



NATIONAL  
HEALTHY START  
ASSOCIATION

# ACIMM Meeting

*Deborah Frazier, CEO  
March 21, 2023*

# Overview

- Introduction to National Healthy Start Association
- Learning from the Field
  - COVID-19 and Vaccine Response
  - Breastfeeding and Parenting
  - Family and Support Needs
- Introduction to AIM-CCI
  - Maternal Health Focus Groups
  - Fathers Focus Groups
- Resources

# Mission & Vision

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## **Mission**

To be our nation's voice in providing leadership and advocacy for health equity, services, and interventions that improve birth outcomes and family wellbeing.

## **Vision**

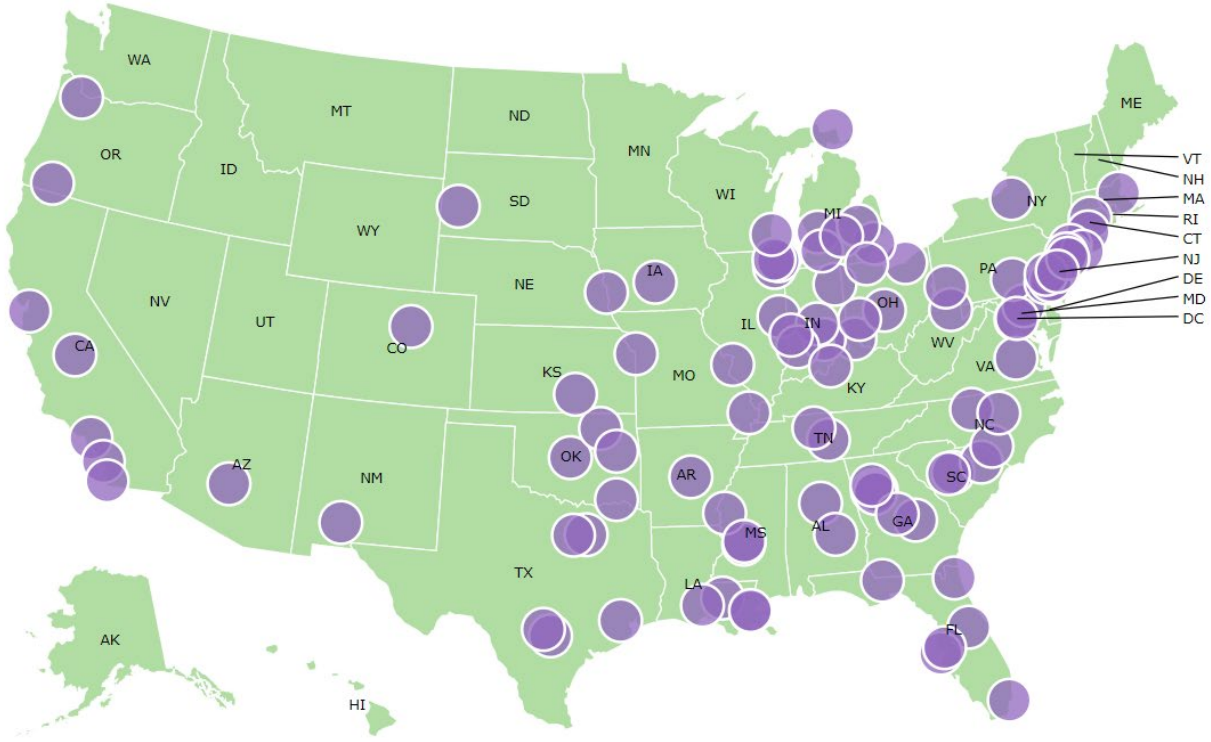
To be a recognized leader in and advocate for reducing infant mortality and perinatal disparities and the hub for maternal and child health programs and services.



# Overview of NHSA

- The [National Healthy Start Association \(NHSA\)](#) was founded in 1998 and is the membership organization for the 101 federally funded Healthy Start Initiatives in 35 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. NHSA promotes community-based, community driven, family and equity focused, culturally appropriate, maternal and child health programs. The models of the Healthy Start Initiative emphasize both the importance of community-based approaches and the need to develop comprehensive, holistic interventions.

