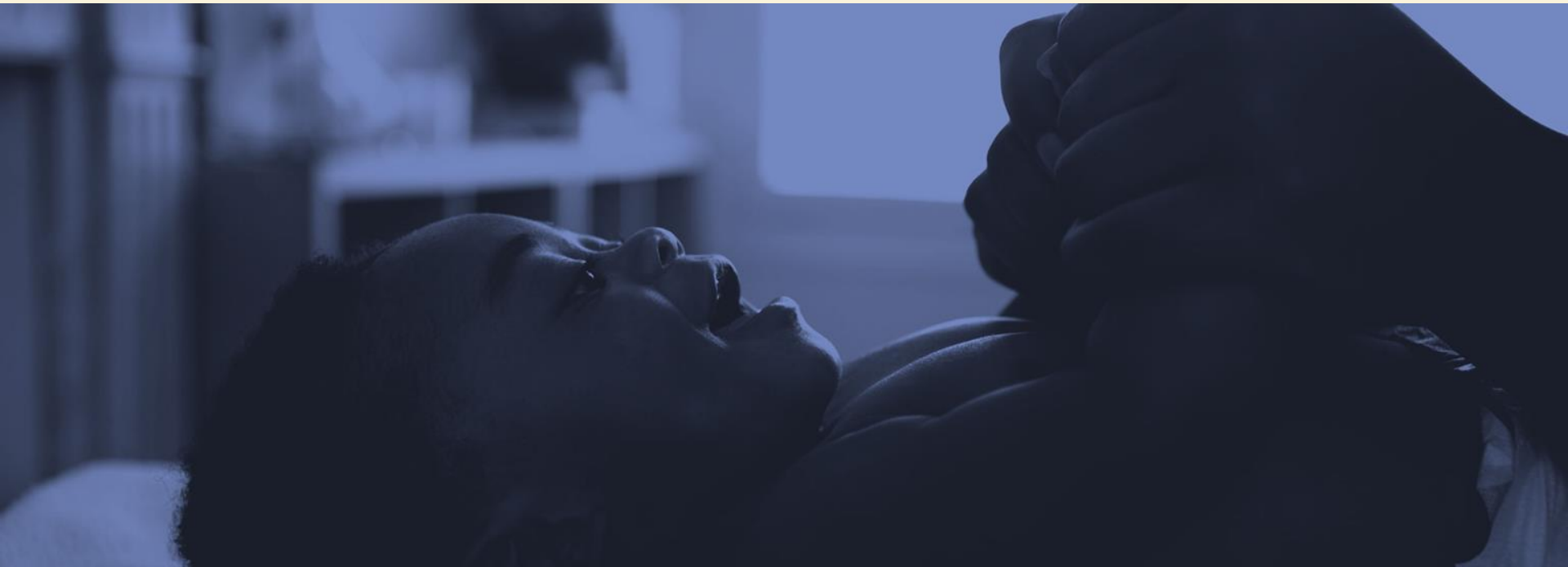




NATIONAL BIRTH EQUITY COLLABORATIVE



## **Taking Action: Respectful Care of Pregnant and Birthing People**

SACIM June 2020

Joia Crear-Perry, MD, FACOG

# Mission

NBEC creates solutions that optimize Black maternal and infant health through training, policy advocacy, research and community centered collaboration.

# Vision

All Black mothers and babies thrive.



NATIONAL BIRTH EQUITY COLLABORATIVE

*Core Values:*

*Leadership, Freedom, Wellness,  
Black Lives, Sisterhood*

# Objectives

- Define Birth Equity
- Identify shared language and tools for Birth Equity
- Practice tools to apply towards Birth Equity and Respectful Maternity Care

# Human Rights – The Global Standard

## Article 2.

**Everyone** is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, **without distinction of any kind**, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

## Article 3.

**Everyone has the right to life**, liberty and security of person

## Article 25.

(1) Everyone has the right to a **standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family**, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services

(2) Motherhood and childhood are **entitled** to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same protection.

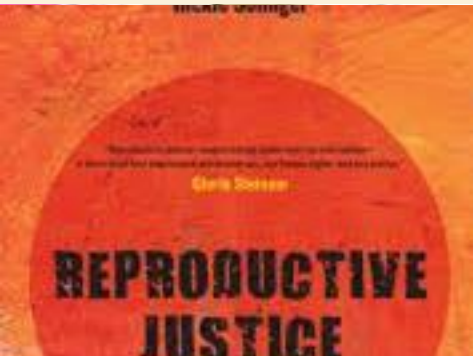
# Reproductive Justice

**The human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities.**

-Loretta Ross

## **We must...**

- Analyze power systems
- Address intersecting oppressions
- Center the most marginalized
- Join together across issues and identities



# Indicator ≠ Framework

## Indicator

Indicator is a datapoint

- Measurement limited by current reality
- A product of our past understanding of public health and science
- Systems are more apt to adhere to specific prescribed indicators than to determine alternatives

## Framework

A framework is a vision

- Expands understanding of current reality
- Allows freedom to explore language of indicators
- Exploration of alternatives to traditional data collection & application
- Questions historical construction health systems

## **birth equity (*noun*):**

1. The assurance of the conditions of optimal births for all people with a willingness to address racial and social inequities in a sustained effort.

