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The UMB Pulse Podcast

How Breastfeeding Support for New Moms in Baltimore is Making For a Healthier Community

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The UMB Pulse Podcast

How Breastfeeding Support fo

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TRANSCRIPT

Dana Rampolla: 0:00

So Charles, I have a question for you. And this is a little bit of a personal nature, but I'm wondering, and you'll find out why in a minute. I'm wondering, were you a breastfed baby?

Charles Schelle: 0:10

Interesting. From what I've been told, yes, but I don't really remember anything before I was like three. I'm going to just say yes. but I know that you have five children and a new grand baby too. So I'll, I'll play along. Dana, do you have any experience either being breastfed or nursing your own babies?

Dana Rampolla: 0:28

I don't think that I was breastfed. My mom died when I was young and all I have is my my baby book. So I don't think that I was because it doesn't mention it, but I did breastfeed all five of my kids. I'm a strong advocate for breastfeeding. But I will say when I started, when I had our first baby, there was no one around me who was nursing or breastfeeding their babies. I was the first baby. First person in our family, first person in our friends circle, all that sort of thing. So not having been around nursing mothers, I was kind of at a loss. And fortunately I had started a new job teaching and the woman I worked with was having a baby also. And she was an experienced mom who had nursed her three children. So she provided a great deal of support, but you know, because it's National Breastfeeding Month, I just keep thinking like. How do women figure this out nowadays? When, I mean, I guess you have the internet, you can Google anything, but I feel like breastfeeding is one of those special things where sometimes you need a hands on or a good moral support mentor in your life. So that's why I asked.

Charles Schelle: 1:31

Well, as you said, Dana, August is National Breastfeeding Month, and there's also National Black Breastfeeding Week that takes place August 25th through the 31st. So in this episode, we're proud to share the work that some University of Maryland, Baltimore changemakers are doing right here in the Baltimore community, not just through lactation counseling, but as part of the larger B'More For Healthy Babies program. Today, our guests are Stacey Stevens. She's a clinical instructor in the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She does work with the Center for Restorative Change. That's the new name of SWACOs or the Social Work Community Outreach Service. We had an episode before of one of those programs, Positive School Center. So you may remember that name. So they're now the Center for Restorative Change. B'More for Healthy Babies is an initiative that works with both the School of Social Work, the University of Maryland School of Medicine, underneath the Baltimore City Health Department that offers prenatal and postnatal services to Baltimore families. So we'll be sharing a lot about that program and what it does. And she's joined by Shasha Satchell. Shasha is a community health worker from the University of Maryland School of Social Work, and she works there as the lactation counselor.

2:50

You're listening to the heartbeat of the University of Maryland Baltimore, the UMB Pulse.

Dana Rampolla: 3:04

Welcome Stacey and Shasha. I'm super excited to have you here as an advocate for breastfeeding. I had five children of my own and proudly breastfed all of them. So I'm excited to have this conversation. I think it's really important. And it is August, which is National Breastfeeding Month and it's National Black Breastfeeding Week. Why is it important to differentiate between the two? Is this because there's breastfeeding disparities in it and inequities in the Black community? And if so, can you tell us about that?

Stacey Stephens: 3:35

Absolutely, Dana. Thank you so much for having us on. It's a pleasure to be here with the University of Maryland Baltimore audience. And so, yes, There are disparities longstanding disparities between African American women, breastfeeding rates and white women's breastfeeding rates.

And a lot of that has to do with, as we know just racial Inequities that exists around structural barriers and social barriers that black women have had to overcome. And a lot of this dates back to being enslaved. And so when we look at that, we know that breastfeeding has tremendous benefits to mom and also baby. And we know that historically, Black women when they were enslaved, they were oftentimes wet nurses, wet nursing for white women's children. And so as we fast forward to current day, there are many challenges that women face and making sure that they have the support that they need and information that they need in order to be successful. And we'll be looking forward to sharing more details about that now, but those inequities exist. And so there's a need to elevate and celebrate and educate during Black Breastfeeding Week, which is the last week of August.

