

It Takes A Village

You've probably heard the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child."

Considered an African proverb, its enduring message is universal: Children thrive when families are surrounded by caring, informed, and connected communities. At Earth's Natural Touch: Birth Care & Beyond, Inc., we know that idea begins long before a baby is born.

*It takes a village to support a healthy pregnancy.
It takes a village to welcome a new baby.
It takes a village to help a family flourish.*

And it takes a village to ensure that every mother is heard, respected, and cared for. A village is not built in a single day.

It is built one conversation, one act of kindness, one helping hand, and one healthy family at a time.

*A village listens. A village learns.
A village shows up. A village shares knowledge.
A village offers support even before it is needed, not just during a crisis.
Whether you are pregnant, a partner, a Dad-Bassador, or a Community Ambassador who cares about the well-being of families, you have an important role in helping to create safer, healthier experiences.*



♥ *Sis...Building your village before the baby arrives makes it easier to ask for help after the baby is born.*



Build Your Village

Pregnancy was never meant to be experienced alone.

Building a strong support system can make a huge difference in your confidence, well-being, and overall experience. Your village is made up of the people who educate you, encourage you, advocate with you, and remind you that you don't have to carry everything by yourself.

Each member of your village has a different role, but they all share one important responsibility: listening to you, respecting your choices, and supporting your well-being.

Your Partner

Your partner is often your closest teammate. They can learn the warning signs, attend appointments, ask questions, help communicate your concerns, provide comfort during labor, and continue supporting you throughout the postpartum period.

Your Doula

A doula provides emotional, physical, and informational support throughout pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period. Doulas do not replace medical providers or make medical decisions for you, but in addition to pregnancy preparation and physical labor support, they can help you prepare for appointments, understand your options, ask questions, communicate effectively, and feel more confident throughout your journey.

Your Family and Friends

Loved ones can offer practical help, emotional encouragement, transportation, meals, childcare, and companionship. Encourage those closest to you to learn about pregnancy with you, know the warning signs and understand the goals of this campaign and their role.



Your Maternity Care Provider

Your maternity care provider is your partner in managing the clinical aspects of your pregnancy, birth, and postpartum care, including prenatal visits, laboratory tests, ultrasounds, fetal assessments, screenings, diagnosis, treatment, and other medical decisions. Depending on your health needs and preferences, your care may be provided by a midwife or an obstetrician (OB). Midwives provide comprehensive maternity care and may practice in hospitals, birth centers, or home birth settings (for appropriately screened, low-risk pregnancies), while obstetricians are physicians who specialize in pregnancy, childbirth, surgery, and the management of high-risk or complex pregnancies. Both are medical professionals who work to promote the health and safety of you and your baby and may collaborate with one another or with other specialists when needed. Your maternity care provider is not an authority over you. They are a partner in your care, working with you to support informed decision-making and help you make the choices that are best for your family.

Mental Health Professional

Pregnancy and postpartum bring emotional as well as physical changes. A mental health professional can help you navigate stress, anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, relationship changes, or the adjustment to parenthood. Seeking mental health support is a sign of strength, not weakness. If you are already on medication, they can discuss any potential changes in your prescription that may be necessary.

Other Providers

Other professionals may also play an important role in supporting your comfort, recovery, and overall well-being during pregnancy and postpartum. Depending on your needs, you may benefit from services such as chiropractic care, pelvic floor physical therapy, prenatal massage therapy, craniosacral therapy, acupuncture, or nutrition services. These providers can work alongside your maternity care team to help address common physical changes throughout your journey.



Your Community

Community organizations like Earth's Natural Touch: Birth Care & Beyond Inc., support groups, childbirth educators, cultural communities, neighbors, and maternal and infant health programs remind you that you are not alone. Community creates connection, encouragement, shared experiences, and opportunities to learn from others who understand the journey.

Building My Village

My Care Team

Primary Prenatal Provider: _____

Hospital or Birth Center: _____

Doula & Back-Up Doula: _____

Lactation Professional: _____

Mental Health Professional: _____

Other Supportive Professionals: _____

Pharmacy: _____

Community Organizations that support Families: _____

Who Can I Call Anytime

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

My Emergency Contact

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone Number: _____

Being Part of the Village

Supporting Her with Love, Respect, and Confidence

Pregnancy is not a journey that should be traveled alone. Whether you are a partner, grandparent, parent, sibling, friend, doula, or another trusted support person, you have an important role in helping her feel safe, respected, and supported.

Being part of her village isn't about having all the answers. It's about showing up, listening, encouraging, and helping her navigate pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period with confidence. Small acts of kindness can have a lasting impact.

At Earth's Natural Touch: Birth Care & Beyond, we teach that strong support systems help create healthier families and stronger communities. The "Sis, Don't Let Them Turn You Away!" campaign is about strengthening the entire village, not placing the responsibility for advocacy on one person's shoulders.

Listen First

- One of the greatest gifts you can offer is your willingness to listen.
- If she says something doesn't feel right, don't dismiss it. Instead, ask questions, offer reassurance, and encourage her to contact her healthcare provider if she's concerned.
- Sometimes simply saying, "I'm glad you told me. Let's figure this out together," can make all the difference.