# Map of Healthy Start Sites

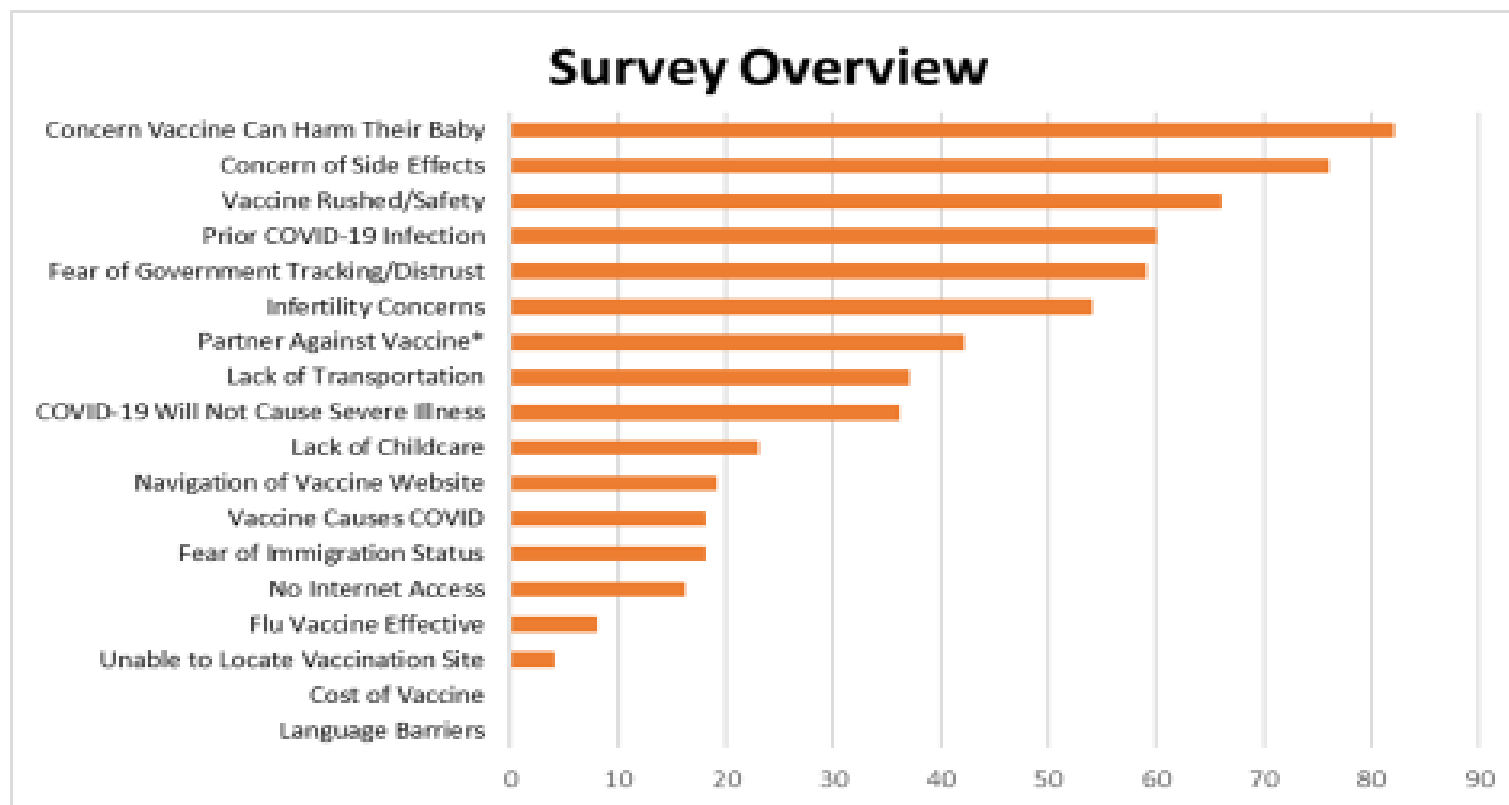


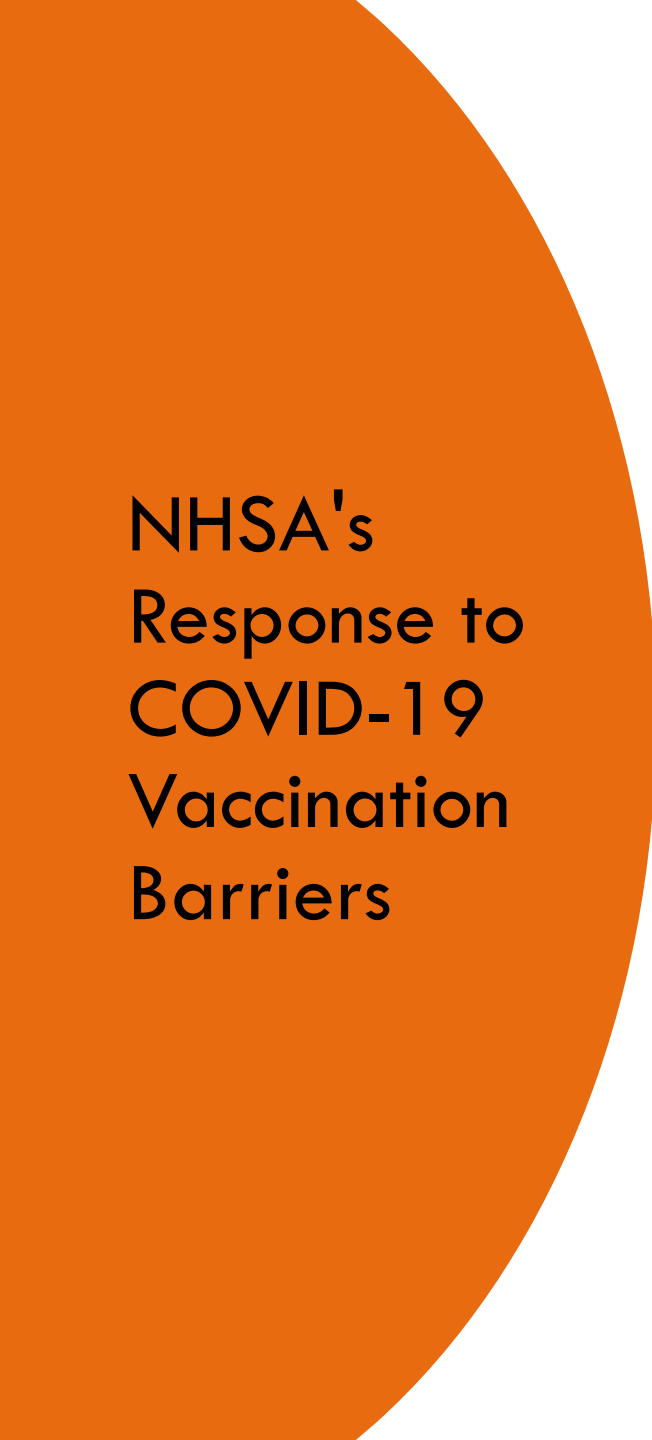
# COVID-19 Vaccination Barriers

- In October 2021, multiple Healthy Start (HS) sites claimed unacceptably low vaccination rates among pregnant and breastfeeding women
- In November 2021, NHSA launched an online survey to obtain barriers to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine among pregnant and breastfeeding program participants.


# COVID-19 Vaccine Barriers

## Results





## NHSA's Response to COVID-19 Vaccination Barriers

- A webinar to address maternal and pediatric COVID-19 and vaccine facts and myths.
  - A comprehensive guide to debunk myths and misconceptions about COVID-19 and the vaccine was developed
  - An infographic for pregnant and breastfeeding women with frequently asked questions regarding the safety and benefits of the vaccine
- 



## NHSA's Response to COVID-19 Vaccination Barriers 2

- Consultation with HS Fatherhood Practitioners informed the development of an additional infographic focused on males. The infographic included information on vaccine myths, benefits, and fathers' role in protecting their families.
- Based on suggestions from PDs, the infographics were translated into Spanish
- QR codes were developed for easy access to the toolkit and infographics

# Community Voices- Breastfeeding

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- “In my culture from where I come from, that’s what you do to feed your baby so that they are healthy, smart, strong, and avoid diseases.” - HS Participant
- “I want my babies to be smart and give them the best nutrition.” - HS Participant
- “I’m afraid not to breastfeed; I don’t want to worry about finding formula.” - HS Participant

