



2004 Winter Newsletter

Special Holiday Issue!

“Demand for Birth Doulas Growing in Louisville—Here’s Why”

By Kathy Markham — with input from doulas, clients and caregivers

Since moving to Louisville in 1998, I’ve watched the birth doula population grow from 3 to about 30 active doulas, all staying quite busy serving pregnant couples. The word doula, back then, was strange and unfamiliar to most women, but these days the Greek word meaning “servant of women” has become the term most people use for professional labor companion. Many mainstream publications for new parents have recently run articles citing research studies* which have found that the presence of a doula can:

- ♥ Decrease the cesarean rate by 51%
- ♥ Decrease the length of labor by 25%
- ♥ Decrease pitocin use by 71%
- ♥ Decrease need for pain meds by 35%
- ♥ Decrease need for forceps by 57%
- ♥ Decrease use of epidurals by 60%
- ♥ Enhance maternal/infant bonding

*Source: Mothing the Mother by Klaus, Kennel and Klaus

If you ask birth doulas in the Birth Care Network, a Louisville organization of childbirth professionals, you hear:

- *“I think our clients feel more comfortable asking questions and advocating for themselves when we are present.”*
- *“I think that most clients feel more relaxed and at peace just knowing that someone with experience and knowledge about childbirth will be available to them through their prenatal period until the birth of their child. They are assured that we know their preferences and we are supportive of them.”*

Dr. William Koontz, at Suburban Hospital, was impressed with Christine Hardy’s commitment to relaxation and determined pushing, which helped save her from a likely cesarean! With encouragement from her doula, Cindy Lamb, and L&D nurse, Carrie Deckman, baby Brinley was born vaginally and mom got the positive birth experience she wanted!



Their doula clients tell them “It was important just KNOWING that you were there, long before you stepped into the delivery room with me. Knowing you knew the correct way to handle different situations helped me achieve a more positive birth experience ~ a memory that will always be part of my life!”.

But is the birth doula being accepted in the Louisville medical community? Robin Weiss, who has been a certified doula in Louisville since 1991, says she is seeing the acceptance growing as there are more trained doulas available and the benefits of having a doula are becoming more well-known. Robin is a certified doula trainer and has trained over 150 doulas since 1996. She was a founding member of the Birth Care Network in 2001 and has devoted much of her time to their mission -- positive birth experiences for all women!

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!!!!

Lamaze Institute for Normal Birth Awards Grants to Support Birth Networks

The Lamaze Institute for Normal Birth has awarded 8 grants of \$500—\$1,000 for development and expansion of Birth Networks in local communities. Grants were awarded to Birth Networks in Florida, Kentucky, Michigan, New Mexico, New York, Ohio and Texas. The Institute review committee received nearly 20 applications from organizations across the country.

Recipients include: **Birth Care Network**; Birth Network of FL; Birth Network Waco; birthNETWORK of Northeast OH; Albuquerque Birth Network; birthNETWORK North Oakland County.; BirthCircle; and birthNETWORK South Oakland County.

The Birth Network Mini-Grant Initiative, which was formed this year under the Lamaze Institute for Normal Birth, is designed to support the start-up or expansion of community-based birth networks. These grassroots organizations provide support, education and evidenced-based information on birth interventions for parents and serve as a resource for caregivers that support normal birth. Over the last several years, Birth Networks have formed independently and can be found in at least nine U.S. states, as well as Canada and Australia.

Birth Networks consist of parents, professionals and health care providers who support normal birth and provide consumer education in their communities consistent with the Coalition for Improving Maternity Services (CIMS) Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative. (Visit the CIMS Web site at www.motherfriendly.org for more detailed information on the Mother-Friendly Childbirth Initiative.) Lamaze hopes its Birth Network Mini-Grant Initiative will serve to promote the Six Care Practices [Labor Begins on Its Own; Freedom of Movement throughout Labor; Continuous Labor Support; No Routine Interventions; Non-supine (e.g. upright or side-lying positions for birth); No Separation of Mother and Baby after Birth] adapted from the World Health Organization that support normal birth and will help counter the increase in unnecessary inductions and cesareans. "Expectant parents, eager to have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby, are often at a loss to find health care providers and resources in their communities that will promote a normal, healthy birth," said Lamaze President Barbara Hotelling. "We're excited about the opportunity to help the birth networks promote normal birth."