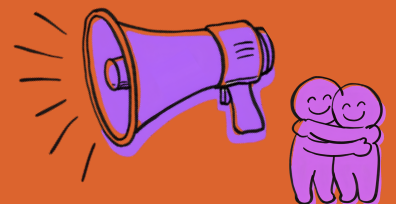
LISTEN



Village Tip

Remember that advocacy is a team effort. Helping someone ask questions, seek clarification, or request additional information is one of the most valuable ways you can support them.

Village Tip: Advocacy is part of participating in your own healthcare. Respectfully asking questions, expressing concerns, and understanding your options are important aspects of patient-centered care.



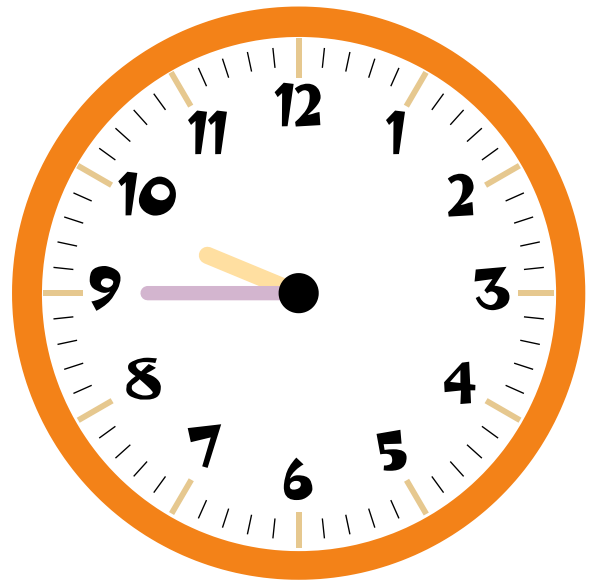


Learn the Warning Signs Together

- Take time to review the maternal warning signs in this booklet.
- Knowing what to watch for means you're better prepared to recognize when something may need prompt medical attention. If you notice changes in her physical or emotional well-being, encourage her to seek guidance from her healthcare provider.
- Remember: it's always okay to ask questions or seek clarification when something doesn't seem right.

Encourage Timely Care

- If she is worried about a symptom, don't encourage her to "wait it out" without talking to a healthcare professional.
- Help her contact her provider, visit urgent care, or go to an emergency room. Trusting her instincts and responding promptly can make a meaningful difference.



Be Present at Appointments

- When invited, attend prenatal visits, ultrasounds, childbirth classes, or hospital tours.
- A second set of ears can help remember important information, ask thoughtful questions, take notes, and provide emotional support. Sometimes hearing the same information together makes decision-making easier.

Help Her Ask Questions

Healthcare conversations can feel overwhelming, especially when there's a lot of new information.

Encourage her to ask questions such as:

- Can you explain that another way?
- Can you tell me why you believe this option is the best fit for me?

Your calm encouragement can help her feel more confident in making decisions about her care.



Respect Her Choices

- Every pregnancy is different.
- Support her informed decisions, even if they differ from what you expected. Encourage open conversations with her healthcare team and remember that the best decisions are made using evidence, clinical expertise, and her personal values.

Help Protect Her Peace

Pregnancy can be physically and emotionally demanding.

- Support her by helping with meals, household tasks, childcare, transportation, or simply encouraging her to rest.
- Ask: "What can I take off your plate today?"
- Small acts of kindness can have a big impact.

Support Her Mental Well-Being

- Check in regularly.
- Ask how she's feeling, not just physically, but emotionally.
- Celebrate small victories.
- Listen without judgment.
- Encourage her to seek additional support if she's feeling overwhelmed, anxious, depressed, or isolated.
- Remind her that asking for help is a sign of strength.

Support Her Feeding Goals

- If she plans to breastfeed, your encouragement matters.
- You can help by learning about breastfeeding before the baby arrives, protecting uninterrupted feeding time, bringing her water or snacks, helping with household responsibilities, and encouraging her to reach out for lactation support if challenges arise.
- If her feeding journey changes, continue offering encouragement without judgment.





Speak Up

Sometimes advocacy simply means helping ensure that her questions are heard. If she seems overwhelmed or unable to speak for herself, you might say: "She mentioned she's still concerned about this. Could we talk through it one more time?" Or "We'd appreciate a little more information before making our decision." Respectful communication helps build trust while ensuring her voice remains part of the conversation.

The Village Remains Beyond Birth

- Your role doesn't end once the baby arrives. Many families receive lots of attention before the birth, but not so much when baby gets here.
- Offer practical, hands-on help. A simple call, text, meal, visit, cleaning, or errand run can make a meaningful difference.
- Encourage follow-up appointments. Sometimes, motherhood can be very overwhelming. But making sure she attends any scheduled postpartum or newborn care visits is important.
- Watch for warning signs. Many mothers may not realize they are experiencing something concerning or may think it's a normal part of postpartum recovery. Promptly get evaluated.
- Help her stay connected to family, friends, doulas, lactation support, and community resources.
- Celebrate progress, not perfection. Parenting is a learning journey so matter how many children you have. Each baby is different. Encourage her. Remind her of her strengths and recognize the small victories.
- Help protect her peace. If anyone does not nurture her in these ways, but instead brings "drama" to her, keep them away.

Village Tip: • *You don't have to be a healthcare professional to make a difference.*



- *By listening, learning, encouraging, and standing beside her, you're helping create the kind of village every family deserves.*
- *Together, we can help every mother feel heard, respected, supported, and empowered.*