# Community Voices- HS Fathers and Healthy Co-Parenting

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- “I usually do not know what to do when I am sad or angry. I end up ignoring my feelings and trying to forget about them. Coming to the group has helped me direct some of those feelings toward something positive; I can bring up what I am going through in class, and you will listen to me and help me see things from a different angle. This is something I feel I cannot do with my wife or my kids because I do not want to burden them. Group has helped me think and talk about my relationship and parenting style with my wife.”- Healthy Start Father
- “These groups have helped me to value the relationship with my children's mother; at the same time, we do not agree on everything, but I have been practicing better ways to share my disappointments instead of yelling or starting an argument. I also want to model a calm posture for them. Thanks.” - Healthy Start Father
- “This group has helped me be more aware of my girls' needs. I change diapers, help out around the house more, and clean. I liked the session that talked about characteristics that we value in relationships. He pointed out that we should be modeling things we value for our families. So, I am working on modeling teamwork.” - Healthy Start Father

# Fatherhood Intake and Needs Assessment Pilot (FINAP)

- NHSA developed intake and needs assessment tools to create common enrollment and data collection for fathers across HS sites.
- The tools were piloted at 19 HS sites.
- Data was collected from 293 fathers representing urban, rural, and tribal communities.

# FINAP Results (N= 293)

## Needs Assessment

- Basic Needs
- Children & Relationships
- Health Insurance Coverage & Access
- Tobacco, Alcohol, Drugs
- Trauma

# Service & Support Needed (%)

Reported Need	Urban (n=213)	Mid/Rural (n=81)	Total (n=293)
Parenting class	91 (73%)	31 (71%)	122 (73%)
Relationships/Co-Parenting	53 (43%)	23 (30%)	76 (45%)
Employment	77 (36%)	28 (35%)	105 (36%)
Housing	33 (16%)	13 (16%)	46 (16%)
Food	30 (14%)	17 (21%)	47 (16%)
Health Insurance**	20 (9%)	27 (33%)	47 (16%)
Mental Health	25 (12%)	5 (6%)	30 (10%)
Physical Health	16 (8%)	4 (5%)	20 (7%)
Childcare/Child-related	9 (4%)	8 (10%)	17 (6%)
Other Needs	48 (23%)	26 (32%)	74 (25%)

\*\*Statistically significant difference by region

# Texting4Dads Program

- Focused on new and expectant fathers
- Fathers receive text messages, sent weekly to their cell phone
- The information presented in text forms cover information about child development that spans pregnancy, infant, and toddler developmental periods
- Information come from the CDC's *Learn the Signs, Act Early Program*; Armin Brott's "My Dad" book; and from skills developed by the project team in their execution of the Healthy Start program
- The texts link the health and well-being of the father to the outcomes of the child and mother

# 2019 Texting4Dads Pilot Data

133 men enrolled

Average age of enrolled Fathers 28

Racial makeup of participants

- 5% Native Americans
- 72% African American
- 10% Latino
- 8% Caucasian
- 6% Other



# Texting4Dads Pilot Data Cont.

- 98% fathers reported that their female partners relied on them for:
  - Financial support
  - Emotional support (the most frequently endorsed)
  - Transportation
  - A place to live
  - Childcare for other children
- 97% of the fathers indicated that they attended an OBGYN visit
  - 78% wanted to go independent of partner asking
  - Just over half (55%) of these men were satisfied with this visit
  - Around 50% felt welcomed, involved in the visit, could express their concerns and engaged

# Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health – Community Care Initiative (AIM CCI)

The purpose of the AIM – Community Care Initiative is to:

- Support the development and implementation of **non-hospital focused maternal safety bundles** within community-based organizations and outpatient clinical settings across the United States and
- Build upon the foundational work of AIM by addressing preventable maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity among pregnant and postpartum women outside of hospital and birthing facility settings

One Agreement Awarded

- National Healthy Start Association

Five-year Pilot

- Pilot Period 2019 - 2024

# ***Why the need for a non-hospital community-based initiative?***

Between 2011 – 2015:

- 31% of deaths occurred during pregnancy
- 36% of deaths occurred at delivery or in the week after
- 33% of deaths occurred 1 week to 1 year postpartum


# AIM CCI Pilot Sites for Focus Groups



# Community Voices- AIM CCI

- Purpose

- To center the experiential and formal knowledge of birthing women and communities for the purpose of targeting QI goals within the implementation of AIMCCI's equity quality improvement bundles.
- Support pilot sites' ongoing systems action plans towards birth equity.