Grant awardees must submit a final report, including a project summary of the project evaluation and a detailed review of actual expenditures of the grant funds. The Institute plans to award at least \$5,000 in grants annually.

Lamaze International, based in Washington, DC, envisions a world of confident women choosing normal birth. Visit Lamaze at www.lamaze.org for more information on books and classes that support normal birth. The papers on the Six Care Practices, a complete list of currently known Birth Networks and resource material on how to start a Birth Network in your community can be found on the Lamaze Institute for Normal Birth Web site at www.normalbirth.lamaze.org.

Source: Lamaze

New Moms Group News By Laura Holt, New Moms Group Coordinator

The BCN **New Moms Group** meets the 4th Monday of every month from 1-3 pm at the Fern Creek library (just off the Gene Snyder @ Exit 17 in the Cedar Springs Shopping Center). Meetings are:

♥ **January 26th**—Ages and Stages of Development (this meeting only will be at Clark Memorial Hospital, call 282-6631 for directions). Michelle Browning Coughlin will teach how to recognize and encourage developmental milestones in our children from infants to toddlers, and how to play with your child to most effectively nurture his or her development!

♥ **February 23rd**—Birth Stories & Birth Art—Angela Ramsey Robinson will share the value of birth art in preparing for a birth experience or processing through a past birth experience.

♥ **March 22nd**—Newborn Massage— Vicki Sanders, certified newborn massage therapist, will demonstrate massage techniques for your infant, as well as describe the many benefits that newborn massage can offer.

Topics planned for the Spring include infant CPR and growing great readers, and we'll do outings to places like the zoo and a local baby gym.

Bring in the New Year by treating yourself to a new source of support and friendship! Email Laura Holt at kentuckianamoms@hotmail.com or call the BCN referral line 499-4418 for more information.

Lamaze Teen Workshop Expands BCN Members Skills

By Angela Young

Mary Jo Podgurski and Teri Shilling were fantastic, as the Lamaze instructors for the Teen Support Training this fall at Baptist Hospital East. There were over 20 participants for the 2-day weekend training, including several BCN members and others from as far away as Louisiana and Wisconsin. Mary Jo and Teri live their lesson plans daily with teens, and their insight was wonderful.

Some of us have not worked with teen parents yet, while others had years of experience. Many of the topics discussed did pertain to typical parental fears, questions, and joys (no matter what age the parent is), but unfortunately teens are labeled as too young and viewed negatively in the process. Parenting is sometimes the most difficult work there is. Therefore, it is important to support these very young families, to bring the best outcomes for the children and parents. Also, education and continued support may help these teen mothers wait to have more children too soon.

Teen parents want to be the best parents they can be, and this is what any aged parent wants for a new baby. Support, rather than criticism, will help these teen parents do the most for their children and family life.

“ A True International Doula!”

by Dorothy Hanson, AIDS Project Manager, International Health Ministries, Presbyterian Church USA

One of our BCN members has been taking the BCN mission to other countries with her REAL job! Dorothy Hanson, AIDS Project Director for the Presbyterian Church, visited Africa in October of 2003. Here are some of the pictures and experiences she offered to share with us!



(left) Ida and Mary, Nurses and Midwives in front of their Baby Friendly Hospital award.

(right) This sign is on the outside of the Eckwendeni Hospital near Muzu in Malawi, East Africa, indicating the importance of breastfeeding.)



"In Africa in October, I finally stepped foot in a hospital awarded the Baby Friendly designation from the Baby Friendly Initiative. My career placed me inside many hospitals in the United States and one in Italy, but, in Africa, in a remote small village, I finally found one that met all the criteria to be a Baby Friendly Hospital. With none of the resources a US hospital

would consider necessary - linens, food and drink, for example - all actions that support breastfeeding are in place. The importance of breastfeeding in Africa - without breast milk, a baby will die. Never mind the controversy over an HIV+ mother breastfeeding. We now know that given breast milk exclusively, for the first 6 months of life, even if the mother is HIV+, the infant's gut is protected against the virus and stands a good chance of never converting to AIDS. In other words, breast is best, even when Mom has AIDS."