Joia Crear-Perry, MD  
*National Birth Equity Collaborative*



# Root Causes and Social Determinants of Health



# Root Causes

Institutional Racism

Class Oppression

Gender Discrimination and Exploitation

LABOR MARKETS

## Power and Wealth Imbalance

TAX POLICY

HOUSING POLICY

EDUCATION SYSTEMS

GLOBALIZATION & DEREGULATION

SOCIAL SAFETY NET

SOCIAL NETWORKS

Safe Affordable Housing

## Social Determinants of Health

Job Security

Living Wage

Quality Education

Transportation

Availability of Food

Social Connection & Safety

Psychosocial Stress / Unhealthy Behaviors

Disparity in the Distribution of Disease, Illness, and Wellbeing

Adapted by MPHI from R. Hofrichter, *Tackling Health Inequities Through Public Health Practice*.

A blue-tinted photograph of a woman smiling and holding a baby, with another person leaning in to look at the baby. The text "Racism- Not Race" is overlaid in white.

Racism- Not Race

# Racism as a SDOH

Racism affects health both directly (i.e., via chronic stress) and indirectly (i.e., via race-based discrimination across multiple systems which creates differential access to high-quality schools, safe neighborhoods, good jobs, and quality healthcare, in other words, by shaping SDOH.)

# Finding the Roots of Inequities

Black mothers who are college-educated fare worse than women of all other races who never finished high school.

Obese women of all races have better birth outcomes than black women who are of normal weight.

Black women in the wealthiest neighborhoods do worse than white, Hispanic and Asian mothers in the poorest ones.

African American women who initiated prenatal care in the first trimester still had higher rates of infant mortality than non-Hispanic white women with late or no prenatal care.



## Campaign for Black Babies

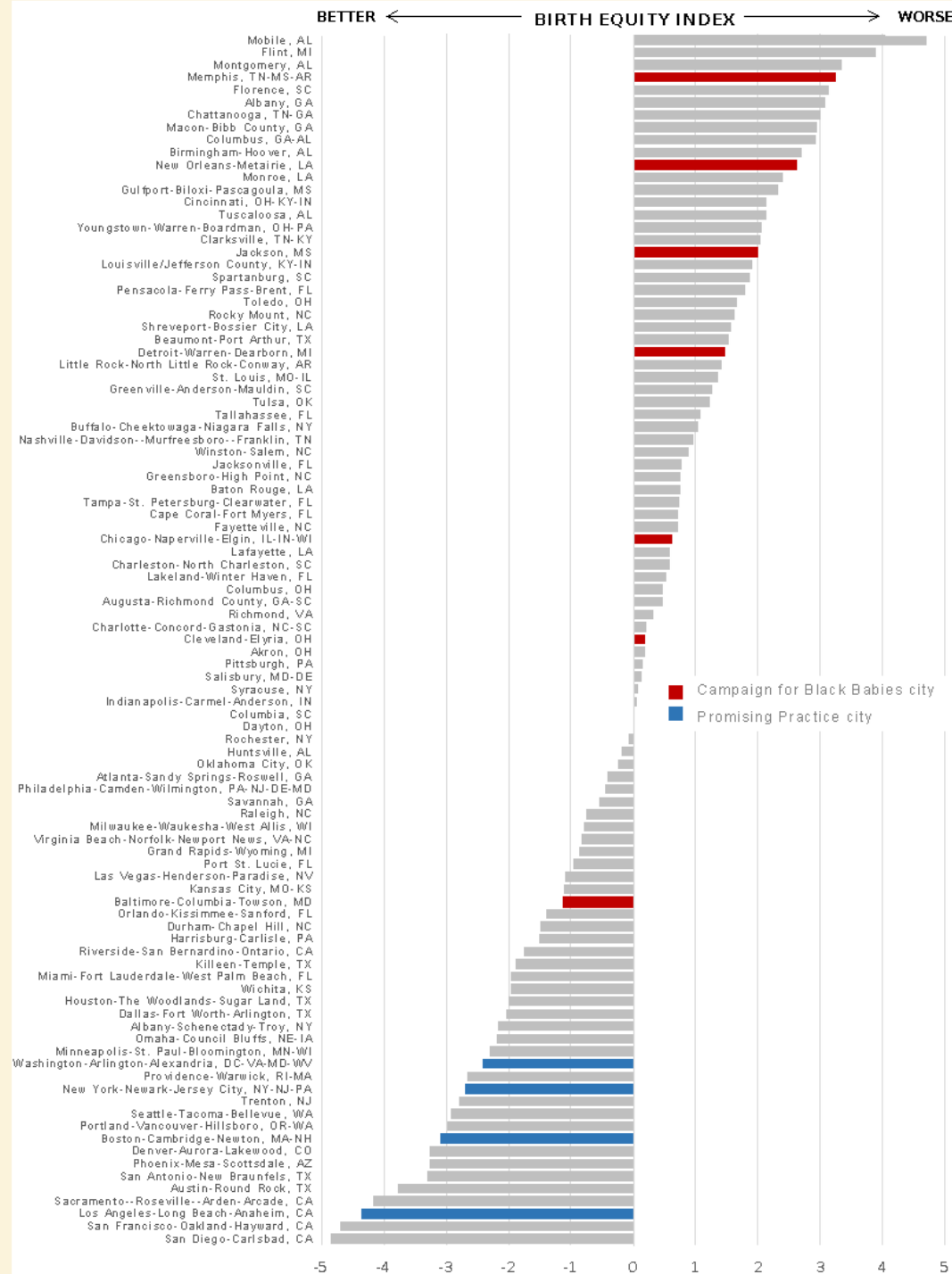
# “Look at the Whole Me”: A Mixed-Methods Examination of Black Infant Mortality in the US through Women’s Lived Experiences and Community Context