Charles Schelle: 5:00

Stacey, that's a perfect opportunity to talk about what is B'More for Healthy Babies and who does it serve?

Stacey Stephens: 5:07

Thanks, Charles. So B'More for Healthy Babies is a first and foremost, a citywide initiative that is basically overseen by the Baltimore City Health Department, the Family League of Baltimore and Healthcare Access Maryland. It's a collective impact model that has well over 30 strategic partners to really reduce the infant mortality rate throughout Baltimore City. And we work in the part of being more for healthy babies in the communities of Upton and Druid Heights and the greater Mondawmin communities, which are basically a place based initiative out of the University of Maryland School of Social Work and Medicine in partnership to really ensure that every baby born in these two communities and throughout West Baltimore are born healthy and of a great weight and are able to thrive in the family in their families. So we're looking at them not only ensuring that babies are born healthy, but we also want to make sure that moms are able to deliver and also live to see their baby's first birthday and beyond. So we're talking about really improving the health of families in those three communities.

Charles Schelle: 6:29

And it's important to note, as you mentioned, your, your work is focused on those communities, but you also mentioned it's a citywide program. So, if someone's listening to this and like, well, I live in a different part of the city can they participate?

Stacey Stephens: 6:41

Absolutely, they can participate when they go to their prenatal visit. Many times their obstetric providers will fill out a prenatal risk assessment, and it is the way that we are able to learn about this pregnancy, and then we share it through healthcare access Maryland, which is the single point of entry for all pregnant women, and then there's a triage process. And so there are home visitors throughout Baltimore city. There are community health workers and certified community health workers, which is what Shasha Satchell is as well as certified lactation counselors. There are doulas and social workers who will receive those referrals and then meet pregnant women or expectant people where they are to support them based on their needs.

Charles Schelle: 7:33

Shasha, tell us a little bit about yourself and what the lactation program does. It sounds like it's a very integral part of B'More for Healthy Babies.

Shasha Satchell: 7:43

Well, yes, I have been a certified lactation counselor since 2015, and we are coming up on our 8 year anniversary this October of 2023 when I first came on board. When moms were delivering and I was supporting them in the hospitals they were not Brown, Black or Brown lactation consultants and counselors in the hospitals. So, I took it upon myself when we had a birth I would just step up and uh, support that mommy in whatever her breastfeeding needs were. I, myself, am a mom of five and I breastfed all of my children as well. So, I brought in... My own personal experience. So I got tired of getting calls from different area hospitals. Where moms delivered and they were asking for breastfeeding support. So I went to my boss and I say, Hey, I just left the hospital and mom delivered on Friday and she's been discharged today on Monday, and she needed breastfeeding support and she didn't have the support that she needed. And when the nurses did come in to assist her, they were not warm. They were not welcoming. They were not they didn't cater to her needs. So when I came in, supported the mom, the first thing she said was, where were you? I needed you when I delivered my baby. And so That just goes to where we are today. Again, I went to my supervisor and I said, Hey, we need to do something about this because we need to support moms and they need to know that Black and Brown mamas do breastfeed their babies. We love our babies just as much as our counterparts and we want them to be happy and healthy as well. So that's how the Black breastfeeding mamas gathering group came.

Dana Rampolla: 9:36

Shasha, why, as a mom who breastfed her children and being in the medical field, do you feel that it is important for breastfeeding to be part of a baby's development?

