

Why Having A

DOULA

MATTERS

ALEXANDRA SMALLS
CHOSEN CHILDREN BIRTHING &
DOULA SERVICES





WHAT IS A DOULA?

The word doula originates from Ancient Greek, meaning 'servant'. In modern birthing terms, a doula refers to someone who serves a woman during the perinatal period.

A doula is a companion (non-medical) who is trained to support a mother by providing both physical and emotional comfort measures.



WHAT A DOULA
IS NOT

- Medical practitioner (doctor, midwife, nurse)
- Lactation specialist
- Newborn care specialist
- Nanny
- Housekeeper
- Therapist

WHAT DOES A DOULA DO?

**A doula provides much of the
following:**

- Physical support
- Emotional support
- Evidence based educational and informational support
- Spiritual support
- Relational support
- Advocacy

- **Sets the atmosphere**

A doula helps to keep the labor and birthing atmosphere calm so that the mother can feel safe. This may include mood setting with dim lighting and making sure whoever is in the room also is calm and helpful to the process.



- **Affirm the desires, preferences, experiences, and feelings of the birthing mother / couple.**

While healthy mama and healthy baby are the ultimate outcome priority, how you experience the birth of your baby matters too. Trauma should not be ‘the norm’ in the birthing experience (as reported by at least 34% of women). Your comfort and desires matter and a doula can help ensure the birth plan preferences of the parents are met or exceeded as much as possible.



- **Helps navigate birthing within a broken system.**

While the United States is advanced in many respects, Unfortunately, the maternal mortality rate has skyrocketed in recent years, especially among minority women.

In addition, the use of interventions has increased by 500% since the 1970s.

Here are some quick statistics for the United States:

Every year, approximately 1,500 children lose their mother to childbirth.

84% of pregnancy related deaths in the US are preventable.

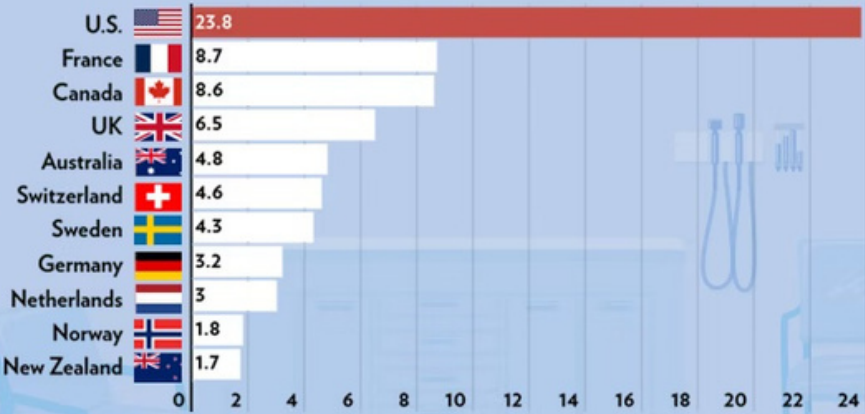
Intervention rate

Cesarean rate

32%

32.1%

Maternal Mortality in the U.S. Far Outstrips That of Other Industrialized Nations



*Deaths per 100,000 live births

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/maternal-mortality/2020/maternal-mortality-rates-2020.htm>



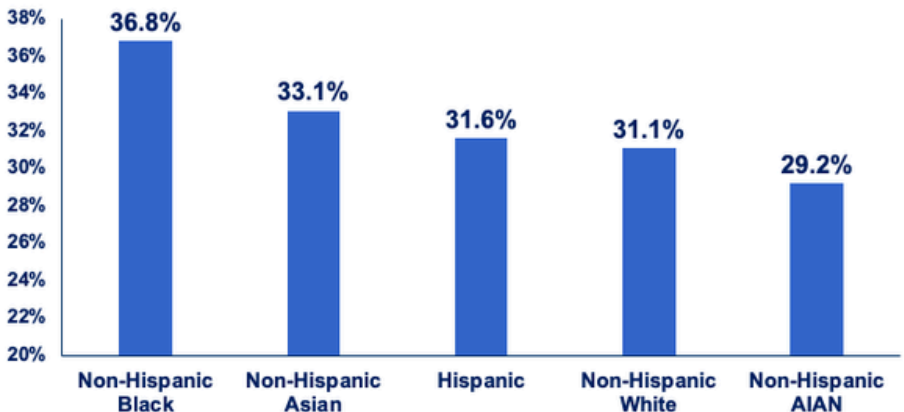
The U.S. Maternal Mortality Rate Continues to Increase Substantially



Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/maternal-mortality/2020/maternal-mortality-rates-2020.htm>



2021 Cesarean Rates* by Race/Ethnicity



Source: NCHS. Births: Provisional Data for 2021. (5/22)

BirthByTheNumbers.org

HOW DOES A DOULA BENEFIT ME?

- Physical support
- Emotional support
- Educational / informational support
- Spiritual support
- Relational support
- Advocacy
- Continuity of care throughout your perinatal journey

Doula support has proven the following:

- Decrease likelihood of an induction by 40%
- Decrease likelihood of needing an epidural by 60%
- Decrease the result of a cesarean section by 40%
- Increase breastfeeding rate by 90%

DOULA IN A NUTSHELL

A doula's work generally begins within the second trimester of a woman's pregnancy and ends 4-8 weeks following birth.

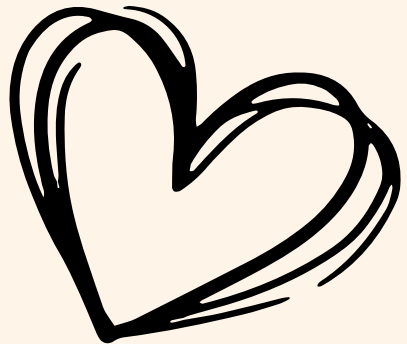
Doula's are privileged to be invited into the lives and the most significant moments for a woman and her family. Along the journey, it is the duty of a doula to safeguard and protect the wellbeing of the mother by ensuring a sense of safety and helping to inspire confidence in her own ability to bring her precious little one into the world.



With doula support, a woman can more easily navigate and find her groove as a nurturing and thriving mother.

ALTHOUGH BIRTH
IS ONLY ONE DAY
IN THE LIFE OF A
WOMAN, IT HAS
AN IMPRINT ON
HER FOR THE REST
OF HER LIFE.

Justine Caines





Alexandra Smalls
Doula | Placenta Encapsulator

chosenchildrendoulaservices.com

 @chosenchildren_doula