Maeve E. Wallace <sup>1,2,\*</sup>, Carmen Green <sup>2</sup>, Lisa Richardson <sup>2,3</sup>, Katherine Theall <sup>1,2</sup> and Joia Crear-Perry <sup>2</sup>

# Birth Equity Index

Data tool to identify significant social determinants

- *A comprehensive set (50+) of social determinant indicators were selected to broadly define health and opportunities for better health within the social and physical environment of 20 US metro areas with some of the highest black infant mortality rates in the country. We identified those that were at least marginally associated with black infant mortality rates including:*
  - *prevalence of smoking and obesity among adult residents*
  - *number of poor physical and mental health days experienced by residents*
  - *percentage of residents with limited access to healthy foods*
  - *rates of homicide and jail admissions*
  - *air pollution*
  - *racial residential segregation (isolation)*
  - *rates of unemployment and low education among NH black residents*
  - *income inequality between black and white households*
- *We used data-reduction techniques to combine values of these indicators into an overall index of black infant mortality social determinants, with higher values representing worse health conditions.*



A blue-tinted photograph of a family in a hospital bed. A man is kissing a baby's forehead while a woman smiles.

# Opportunities

“What’s missing from the care of Black women is their centered voice, validation of experience, and freedom to choose and be informed. Black women need **respectful care that is free of implicit and explicit bias.** It is the provider’s responsibility to address those biases. To address the issue of maternal mortality **we need care that originates from and is defined by Black women-led organizations, practitioners, and community members.**”



Jessica Roach, MPH

Black Mamas Matter Alliance (2018). Setting the Standard for Holistic Care of and for Black Women. Retrieved from <https://blackmamasmatter.org/resources/bmma-products/>



# Black Maternal Health Week

April 11-17

#BMHW20

#BlackMaternalHealthWeek

Join the Movement  
for Black Mamas

Black Maternal Health Week 2020

#BMHW20



**BMMA**  
BLACK MAMAS MATTER ALLIANCE



# Holistic Systems of Care

## Setting the Standard for Holistic Care of and for Black Women



Mamatoto Village Doula Services  
Washington D.C.



Ancient Song Doula Services

Brooklyn, New York

### Community engagement

- Trauma informed story sharing



A blue-tinted photograph of a man kissing a newborn baby while a woman smiles. The man is leaning over the baby, and the woman is looking at the baby with a joyful expression. The text "Respectful Maternity Care" is overlaid in white.

# Respectful Maternity Care

# Birth Equity during COVID-19

## Alternatives to banning support persons

- Setting up telehealth doula services and lactation and prenatal care by providing birthing people iPad access (including data plans).
- Offering vouchers for food and meal-delivery services.
- Investing in home birth and birth centers to expand or maintain their current services.

Dr. Monica McLemore, Scientific American

- Prioritizing COVID testing for pregnant women
- Permanently extend Medicaid postpartum coverage to 1 year

Laurie Zephyrin, StatNews



**Segregationists**

**Assimilationists**

**Anti-Racists**

# Thank you



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@birthequity