Shasha Satchell: 9:48

Studies show, and as we see in our own children, you can speak from your own experience, when the difference between breastfeeding and formula fed babies they're alert, it's helping the brain development. It's the bonding between mom and baby, not just mom and baby, but dad as well. We always, always encourage our dads to be a part of the breastfeeding journey as well. As we know, skin to skin initiates the breastfeeding from once. And we encourage our parents to take part in that skin to skin as well. And we include the whole entire family. If mom has other children at home, you know, include your children in the breastfeeding journey and talk to them early on. I always talk to my moms about breastfeeding doesn't start after you have your baby. It starts while you're pregnant. So we encourage our families and our moms to learn everything they need to know about breastfeeding while they're pregnant. So when they do have that baby, some of those myths have been dispelled. And we can address those hiccups, but if we're well educated beforehand, so when those hiccups do arise, we know how to take care of them. And also to know that you have support in the community with our, uh, B'More For Healthy Babies, we have three CHWs who are certified and we also have peer leaders that we brought on board who also got trained and became peer counselors in breastfeeding. So we have support in the community

amongst our mummies that join our program. So they know that if for chance that one of us are not available, they can reach out to one of the community peer counselor breastfeeding specialists.

Dana Rampolla: 11:37

And can they reach out to you just any time, or is it, do they have to wait for these group or, you know, scheduled sessions?

Shasha Satchell: 11:45

I host the Breastfeeding Mamas gathering once a month, uh, it is held every first Wednesday of the month. My dedicated days to breastfeeding is every Wednesdays, but if I know that we have a mom who is about to deliver and she needs to have that support, I always keep my phone open and available because I know what it is when you get stuck with one of those hiccups when you're breastfeeding. Or if your baby like I don't want a nurse today. So, you know, what does mom want to do? So, yeah, so, you know, it's a labor of love. It is. This is something that is true, near and dear to my heart, and it brings me extreme joy to be able to support that mom in whatever her breastfeeding journey looks like, you know, and we just support mom in however that looks, and I always say to my moms, give yourself grace. You just had a baby, you know, you're learning your baby, your baby is learning you, you may have other children that you might have breastfed, but each breastfeeding journey is different. No two are the same. And I can say that. Confidently cause I'm a mom of five and each experience was different. But to uh, to be able to assist and love and nurture on a mom or family who really wants to exclusively breastfeed their baby and to see them through that journey. It is, it is so rewarding.

Dana Rampolla: 13:14

I agree. I agree. One thing you didn't mention is that it's a really affordable option for a family.

Shasha Satchell: 13:20

Oh, absolutely. Yes. So it is. Affordable is there is ready is waiting for baby. You know, and that's another one of the reasons why we do what we do because sometimes those breastfeeding supplies can be a little bit expensive. So we make sure that we support mom with those breastfeeding supplies so when mom joins our program or she's interested in our breastfeeding group, we support mom with breast pumps nursing pads, bottles, the milk storage bags, the coverups, all things breastfeeding, lots and lots of education is giving during the pregnancy after they deliver it and throughout their whole breastfeeding journey. So anytime mom is in need, we'll make sure that we get whatever it is that she needs so that she can take, can continue to be successful in her journey and however that looks.

Dana Rampolla: 14:12

And because your program is being offered through the university here at the University of Maryland at Baltimore, where does the funding come for those types of supplies?

Stacey Stephens: 14:21

All right. So we have several funding sources for our work. And so through Care First Blue Cross Blue Shield, first and foremost, they have funded our work for the last 12 13 years. We also have funding from Annie E. Casey Foundation. We have been fortunate to be a part of the Promise Heights pipeline of services over the last four years. And so some of that money has also come

from the Department of Education through the Promise Neighborhoods Grant. And then we get folks who are very interested in making donations and they make donations to our program through the UMB Foundation. And so through that, we're able to buy breastfeeding supplies and supports. For anyone who was interested in breastfeeding.

Dana Rampolla: 15:12

That's fantastic. And to kind of circle back to the whole notion of breastfeeding. I know when I had my children, I was the first one to have a baby in my family and in our social circle. I didn't really have any breastfeeding support. And it does seem like there's been a huge uptick in nursing. According to the Journal of Breastfeeding Medicine, the numbers of breastfeeding moms in the country has really increased during the last 60 years. I think back in the 1960s, there was like 30% of women who breastfed and now the data, I'm not sure exactly what it is, but I think it's over 60%. So what do you, why do you think that is? What do you think has changed or what is encouraging women to consider and try breastfeeding their babies?

