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Cultural Connections of Healing for Postpartum Recovery and Holistic Care in BIPOC Communities

Toshira Maldonado

Beautiful Homes LLC, United States

Statement of the Problem: BIPOC/Latinx women face adjustment and emotional challenges following the birth of a baby. Many challenges are related to the inaccessibility to community-based resources and services that can mitigate stressors or barriers to physical and emotional wellness. Communities of color are often marginalized and face poor birth outcomes. For BIPOC women, reproduction, birth, and the postpartum period has strong influences of historical trauma that can be recognized in an international context. In the United States BIPOC women face greater disparities related to the care and support they receive in their postpartum period. Pregnancy related mood and anxiety disorders rates have risen as high as 70% during the pandemic. As much as 80% of cases go undiagnosed or untreated due to the stigma associated with Postpartum Depression.

Biography

Toshira Maldonado, M.Ed., CPE, CD has an extensive background in community birth work, advocacy, and Birth Justice. She is dedicated to improving birth outcomes and Maternal Wellness for BIPOC/Latinx women through advocacy and activism. Her career in Human Services spans over 25 years starting as a temporary file clerk at the local substance use treatment center in 1999. There she befriended the pregnant women and supported them in their birthing spaces. Over the years she witnessed firsthand the disregard for Black mothers and babies, the devastating impact of both intersectionality and the Family Regulation System. She is the Executive Director of Most Beautiful W.O.M.B. Inc., a grassroots Birth Justice centered organization. She holds a Master's in Education and an undergraduate degree in Psychology. She is a Birth Justice Institute Fellow with Ancient Song, and Community Doula with 25 years of expertise formally trained by Commonsense Childbirth Institute.