

ANCIENT HISTORY TELLS US THAT BIRTH-GIVERS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SURROUNDED BY SUPPORTIVE HANDS.

For the past 45 years, formally trained doulas have provided continuous support for mothers and birthing people. In 26 randomized controlled trials, birth-givers and newborns with doulas were more likely to:

- Have spontaneous, vaginal births
- Require less pain medication
- Have positive feelings about childbirth
- Have shorter labors
- Have higher APGAR scores
- Have lower rates of C-section

www.prisonbirth.org

DOULAS ARE A UNIQUE MEMBER OF THE BIRTH TEAM

	Partner	Doula	Nurse	Doctor
Continuous Support	✓	✓		
Experienced		✓	✓	✓
Natural Methods		✓	✓	
Focused Only On Mom	✓	✓		
Knows Mom	✓	✓		✓

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APBP IS A PROGRAM OF OSTARA INITIATIVE, A 501C3 NONPROFIT

Bohren MA, Hofmeyr G, Sakala C, Fukuzawa RK, Cuthbert A. Continuous support for women during childbirth. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2017, Issue 7. Art. No.: CD003766. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD003766.pub6

Dekker, R. 2017. Evidence on Doulas. Evidence Based Birth.

USDA. 2020. WIC Breastfeeding Data Local Agency Report. (Alabama Rate 12.7% vs. APBP Rate 63%)

March of Dimes. 2018. Peristats (Alabama Rate Primary CS 26 % vs. APBP Rate 7%)

March of Dimes. 2021. Alabama Premature Birth Report Card. (Alabama Rate 13% vs. APBP Rate 2.1%)



WHAT IS A PRISON DOULA?

Healthy babies. Bonded mothers.
 A program of Ostara Initiative, Inc.

DOULA:

A Greek word meaning "female servant" --
A woman who is trained to assist another woman during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Doulas develop relationships with clients in the prenatal period that carry through the postpartum year.

During labor and delivery, emotional support includes uninterrupted presence to create a feeling of safety, reassurance, and encouragement. For an incarcerated birth-giver, the doula supports as a family member would support.

This continuous support is key to reducing profound psychosocial stress and trauma that comes from immediate family separation.

PEER TO PEER SUPPORT IMPROVES HEALTH OUTCOMES

PHYSICAL SUPPORT

Doulas are trained in providing comfort measures including massage, hot/cold compresses, music, and lighting to increase relaxation during the birth.

Our doulas have practiced in numerous hospitals and with practitioners in Alabama and Georgia. They receive ongoing training in harm reduction and trauma-informed support. Doulas do not provide medical care.

KEY OUTCOMES OF OUR PROJECT

- Reduction in primary cesarean birth rate compared to Alabama average
- Prematurity rate <½ the Alabama average
- Increase in breastfeeding initiation rate compared to other vulnerable populations
- Increased satisfaction with birth experience
- Increased parenting confidence
- Prison culture change

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

Alabama Prison Birth Project is a partner with the Alabama Department of Corrections in providing childbirth, lactation, health literacy, and parenting education, including the topics of infant and toddler development.

Doulas enhance communication between the birth-giver and provider and encourage clients to ask questions in order to make informed health care decisions and have a positive birth experience.

Doulas center the mother's voice while providing culturally-humble and relational support.