Stacey Stephens: 15:56

I think that there have been some myths about women and then breastfeeding, you know, uh, and people breastfeeding. And so I feel like in our conversations that we have with many of our families, when we start to have these conversations, we learned that. Many of the women who are in our program, their mothers have breastfed as well, or an auntie has breastfed as well. And so when they, you know, check their own families, you're seeing that this has happened and this is a possibility. And I want to speak of also when Shasha was saying what we know from the literature also is that if a partner is supportive of a woman in breastfeeding, they are more likely to breastfeed. And so we do a lot of education and engagement with fathers in the community. And surprisingly, some of our stronger, strongest advocates have been in the work that we've done in the barbershops. We've got barbers who are champions of breastfeeding. And they also have done a video to talk about how important breastfeeding was and is for their partner to do their wife to do. And so they are champions. They talk about the benefits of breastfeeding. And so it's been interesting just watching and hearing you know, and coming in contact with many of our families, how many of them actually are breastfeeding.

Shasha Satchell: 17:18

I know for myself when I had my first child, I was not going to breastfeed. I was, you know, going to do formula because that wasn't the thing that was done then. And, you know, my oldest sister she breastfed her baby but you know I was like, I'm just going to go ahead and formula fed. And it was actually my husband who encouraged me to breastfeed my son at the time. And I was like, no, I'm just gonna, you know, go ahead and formula feeding. He was like, no, he was like breastfeed. He said, my husband is actually West Indian. So that's the normal for them. You know, they don't give their babies formula. You know, they are breastfeeding. They were, he came from a breastfeeding family. So he really educated me about breastfeeding earlier. I was a young mom. I was 21 when I had my first child and he really was an excellent support system to me. And so that is something that I incorporated in our in our groups is knowing who your support system is, before you begin the breastfeeding process, because that is the number one reason why a lot of moms do not breastfeed is because they don't have good support at home and outside of the

home. So once I, you know, begin to share my story, you know, my own personal journey, and then allowing families that come in. We had a lot of, couples, and we did one on one support for them and just actually educating dad and showing dad how much of a support that he is and how much mom needs you in this breastfeeding journey. So, that is I think that's key is key to know that you have your breastfeeding village that's what we call it you have your breastfeeding village in store beforehand. And these are the conversations that you need to have right now and. Who is going to be around. So this, if you know that you have family, family members who are naysayers, then this is the time that you need to say, okay, well, we're going to step back because I've made a conscious decision that I'm going to breastfeed. I'm going to stick with it. However, it may look. And if you cannot support our decision to breastfeed, you know, we're just going to take a step back. That doesn't mean that we don't love you or we don't care, but we want to have. A good support system around us, because mom needs to feel that she is loved and that she is supported and that she can do it. And we all know that if we have support persons in our corner, we can accomplish anything.

Stacey Stephens: 19:51

It's true. Dana also want to share that some moms are concerned what will happen when they return to work. Right. And so a part of that support system is the employer, right? Making sure that they have space that is designated to support when breastfeeding people return back to work. And so I think from the sixties until now, I would like to think that we have far more lactation rooms that can accommodate women when they come to breastfeed that are comfortable and have refrigerators well stocked to support women when they return back to work. So that is a critical piece. And I know that the Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition has been really strong in advocating for this throughout the state of Maryland successfully.

Charles Schelle: 20:41

it's great that you mentioned dads and the barbershop initiative. How are some ways that you are bringing in dads to the fold? And what are some tips or advice that you're giving them to be that support?

Shasha Satchell: 20:54

Well, I always tell dads, you are mom's best advocate. It's something about a strength in a man's voice. So if he is well educated and he knows about, uh, breastfeeding and of all things, breastfeeding, then he can be a tremendous help and support to mom. So we always want to empower our dads and let them know that, you know, you are the head of the household and you are the one who is going to be there with mom while she's delivering and you are mom's advocate. So that's what we teach our dads.