## Pilot Site

- 2 Pre-Bundle Focus Groups
- 2 Post-Bundle Focus Groups

*The following slides are excerpts of presentations by evaluation and focus group partners, National Birth Equity Collaborative and Georgetown University*

# Discussion Topics

**Readiness to  
Birth and  
Breastfeeding**

**Birth and  
Breastfeeding  
Expectations  
and  
Experiences**

**Birth Supports  
and  
Resources**

**Community  
and Medical  
Referrals**

## DISRESPECT, DISREGARD, MISTREATMENT

*"It was like, no one listens. .. You're talking about balance of power. There was no power. Like, I didn't have any power in that situation. In fact, I had the epidural and I was numb from the waist down. So, I literally am powerless. I cannot move from this bed. And they were, like, tossing me around on the bed and just... It was, again, just no respect. It's not, not listening..."*

## COMMUNITY – HOSPITAL CONNECTIONS

*"...the social worker, and she gives you this information, and she's like, "Do you want to put in a referral for this?" A referral? I mean, like, what is that? And once she start explaining everything to you, that's when I got involved with, uh, HUGS and a paternal nurse. That's when they started helping with everything."*



ALLIANCE FOR INNOVATION ON MATERNAL HEALTH  
Community Care Initiative (AIM CCI)

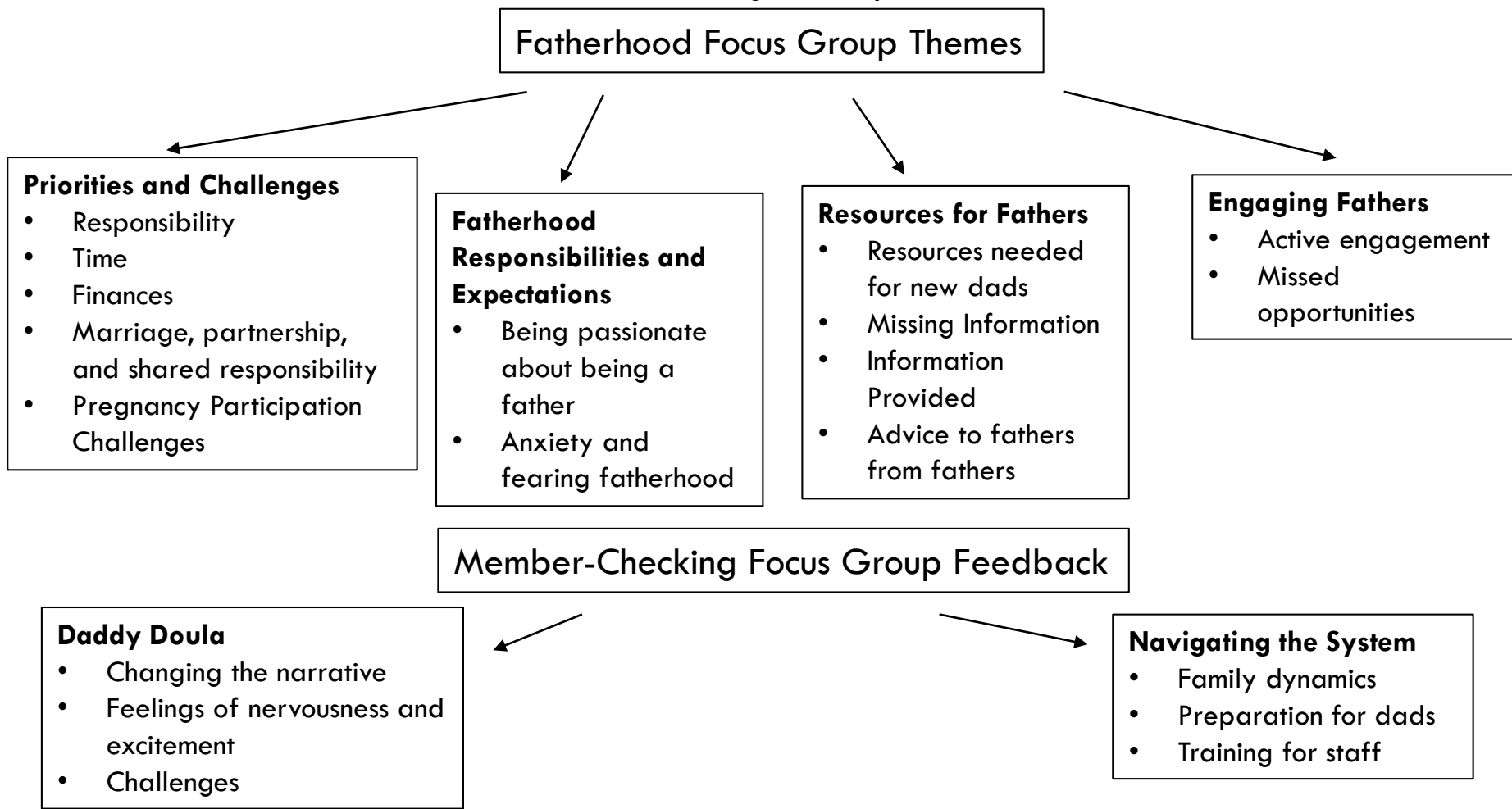


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# Capturing the voice of fathers to improve the birthing and parenting experience:

Results from AIM CCI Fatherhood Focus Groups

Figure 1: Visual Representation of Focus Group Results by Theme and Member Checking Concepts





# ENGAGING FATHERS

## Active Engagement

*“I made out time to go with my wife to some of those visits and I think I was received very well. And the doctor, he gave me words of encouragement, guide[d] me through during my wife's pregnancy. Also, he gave me advice from how to guide my wife throughout that stage.”*

## Missed Opportunities

*“Had the feeling at dr. appointments that I could be replaced at any moment. That's the kind of feeling I was getting, that I could be replaced at any moment.”*



## RESOURCES FOR FATHERS

**Fathers talked a lot about the resources that they felt would have been helpful to them and feel would be helpful to others related to their fatherhood experience.**

*“I feel that the way mothers get the prenatal treatment, prenatal care, men should have counseling.”*

