

*Delving Into Maternal Mental Health Webinar Series*

# Pregnancy, Infant Loss, and Maternal Mental Health Webinar

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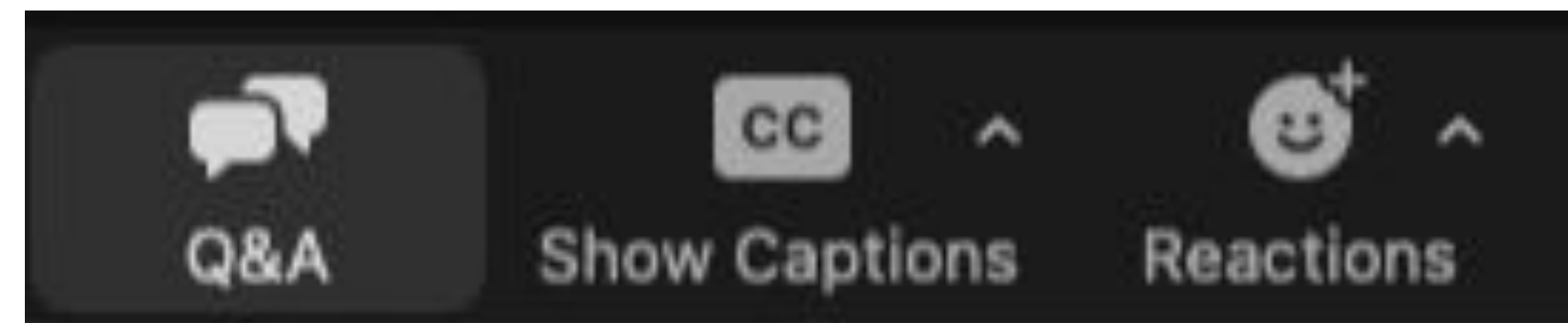




# Questions, Captions, & Reactions

At the bottom of your screen use the:

- **Q&A button** - ask a question.
- **Show Captions button** - see live captions.
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# Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance (MMHLA)

We are a nonpartisan 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the mental health of mothers and childbearing people in the United States with a focus on policy and health equity.

Learn more at [mmhla.org](https://mmhla.org).



# Delving *Into* Maternal Mental Health

- Birth Trauma (August)
- Pregnancy and Disability (September)
- Perinatal Loss (October)
- Military Mothers (November)

[Learn More](#) →

A promotional graphic for the MMHLA Webinar Series. It features a background image of a woman holding a baby. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image. The title 'Delving Into Maternal Mental Health' is in a large, purple, serif font. Below it, the text 'Explore the intersection between maternal mental health and birth trauma, disability, infant loss, and military families.' is in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. A blue button with white text 'REGISTER TODAY' is located in the bottom right corner of the graphic.

MMHLA Webinar Series

## Delving *Into* Maternal Mental Health

Explore the intersection between maternal mental health and birth trauma, disability, infant loss, and military families.

REGISTER TODAY

# What we'll cover...

- ✓ Overview of pregnancy and infant loss.
- ✓ Sharing of lived experience.
- ✓ Strategies for employers and policymakers to support bereaved parents.



# After this webinar, we will email you:

- Brief survey
- Powerpoint presentation
- Webinar recording

# Webinar Self-Care

Some information may be challenging.

Please take breaks as needed.



# Our Presenters







Lived Experience & Advocacy

**Kay Matthews, LCHW**

**Founder, Shades of Blue Project**



Potential Strategies for Employers

## Jessica Brooks-Woods, MPM, PHR

CEO, National Association of Benefits  
and Insurance Professionals

MMHLA Board Member



Potential Strategies for Policymakers

# Jamie Zahlaway Belsito

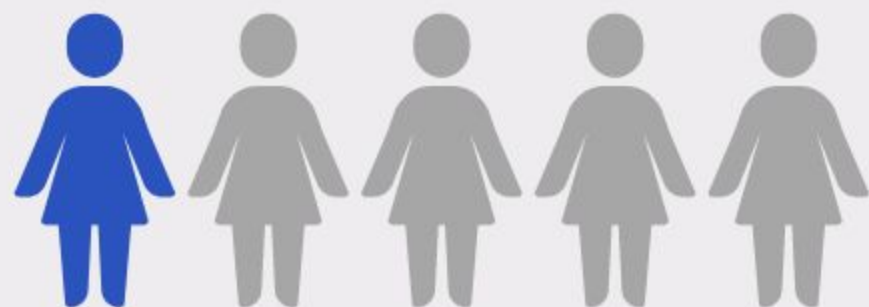
MMHLA Founder

Director of Policy & Partnerships

Key Facts:  
*Maternal  
Mental Health*

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## **1 in 5 Mothers Are Impacted by Mental Health Conditions**