Charles Schelle: 21:36

Talk to me a little bit more about that barbershop initiative. What does that look like? What, what do you go in and say to the folks or what type of literature are you providing?

Stacey Stephens: 21:47

So we've been engaging the barbers, I would dare say for the last 10 years. Oh, wow. We, we, yes, we because what we recognize is that's a great way to reach fathers, grandfathers, uncles, young

boys. And so we do several barbers shops that we have partnered with, and we use it as an opportunity to go in and educate first and foremost about infant mortality. And then to that end, we talk about safe sleep. But then we also want to talk about protective factors. And so protective factors include breastfeeding and include social supports. And so we really are very fortunate that the barbers have welcomed us to come in. We usually have about four activities before the pandemic every year to educate men. We do it during Father's Day weekend. We also do it during NFL football kickoff weekend. We do it During November for a harvest season that we have, and then we do it around March Madness. Oh, we know how to enter in. So we, we enter in with a lot of education information to impart with the borrowers. And so they have become well informed and they know what the numbers are. They know about our success of being able to reduce the infant mortality rate by 75%. They're, you know, the success story and they own that story. And they celebrate that story and they continue. So when they have men who come in, who are you know, their partners are expecting, they just share about our program. They've been featured on videos and you know, they have shared this word across the country. So we are very fortunate for their partnership and the collaboration. And so now, coming through the pandemic, we are now in the barbershops every month to really support men and I would dare say women are also present as, as barbers as well and mothers as well who were there. Women are there as well, really more around mental health and stress reduction and self care. So yeah, they're, they are an active part of the work that we do.

Charles Schelle: 24:00

I'm just imagining this wonderful PSA about breastfeeding happening in a barbershop where all the barbers and the guys in the chairs are giving breastfeeding facts and tips.

Dana Rampolla: 24:12

Yeah, well, we will definitely include the link you shared.

Stacey Stephens: 24:15

Yeah, we have a video, Quante Bullwear at CutStyles did a video for us, not only talking about breastfeeding and the role of, of fathers, but also literacy. So yeah, we do. Sure.

Dana Rampolla: 24:28

It's a really lovely video. It's produced really well and, but you can see the sincerity of the men who are speaking in it. So I encourage our listeners, we'll put the, the link in our show notes and take a peek when you have a minute.

Charles Schelle: 24:41

So the one other thing I wanted to go back on is you mentioned formula, and there might be one reason or another that a mom needs to use formula. And then at the same time, we see what supply chains can do for the mothers who are dependent on formula where it really throws a wrench into their plans. Can you just talk a little bit about what type of support you provide for those mothers who may need formula at some point?

Shasha Satchell: 25:09

Well, I always said a well fed baby is a happy, healthy baby. So even if mom has to supplement with formula, we respect mom in whatever her journey looks like until she can get back on uh, where

her milk is flowing again to where she would like it to be. So, you know, we don't shame mom. And that's one of the things we talk about in our groups is we respect mom and whatever her journey looks like, whether she chooses to breastfeed or bottle feed, then that's fine. But at the end of the day, we just want to make sure that that baby is just well fed and that mom is healthy and baby is healthy as well.

Dana Rampolla: 25:50

I, I feel like there's a lot of moms who, especially new moms, first time moms who start out and breastfeeding can be a challenge. How do you help them kind of get over that hump? Like what's your encouragement look like?

