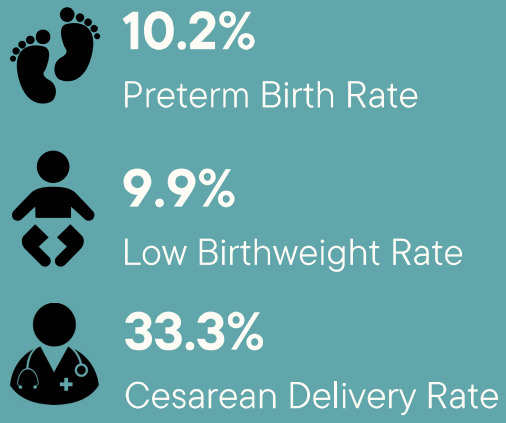


DC Maternal and Child Health Indicators (2022)^a



OVERVIEW OF DC HEALTHY START PROGRAM

DC Health operates Healthy Start, a federally-funded program targeted to residents of Wards 5, 7, and 8 and provides support for mothers and infants. DC Health aims to improve health outcomes and reduce racial/ethnic disparities in rates of infant mortality and adverse perinatal outcomes.

- Doulas are an important resource of continuous emotional and informational support to birthing clients and their families from prenatal through postpartum care.
- Perinatal Care Coordinators (Community of Hope) and Community Health Workers [redacted] provide personalized care and connect clients to a wide array of resources through the perinatal period.

HEALTHY START EVALUATION BY GUCCHD



The Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development (GUCCHD) aligned the evaluation with community-based participatory research principles to co-design the evaluation with DC Health and the two local implementing agencies (LIA), Community of Hope and [redacted]. Key informant interviews were conducted to inform the evaluation’s development, and Community Partner Conversations (informal focus groups) were held to discuss doula services program initiation and implementation along with successes and barriers to implementation.

The evaluation of the community-based doula services programs utilized a mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design to compare maternal and child health outcomes of doula and non-doula Healthy Start participants at each LIA. The evaluation relied primarily on the use of data from the HRSA CAREWare system to minimize data collection burden on the LIAs and Healthy Start clients. Additional data from each LIA was collected to capture information on mode of delivery and weeks gestation at birth. Participant surveys assessing the experience and satisfaction with the doula services program were distributed to clients.

- **Community of Hope (COH) Doula Services Program**
- 2 Staff Doulas & 2 Perinatal Care Coordinators
- **259** Healthy Start Clients Who Gave Birth
- **63** Clients Receiving Doula Services
-

- [redacted] **Doula Services Program**
- 6 Contracted Doulas & 4 Community Health Workers
- **155** Healthy Start Clients Who Gave Birth
- **34** Clients Receiving Doula Services
- [redacted]

COH Note: Gray Boxes indicate the other grantee by name, initials or logo

^a National Center for Health Statistics. (2024, May 21). *District of Columbia*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/states/dc/DC1.htm>

Demographics and Outcomes of DC Healthy Start Clients

Demographic Characteristic	Community of Hope (n = 259)	(n = 155)
Ward of Residence		
Ward 5	49 (19%)	71 (46%)
Ward 7	70 (27%)	42 (27%)
Ward 8	118 (46%)	37 (24%)
Other	2 (1%)	3 (2%)
Age Group		
18-29	135 (52%)	67 (43%)
30-39	110 (42%)	76 (49%)
40-49	14 (5%)	12 (8%)
Most Identified Race/Ethnicity		
Black or African American	247 (95%)	87 (56%)
Hispanic	5 (2%)	37 (24%)
White	2 (1%)	30 (19%)
Other	6 (2%)	15 (10%)
Education		
< High School Degree	39 (15%)	46 (30%)
High School Degree or Higher	215 (83%)	107 (69%)



Preterm Birth Rates



Low Birthweight Rates



Cesarean Delivery Rates



Overall, the doula and non-doula clients at both LIAs did not differ largely on their demographic or prior pregnancy characteristics (i.e., prior live birth, prior preterm delivery, etc.). In addition, there were no statistically significant differences in any of the health outcomes for the doula clients compared to the non-doula Healthy Start clients.

PARTICIPANT SURVEY RESULTS

22 doula participants completed the survey, 17 were COH clients and 5 were clients:

- **64%** reported **doula services improved** their birth experience
- **73%** expressed a **future desire for doula support** in pregnancies
- **86%** were overall **satisfied or very satisfied** with doula care
- **77%** strongly agreed their **doula communicated well**



Quotes from Doula Participant Survey

"I was truly blessed. Throughout my pregnancy, my doula was my emotional support partner. And never left my side."

"My birth plan took a turn and she was there to encouraging me that I'll be okay. She was there anytime I needed her. She was nothing short of amazing."

"Her words were encouraging and she never once got frustrated. This birth was my best birthing experience out of all my births. I would recommend [doula's name] to everyone if possible!"