

## Who are we?

Open Arms Perinatal Services provides community-based support during pregnancy, birth and early parenting. **We are the leading non-profit providing doula services specifically for families facing poverty in Washington State, serving around 300 parents and 300 babies annually.**

Our approach is distinct. We hire and train doulas in the same communities that we serve. Since 1997, Open Arms has helped over **2,500 clients** who speak **19 different languages**, and conducted over **22,000 home visits**, resulting in improved maternal and infant health, and strong foundations for early learning.



**What is a doula?** A doula is a trained health worker who provides physical, emotional, and informational support to women before, during and after childbirth.

## Our community-based approach works.

### Our Programs:

- **Serves pregnant people with significant health and social needs living within 200% of the Federal Poverty level**, including food insecurity, homelessness, domestic violence, refugee/immigrant concerns and mental health issues.
- **Incorporate an equity lens** into training for doulas, who help clients to become their own best advocates within healthcare and educational systems
- **Support doulas to earn a living wage** and explore careers in health care as they work in services of their own communities.

### The Community Based Outreach Doula Program:

- Pairs Somali, Latinx, African American, and American Indian Alaska Native clients with doulas who are **culturally and/or linguistically matched** whenever possible.
- Provides **support by the second trimester until the child is two** with case management, home visits, labor/breastfeeding support and parent bonding/education.
- Is **nationally accredited by HealthConnect One** and uses the evidenced-based *Promoting First Relationships* curriculum.

### Our approach reaches and retains families from communities in need:

- Extensive doula training and careful client pairing result in **trusted relationships** and **high program retention and engagement**.
- **Higher rates of completed home visits** compared with other programs.
- More clients **continue with our program** after one-year (retention rate of 72% compared to 47% for other Washington State programs).

### Positive birth and early child development outcomes show that:

- **Significantly lower rates of low birth weight infants and unplanned C-sections** compared to King County and State population data.
- Latina and Somali clients have **fewer pre-term births** (when compared to King County).
- More parents **initiate breastfeeding and continue at 6 months** (99% initiation of breastfeeding vs. 96% for King County; 94% breastfeeding at six months vs. 35% for other Washington State programs).