Shasha Satchell: 26:03

So we don't call it challenges or problems. We call it hiccups. We call it the breast, the hiccups of breastfeeding, because I believe you can overcome. Anything, as long as you have good support around you and you have consistency and a made up mind because to breastfeed and to pump, you have to have a well made up mind that this is something that you're going to stick with because you will have good days and you will have bad days. It's not all peaches and cream with breastfeeding. So we just, we talk about the good, the bad and the ugly. Yeah. About breastfeeding. We don't, you know, because most moms are like, Oh, I'm going to breastfeed. My baby on milk is going to be flowing. Yeah, for some moms, that might be the case, but for all not so much. So we just prepare the family head on. So Information is key and getting ahead of it as, as soon as mom finds out that she's pregnant, just consistency, talking about breastfeeding giving lots and lots of information, always encouraging moms and dads to do their own research as well because everyone is different. And, you know, we don't know what life looks like day to day to moms. So we also do a lot of teaching around stress management. How do you bring yourself back to center when you're overwhelmed? We have lots of moms who have other children. Mom might be working. My mom might have went back to school. So we know that moms and dads, they wear many, many hats. So we talk about all of these things. So we never brush over anything. We never make it look like it's all roses or peaches and cream. We get to the nitty gritty and we talk about everything. We get to the root of the problem and we find out what those hiccups are. And we address them head on and then we just move on from there.

Stacey Stephens: 27:50

So I really want to shout out Shasha here for kind of reframing and naming it hiccups. And that really speaks to the power of being positive, right? And so, you know, I, I breastfed both of my children too. And having that positive attitude, like you said, it's really important. And so I think it was last summer, correctly if I'm wrong, Shasha, that The breastfeeding mamas got together and created these beautiful affirmations during Black breastfeeding week. And so with those affirmations, we turn those into T-shirts. So we've got walking positive affirmations around breastfeeding that will be in the community real soon. We also have stickers available, but, so this message, you know, coming from the, from Shasha's leadership has really been instrumental in supporting families within West Baltimore and we, and we are grateful.

Dana Rampolla: 28:43

That's terrific. Stacey, let's go way back into the conversation. When we first started, we talked about B'More For Healthy Babies. We've been referring to it as B'More a couple times in a conversation. And even though this program or show isn't really about the general overarching organization. You did mention data a few minutes ago. So tell us what your success rate is, because the goal was to reduce infant mortality before you can breastfeed a baby. You've got to get the baby there. So can you take a minute and just tell us a little bit about your positive outcomes in that area?

Stacey Stephens: 29:17

Sure, I can share with you. So when we started this work, probably, I guess it'll be 13 years on January. Baltimore City had the fourth worst infant mortality rate in the country for cities, it's same size, right? We know that the infant mortality rate is a metric that really reflects the health of the community. And so at that time, I would dare say that the disparity between Black infants and white infant deaths within our community was probably two times or three times. That was that was the make the disparity and so really through this collective impact model that we've been a part of throughout the city and more specific concentrated work that's been coming out of, like I mentioned the University of Maryland School of Social Work and particularly the Center for Restorative Change. Currently, we've been doing outreach and education and really doing perinatal support groups breastfeeding groups. Prenatal support groups, postpartum support groups, and also parenting groups over the last 12 years. And so, as a result of that work, we've been in deep partnership with our community partners and families in this community. They've taken ownership and lead a lot of this work. Co- lead it. We were able to successfully reduce the infant mortality rate by 75% two years ago. And we celebrated that. Mayor Scott came to one of the barbershops and celebrated it with that us on a Fathers Day about two years ago eliminating that disparity between Black infant deaths and white infant deaths. And so what that means is that within a community of Upton and Druid Heights, a historic community that was redlined, right? Our infant mortality rates now look like places in Connecticut, in predominantly white affluent areas. And our community is predominantly African American. And you know, with low income and what have you, lots of challenges and barriers to overcome, including racism, as it intersects many of the social determinants of health. And so we are really fortunate of that outcome. We don't take it lightly. We are appreciative of continued funding and support. Everyone who has come together to lift and, you know, we lift. And so we are continuing to look forward to doing this work in the future and really talk about increasing longevity of healthy life in the community. That's what we're looking to impact now. So thanks for asking. It was our pleasure to share that information.