Maternal mental health (MMH) conditions are the **MOST COMMON** complication of pregnancy and birth, affecting 800,000 families each year in the United States.<sup>1,2</sup>



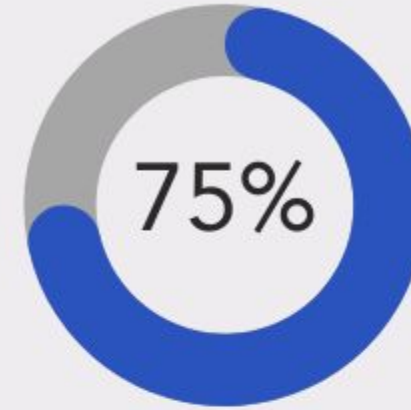
## **Mental Health Conditions Are the Leading Cause of Maternal Deaths**

Suicide and overdose are the **LEADING CAUSE** of death for women in the first year following pregnancy.<sup>3</sup>



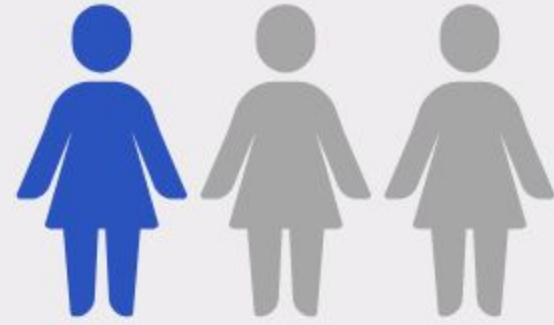
## **\$14 Billion: The Cost of Untreated MMH Conditions**

The cost of not treating MMH conditions is \$32,000 per mother-infant pair, or **\$14 BILLION** each year in the United States.<sup>5</sup>



## **Most Individuals Are Untreated, Increasing Risk of Negative Impacts**

75% of individuals impacted by MMH conditions **REMAIN UNTREATED**, increasing the risk of long-term negative impacts on mothers, babies, and families.<sup>4</sup>



## **Certain Individuals are at Increased Risk for Experiencing MMH Conditions**

High-risk groups include people of color, those impacted by poverty, military service members, and military spouses.<sup>6,7</sup>



## **It's Not Just Postpartum Depression: There are a Range of MMH Conditions**

MMH conditions can occur during pregnancy and up to one year following pregnancy and include depression, anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar illness, psychosis, and substance use disorders.<sup>8</sup>

# Perinatal Loss and *Maternal Mental Health*

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# Perinatal Loss

## *Facts and Figures*

### Miscarriage

- Loss of pregnancy < 20 weeks gestation
- 10-15% of all recognized pregnancies
- As many as 30% of total pregnancies

### Stillbirth

- Loss of pregnancy > 20 weeks gestation
- 1 in 175 pregnancies
- 21,000 each year in the United States

### Neonatal and Infant Death

Neonatal	before 28 days of life	3.6 per 1,000 births
Infant	before 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday	5.4 per 1,000 births

# Perinatal Loss

## *Racial Disparities* <sup>17</sup>

Black women are  
**2X**  
as likely to experience  
miscarriage / stillbirth as white women

- Maternal preconception health
- Socioeconomic status
- Access to quality health care
- Intergenerational stress and trauma
- Racism and bias in the health care system

# Perinatal Loss

*Impact  
On  
Parents* <sup>9, 10, 11</sup>

## Perinatal Loss Is...

Unexpected  
Traumatic  
Emotionally devastating  
Life-changing

## Parents Suffer Numerous Losses

Baby  
Relationship with child  
Safety  
Self-esteem and self-efficacy  
Sense of self and sense of health  
Trust in the world as they know it

Perinatal  
Loss

*Bereaved  
Parents  
Feel...*<sup>10, 12</sup>

*Sadness*

*Anger*

*Loneliness*

*Fear*

*Grief*

*Emptiness*

*Guilt*

*Shame*

*Self-blame*

*Failure*

# Perinatal Loss

*Bereaved  
Parents  
Experience...*<sup>13</sup>

Stigma

Blame

Isolation

Shunning

Loss of social status

Relationship struggles

Financial issues

# Perinatal Loss

*Bereaved  
Parents  
Experience...*<sup>10, 14</sup>

## Higher Rates Of...

Mental distress

Poor health

Drug and alcohol use

Divorce

Problems with relationships

# Perinatal Loss

## *Bereaved Parents Want...*<sup>15</sup>

- Acknowledge their baby as an *irreplaceable individual*, including using their baby's name.
- Acknowledge their parenthood and validate their grief.
- Acknowledge their traumatic experience.
- Acknowledge their need for specialized support.

# Perinatal Loss

## *Bereaved Parents Need...*<sup>14</sup>

- To be heard and held.
- To have access to bereavement services.
- To make meaning of their loss.
- To regain a sense of control.