Another story: "A visit to Eckwendeni Hospital on the Presbyterian mission compound near Muzuzu in Malawi, East Africa was on my agenda when I traveled there to implement an AIDS Workshop for 32 delegates from 10 countries in October, 2003. Ida, an experienced nurse and midwife, took me to the Maternity ward where we met Grace, also an experienced nurse and midwife. On our walk past the labor ward, a mother was observed resting on her side, on a mat, on the floor. Grace described a "new" technique seen in a film - giving birth in the squatting position. "We've only seen it on a movie, but we've tried it and we like it much better. We hope we can get everyone to give birth this way

soon." This is the same hospital that earned the Baby Friendly designation for breastfeeding practices. The cesarean rate here is 5% in a country where 50% of the babies are born at home and 50% in the hospital. How much we have to learn from our African sisters and how much we could share, given the opportunity! I am thankful for the gift afforded me to visit and talk with these magnificent women in the "warm heart of Africa."



(left) Premature babies are kept in tubs.

Finally, "a visit to the postpartum ward revealed the universal joy of the first hours and days with a mother's newborn." (right) A mother with her baby girl, in the postpartum ward. Everything around her is provided by the family. Overhead are mosquito nets, pulled down for sleeping. (lower right)



A mother with her triplets (no fertility drugs here), <24 hours old and learning how to nurse. There is a "guardian" in the room for each of the babies.



Our thanks to Dorothy Hanson and Cindy Lamb for contributing to this article.

For more information on this mission, contact:

Dorothy Hanson, AIDS Project Manager

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2004 Spring/Summer BCN Events

We at the Birth Care Network, are very excited about the events of this upcoming season. This year we have added a special time of “ Doula Talk” one hour prior to each Saturday meeting. This is a discussion time for doulas both new and experienced, who want to share the challenges and celebrations of being a doula. We hope that you will join us for another great year of learning together as we reach out to Louisville’s birthing community.

January 15th (Thurs 6:30-9:00 pm) - Topic: The 4 R’s “Rhythm, Ritual , Relaxation and Record keeping” Bring your client files from 2003 in order to provide BCN with the doula statistics it desperately needs! We will also watch Penny Simkin’s new and unique video on labor coping techniques. Popcorn and pencils provided.

February 17th (Thu. 7-9pm) - “Meet the Doulas Night” at Clark Memorial Hospital. Open to all.

February 21st (Sat. 2-5 pm, 12:30-1:30 Doula Talk) - Topic: “The Tax Fairy Cometh” Accountant and former doula client, Leslea Harmon will be on hand to give us guidance on how to structure our businesses and keep Uncle Sam happy. Leslea and her husband both run home-based businesses.

March 13 & 14 (Sat.—Sun.) Birth Doula Training Workshop sponsored by BCN
Doula Trainer is Robin Weiss, CD,DT, LCCE. Call BCN 499-4418 for a brochure.

March 18th- (Thu. 6:30-9 pm) - Topic: Profiling the High Needs Client
Kim Avera and Ryn Armstrong will facilitate a group discussion of how to meet this challenge while maintaining your own boundaries and professionalism.

April 3rd- (Sat. 1-3pm) Mentor Program Luncheon - Mentors and Mentorees meet and eat! All are invited to come and welcome the newest members of the BCN.

April 17th (Sat. 2-5pm) (12:30-1:30—Doula Talk) - Topic: “How to Read the Medical Literature”
Robin Weiss will facilitate a discussion on what is the difference in a double blind study or meta analysis? Interpreting the medical data means giving more accurate information and better decisions for our clients and ourselves. Join us and take the mystery out of the data!

May 20th (Thu. 6:30-9pm) - Topic: “The Amazing Placenta “ Fascinations with the body’s only disposable organ. Dr. Bob Bendon, of the Department of Pathology at Kosair Children’s Hospital, will share on the function of the placenta. An excellent educational offering.