Charles Schelle: 31:59

That's a wonderful stat and not only just look at a number but just real impact to the community and to lives and just making a community that much stronger. So kudos, big round of applause for all that effort that that it takes to do that. Going back to the groups and the support you, you provide I know there's probably like a thousand things that, that you throw out these moms and they're trying to go, Oh, what can I remember? Well, what am I doing today? But to kind of maybe get them started off, what are maybe some five basic tips for moms listening to, to keep in mind, uh, for their breastfeeding journey.

Shasha Satchell: 32:40

Well, again, breastfeeding starts before you have your baby. Be well educated. If you could join a breastfeeding group, or, you know, just be proactive and get as much information as you can. Build breastfeeding relationships with other moms. That's why we do the group that we do. You'd be so shocked and surprised of the sisterhood that is born from these groups, how they support one another. They start doing daycare for others. The other mommies, you know, Oh, well, I'm still at home with my baby. I can pick your kids up from school, you know, so it really creates a very positive atmosphere. And for moms that might be struggling or need support, not just in her breastfeeding journey, but just in life in general, so they help each other out that way. We support the moms again with the breastfeeding supplies. This is key, especially for our moms who are going back to work and they want to maintain their milk supply. You know, giving them the breast pumps, the breast storage bags, and, you know, also giving them the law, you know, the new law that was enacted, the breastfeeding workers law. We just had a mom last week in our group who said that her HR wasn't going to honor her while she's out on maternity leave. And I say, yes, they will, honey. I have the breastfeeding law here for you. We want to print it out and you can take it to HR first. And if you have a problem, let me know. I will advocate for you. So it's not just coming to the group and learning about breastfeeding. We attack every every area of breastfeeding. And that starts from when mom has that baby. And when she does return to work, making sure she has all the tools so that when she does face HR, she can just hand them the paperwork and it's a done deal. So mom doesn't have to worry about not being able to take those additional breaks or if mom needed additional time off because she may not have healed properly, you know, so these are all things that we're talking about. So that's another key point, education for dads and for the rest of the family as well. I always encourage moms because they say, well, I have other kids and I'm trying to focus on a baby, but my other children come in the room. I said, well, what are you doing with your other children when they're in the room? And he said, Oh, well, they're just sitting there. I said, well, give them activities to do. So I put together a care package for them. There's puzzles, there's coloring books. All kinds of things to entertain their other children so that when mom is breastfeeding her baby, she can concentrate on her baby and her children are also being looked at after as well. And again, our slogan is encouragement, encouragement, encouragement, encouragement, we respect mom, wherever she is in her journey. We're patient with mom, and we let mom lead. We don't ever want to make mom feel like she's not being heard or she's not being respected. So we always let moms lead. And once mom feels comfortable and we build that good, solid relationship, we can talk about anything and we can overcome anything. We can overcome those hiccups.

Charles Schelle: 36:04

It's incredible. could you describe what that law that Shasha mentioned and what that covers?

Shasha Satchell: 36:12

I believe it was just passed. a couple of months ago, if I'm not mistaken. But it basically says that if mom needs to have additional time off from work, then she can have that and the job cannot threaten her job or, you know, to fire her or anything like that. She's protected because it's considered. To be a life changing event, just like if you had FMLA. So they're starting to really

shine a light on breastfeeding and what that postpartum journey looks like afterwards. And that mom still needs support in additional time. So it, it goes to that, and it also goes back to having. A breastfeeding room, which is dedicated to breastfeeding, not a bathroom with a sink and a chair in the desk. So, they have to provide a room where it's a comfortable chair, a refrigerator. That's just for breast milk for moms who are breastfeeding a sink where mom can wash her hands. And it's a private area, which is set off from other offices or break rooms and bathrooms and stuff like that. So, yeah, so that is what the law says is protecting moms after they return to work.