*“In the birthing process, don't forget the fathers. Remember that the fathers are there too. Don't forget about us and try to include us in the process as much as you can (to healthcare providers).”*



ALLIANCE FOR INNOVATION ON MATERNAL HEALTH  
Community Care Initiative (AIM CCI)



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# NHSA Resources & Publications

- Community and Partnership Engagement: A Guide to Support Healthy Start Community Action Network  
[5ceb9ca66f1c4595a4441c2ae663fb38NHSA CAN Community Engagement Publication June 2021 Final.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#)
- Recruitment and Retention: An Action Guide for Fatherhood Programs  
[41c9165663754ed387fb3a90fffd3db4Fatherhood Publication 070821.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)](#)
- A Guide to Community Conversations About COVID-19: Vaccines, Myths & Implications for Pregnancy and Breastfeeding  
[Guide to Community Conversations about COVID-19: Vaccines, Myths & Implications for Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Updated 2.24 \(amazonaws.com\)](#)
- COVID-19 Vaccine: Myths, Benefits & Implications for Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Infographic  
[Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Infographic COVID-19 Updated 2/23 \(amazonaws.com\)](#)
- COVID-19 Vaccine: Myths, Benefits, & Fathers Role in Protecting their Family  
[Fatherhood Infographic COVID-19 Final \(amazonaws.com\)](#)

# Additional Resources & Publications

- Infant and Maternal Loss: A Toolkit for Grieving Fathers: [Infant and Maternal Loss: A Toolkit for Grieving Fathers Final \(amazonaws.com\)](#)
- Fatherhood Advocacy Toolkit: [https://cm20-s3-nhsa.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/ResourceFiles/13a218e55c254b0abd481483857bd14fAdvocacy Toolkit 8 .pdf](https://cm20-s3-nhsa.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/ResourceFiles/13a218e55c254b0abd481483857bd14fAdvocacy%20Toolkit%208.pdf)
- For additional publications, please visit our Resource Center: [Resource Center - National Healthy Start Association](#)

# Thank you!



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