# Stillbirth

## *Bereaved Parents May Choose To...*<sup>16</sup>

- Name their baby.
- Rock, hold, kiss, and cuddle their baby.
- Bathe and dress their baby.
- Sing and read a book to their baby.
- Make and keep mementos, such as hand and footprints or a lock of hair.
- Take photographs of and with their baby.
- Hold a religious service or ceremony.
- Create an online memorial.
- Seek a perinatal bereavement mental health provider or support group.

# Perinatal Loss: *Lived Experience and Advocacy*

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Kay Matthews, LCHW  
Founder, Shades of Blue Project



# Employer Strategies to Support *Bereaved Parents*

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Jessica Brooks-Woods, MPM, PHR

- CEO, National Association of Benefits and Insurance Professionals
- MMHLA Board Member



# Policy Strategies to Support *Bereaved Parents*

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Jamie Zahlaway Belsito  
Founder and Director of Policy & Partnerships,  
Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance



# Proposed Federal Legislation

## Stillbirth Health Improvement and Education (SHINE) for Autumn Act

- Aims to prevent stillbirths through enhanced data collection, analysis, reporting, and research.
- Focus on training for perinatal pathologists.

## Maternal and Child Health Stillbirth Prevention Act

- Would add stillbirth and stillbirth prevention to Title V of the Social Security Act.
- Calls for programs, activities, and research to reduce the incidence of stillbirth.

# Proposed Legislation in Massachusetts: Paid Pregnancy Loss Leave

[Filed on January 9, 2023](#)

## **10 days of paid pregnancy loss leave may be used by an employee for:**

1. Absence resulting from any of the following:
  - Pregnancy loss
  - Unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or of an assisted reproductive technology procedure
  - Failed adoption match or an adoption that is not finalized because it is contested by another party
  - Failed surrogacy arrangement
  - Diagnosis or event that impacts pregnancy or fertility
2. Absence to care for a spouse or domestic partner who experiences a circumstance above.

# State and Local Legislation

## STATES

2 states have laws requiring private companies to provide bereavement leave.

- **Oregon:** Family Bereavement Leave Act requires companies with 25+ employees to offer up to 2 weeks of unpaid bereavement leave to eligible employees.
- **Illinois:** Child Bereavement Leave Act requires that employers with 50+ employees provide a maximum of 2 weeks of unpaid leave following the death of a child.

## CITIES

Several cities have adopted laws for government (city or public) employees.

- **Washington DC:** 2 weeks of paid leave for loss of a child under 21 (including stillbirth).
- **Pittsburgh, PA:** 3 days of leave for miscarriage or pregnancy loss (either parent).
- **Portland, OR:** 3 days of paid leave for miscarriage or pregnancy loss.

# Pregnancy Leave Policy in Illinois

## **Illinois: The Support Through Loss Act**

*Takes effect January 1, 2024*

Requires employers in the state to provide two weeks of unpaid leave for employees who experience:

- Miscarriage
- Unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or other assisted reproductive procedure
- Failed or non-finalized adoption match
- Failed surrogacy agreement
- Diagnosis affecting fertility
- Stillbirth

Employees can access the same time off to support a spouse or partner who experience one of the same losses.



# Pregnancy Leave Policy in Oregon

## **Oregon: Oregon Family Leave Act**

*Went into effect September 3, 2023.*

- Up to two weeks of unpaid bereavement leave.
- Eligible events:
  - Pregnancy
  - Birth
  - Health needs because of childbirth

# Resources



# Resources



[rtzhope.org](http://rtzhope.org)



[firstcandle.org](http://firstcandle.org)



[nationalshare.org](http://nationalshare.org)



[postpartum.net](http://postpartum.net)

# Return to Zero: H.O.P.E.



[rtzhope.org](http://rtzhope.org)

## Support for bereaved parents:

- Guidance for bereaved parents.
- Messages of support from other bereaved parents.
- Virtual support groups and workshops.
- In-person healing retreats.
- Webinars for bereaved parents and for providers.
- Books, journals, and podcasts.
- Resources specifically for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ parents.

## Support for providers:

- Provider education and support.
- Perinatal loss print materials in many languages.
- Comprehensive Guide to NICU Bereavement Care.

## REMINDER

After this webinar,  
we will email...

- Brief survey
- Powerpoint presentation
- Webinar Recording



# Quick Poll



# Thank you! *Stay in Touch!*



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[mmhla.org](http://mmhla.org)



[Maternal Mental Health  
Leadership Alliance](https://www.linkedin.com/company/maternal-mental-health-leadership-alliance)



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[shadesofblueproject.org](http://shadesofblueproject.org)



[Shades of Blue Project](https://www.linkedin.com/company/shades-of-blue-project)



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[@sobproject](https://www.facebook.com/sobproject)

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