May 24th (Thu. 7-9pm) “Meet the Doulas Night” at Clark Memorial Hospital. Open to all.

June 5th - “Birth in the Bluegrass” BCN’s Annual Birth Conference

*** BCN also hosts the New Mom’s Support Group which meets on the 4th Monday of each month from 1-3 pm at the Fern Creek Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library on Bardstown Rd. Call Laura Holt (ph. 243-9194) for further information and topics.

Meeting Notes:

- ~ Given the busy lives of our speakers, the topic and speaker is always subject to change. For current info, check our website (www.birthcarenetwork.com) or call the BCN phone line 499-4418.
- ~ All meetings are held at Commonwealth Bank in St. Matthews on Hubbards Lane unless otherwise specified. Directions to all meeting locations can be found on the above listed website.
- ~ Nursing babes welcome. Childcare not available on site.
- ~ Refreshments provided by participants generosity.
- ~ Expectant couples and former clients welcome and appreciated.

Looking forward to seeing you! — Kim Avera, President of Birth Care Network

FROM: Birth Care Network
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Louisville, KY 40207
www.birthcarenetwork.com

Special thanks to...

- ♥ Cindy Lamb, Angela Young and Kim Avera who submitted the application for the Lamaze Mini-Grant and WON!!!
- ♥ Jessie Anderson, RN, CNM candidate, our October meeting speaker on the Frontier Midwifery School and the need for a Birth Center in Louisville!
- ♥ Teri Shilling and Mary Jo Podgurski, the instructors, for our Lamaze Teen Support Workshop on November 8 & 9 at Baptist East.
- ♥ Ka thy Markham and Vicki Sanders who presented Hypnobirthing at our November meeting.
- ♥ Keith Stormes, Executive Director of St. Elizabeth's Maternity Center in New Albany, IN, who hosted our December "Baby Shower" meeting.

Congratulations to...

- ♥ Susan Kute and Bobbie Morgan for earning their DONA Birth Doula certifications!
- ♥ Kim Avera & Vicki Sanders who are now Certified Lamaze Childbirth Educators!

Our thoughts & prayers to...

- ♥ Sarah Krauskopf, who is battling cancer — see Sarah's website at <http://caringbridge.org/ky/sarahkrauskopf/>.
- ♥ Darla Lindenmayer, who was recently home recovering from surgery, and her son, Matthew, who has fanconi anemia. Matt has a new website at <http://www.caringbridge.org/in/matthewlindenmayer>.
- ♥ Trina Jackson, who will be going on a month long mission trip to Nicaragua along with her husband, Gregg, and all four of their 4 children in January!

Another Twas the Night before Christmas...

Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house
Not a pager was stirring, nor cell phone, nor mouse.
The babies were tucked all snug in their wombs
Awaiting the signal that would come sometime soon.
The doula with her rice sock all heated and warm,
was hoping to sleep all the way until morn.
When out on the roof there arose such a clatter
The doula jumped from her bed to see what was the matter!
When what to her wondering eyes should appear
But Mrs. Claus so roly-poly and dear.
Sorry to wake you she said with a smile
But I wanted to help you - I'll only stay a while.
"Mothering the mother" is what you do best
And sometimes I know you don't get much rest.
So, I borrowed Santa's elves to give you a treat
I know you work hard and need time off your feet.
Outside on the lawn, there appeared such a sight,
My whole body relaxed and I knew she was right.
A jacuzzi was filled with bubbles and scents
And candles were circling it just like a fence.
Birth balls were inflated and rice socks were hung
while DONA Nobis Pachem was so softly sung.
And laughing out loud, in spite of myself,
I thought "What a treat for me, from the elves!"
So I thanked Mrs. Claus as she drove out of sight,
"Happy Birthing to all and to all a good night!"

(author unknown and slightly modified from the Yahoo doula egroup)

FREE REFERRAL LINE:

502-499-4418

BCN Members: Please remember to call the referral line if you are going to be on leave or inactive.

Three Wise Women would have...

asked directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby, cleaned the stable, made a casserole, brought practical gifts & there would be Peace on Earth! (Author unknown)