Charles Schelle: 37:28

So, it's called the, uh, Pregnant Workers Fairness Act. Yes. And it just became effective June 27th. We'll provide a link so people can refer to it. And there's also the PUMP Act that was passed in December 29, 2022, which is Providing Urgent Material Protections for Nursing Mothers Act. So, as you said, both of them provide protections for a certain amount of time. That's super important when you're returning to work. So we'll, we'll include a link to, to learn more about those in our show notes.

Stacey Stephens: 38:03

And I want to also say how important that is, too, because when you're breastfeeding, you don't need anything that's going to stress you out, right? Because when you are stressed it makes it more challenging for that milk to release and for baby to get fed. And so I'm really glad to hear that both of those policies, those acts are in place. And so I'm hoping your listening audience can now share that information as they are breastfeeding with their peers.

Dana Rampolla: 38:33

And I am very proud I do some work here at UMB with campus maps and I'm very proud. I can't tell you how many rooms, but that in the recent years, the number of rooms that have been added just to campus for moms like that. There's one right outside our office suite in Saratoga. One other question, Stacey, I guess this is probably more for you. Are you doing anything with the programming that you're doing in order to share it with other people, either across the state, across the country or globally.

Stacey Stephens: 39:07

Thanks for that question. So we, first and foremost, let me say that we have a very active social media accounts, Facebook and Instagram. And so folks can reach us and we will share that information. But we have been fortunate that we have been able to present a lot of the work that we do. Breastfeeding work, our social, our work with social media, our work and really supporting women during maternity care, our work around our model of having community health workers really lead this work. We've been able to share this at local conferences and national conferences. And international conferences. And so actually we'll be at the City Match Conference in September, New Orleans, and we'll be presenting for during for presentations. And so yes, yeah we we really try. We are very fortunate. We take every opportunity to. To share with folks what we're doing, and we're fortunate that we have partnered deeply across the university. And so others are also sharing that work as they go to their professional conferences as well. So, yeah, we're very fortunate to be able to do this

Dana Rampolla: 40:22

That's good to know, being that successful. We need to encourage other people to look at your program as a model.

Charles Schelle: 40:30

For the moms that are listening and they're like, I need help, I need to reach out to B'More For Healthy Babies what's the best way to get in contact, or, visit a website to find out more information.

Stacey Stephens: 40:41

So they can just go to, [www. healthybabiesbaltimore. com](http://www.healthybabiesbaltimore.com). And that's a way that That's okay. You got it. Awesome, Shasha.

Dana Rampolla: 40:50

I was going to say, for those who can't see because a lot of, most of our listeners are just listening, not seeing our YouTube production, but Shasha's sharing her t shirt that is B'More for Healthy Babies with the website emblazoned upon her chest of all places. Thank

Stacey Stephens: 41:05

Absolutely. And that's for anyone throughout the city and they can that will put them in through the healthcare access Maryland single point of entry and you'll be triage. And then we'll get the referrals, but I will also share additional information about how to come directly into our program and the communities that we do that we serve. And I will share that that link later on so that people can access our services as well.

Charles Schelle: 41:34

Great. And we'll definitely put in the show notes for those who are listening or in the episode description on YouTube. Before we let you go, is there anything else that you just wanted to give moms as one last takeaway?

Shasha Satchell: 41:47

I would just say, you know, if you decided to want to breastfeed, give yourself grace, give yourself time, you know, you'll get it. Just stick with it and just have a good support system around you and reach out. Ask for help because what I'm finding is a lot of times our moms feel a little bit discouraged because of an experience they might have had in the past and they may not feel comfortable or confident enough to reach out and ask for help. So the say and go, close mouths, don't get fed, ask for help. Ask for the help and it's here and we'll definitely, uh, guide you and get you started in whatever your journey looks like.

Charles Schelle: 42:29

Well said. Yeah. Yes. So, uh, Stacey Stevens, Shasha Satchell from B'More for Healthy Babies. Thank you for all of your work and thank you for joining us on The Pulse.

Shasha Satchell: 42:42

Thank you. Thank you so much for having us!

42:48

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