833-377-RENT (7386)

or apply online at

<http://www.neorenthelp.org>

Get Connected @   



Find a Black Doula

The Black Doula Directory was created by Sista Midwife Productions (SMP), a birth advocacy training and consulting agency providing education for communities, birth workers, and organizations that work with childbearing families. SMP provides lectures, consultations, and individualized training to organizations, institutions, and governments, at the local, regional, and national levels.

Their mission is simple: To Make Birth Better. Specifically, they are working to improve pregnancy and birth experiences and to eliminate perinatal disparities by increasing the number of Black birth workers, teaching families about their rights and options; and creating transparency and accountability within childbirth education and the medical obstetrical system. Their Vision is to create a paradigm shift in the ways individuals and communities think about conception, pregnancy, birth, and parenting.

Visit <https://www.blackdouladirectory.com/> to search the directory and find a doula near you.



MomsFirst Community Health Workers and Case Managers Connect with Birthing Beautiful Communities Staff for Infant Massage Certification Training



The Infant Massage Certification training took place February 21-24 at the EJ Kovacic Recreation Center and was facilitated by Justine Tutuska of Infant Massage USA. Staff will now complete certification by conducting infant massage classes with five families. Group classes may be offered in the future. Ask your Community Health Worker about the benefits of infant massage today! Learn more at <https://www.infantmassageusa.org/>



MomsFirst Neighborhood Sites

Friendly Inn Settlement House
2386 Unwin Rd.
(216) 431-7656

May Dugan Center
4115 Bridge Ave.
(216) 631-5800

Lexington Bell Community Center
7724 Lexington Ave.
(216) 391-4100

Merrick House
1050 Starkweather Ave.
(216) 771-5077



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Justin M. Bibb

Cleveland Department of Public Health
75 Erieview Plaza | Cleveland, OH 44114
(216) 664-4194 | <http://www.momsfirst.org>

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Invest in Children



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