

Held

A BIRTH JUSTICE IMPACT REPORT

open arms
perinatal services

2025 IMPACT REPORT



HELD IN COMMUNITY, MOVING FORWARD

From our Executive Director, Dila Perera

In 2025, Open Arms reached more families than at any point in our nearly 30-year history, despite one of the most uncertain years we have ever faced.

Political volatility, funding cuts, and major changes to public programs, including Medicaid, put pressure on the relationship-based, culturally responsive care our families rely on. Through it all, **we remained grounded in our values, ensuring families felt held with compassion, dignity, and support.**

That commitment helped achieve a historic milestone: **Washington State began reimbursing Medicaid-covered doula care** at the highest rate in the nation, the result of years of advocacy. This victory will expand access to birth doula care for families across the state for years to come.

This year also brought powerful validation of our work. **Independent research from the University of Washington confirmed that our culturally responsive doula care leads to healthier births**, with our clients experiencing lower rates of cesarean and preterm birth than the state average. Behind every outcome is a family that was held through pregnancy, birth, and early parenting with care that honors their culture, language, and lived experience.

But access alone is not enough. Public funding helps more families receive care, while **supporters like you make it possible to provide the flexibility, connection, and wraparound support that allow families to truly thrive.**

That same spirit of care extends to the next generation of providers. This year, Tiffany Renee and Jessica Trinidad Perez completed their International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) certifications. Jessica became **the first Latine, Spanish-speaking IBCLC to come through our Community Lactation Specialist training program.** She will now teach in Spanish through a culturally responsive lens, helping more Latine providers enter the field and strengthening a workforce rooted in community.

Together we are moving forward,

Dila Perera



WHY THIS WORK MATTERS: INEQUITIES PERSIST

Where you live, your race, how much you earn, and the language you speak - these factors should not determine birth outcomes.

Yet they do.



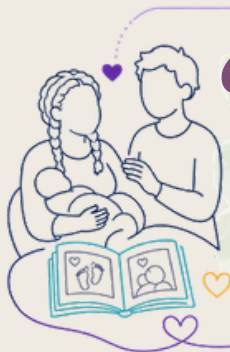
People of color and those with less support and access to care face a higher risk of poor maternal health outcomes.



Black birthing people are 1.5x more likely to have preterm births and more likely to have medical interventions than white birthing people.



Language and cultural barriers limit access to care and erode trust in systems.



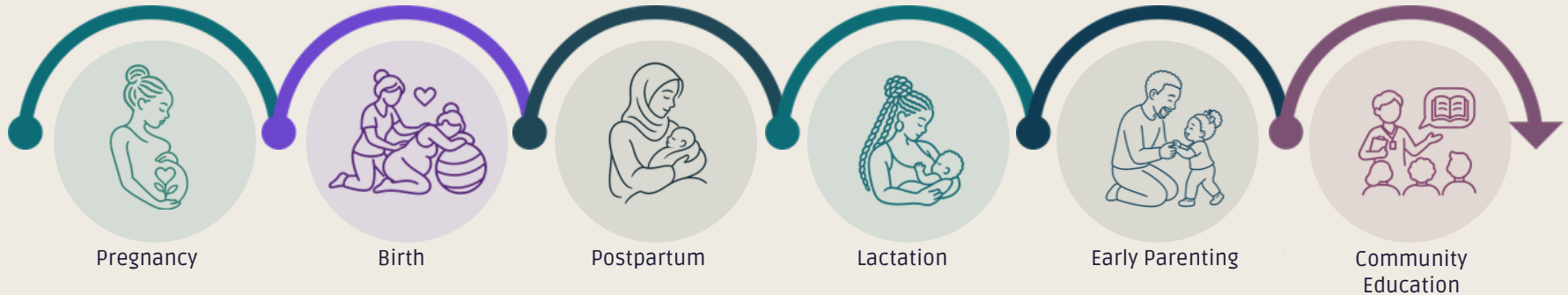
“My birth was scary and I was nervous. My doula was there and I felt so much better and supported. She made a photo book for me so I can have these special memories!”

Equity in maternal health saves lives.



A CONTINUUM OF CARE THAT MOVES WITH FAMILIES

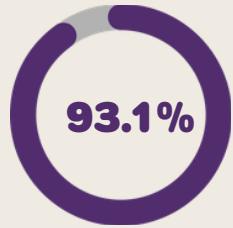
From pregnancy through early parenting and beyond, we walk alongside families.



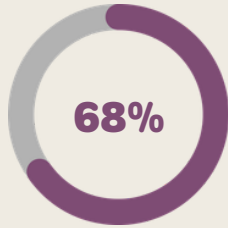
We provide culturally responsive support at every stage – so families can thrive.

BETTER OUTCOMES. BRIGHTER FUTURES.

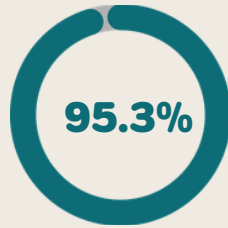
Year after year, our outcomes demonstrate the strength of community-based care, with many indicators outperforming state averages.



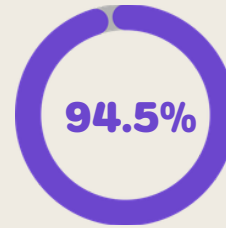
full-term births



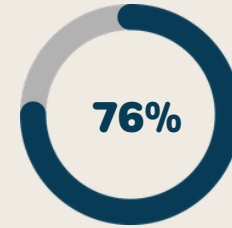
vaginal births



healthy birth weight



lactation at birth



lactation at six months

HEALTHIER BIRTHS. STRONGER FAMILIES. THRIVING COMMUNITIES.



699

families
served



1,400+

household
members



265

births
supported



2,043

hours of birth
support



643+

hours of 1:1
lactation
support

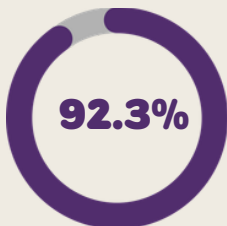


3,945

home
visits

Our outcomes reflect the power of culturally congruent, relationship-based care.

EMPOWERING DOULA SERVICES



families who
identified as
BIPOC



first-time
parents

Our doulas deliver exceptional outcomes, and we have data to show it. A 2025 University of Washington study found that **Open Arms clients had lower rates of cesarean and preterm births, reinforcing what we have long known: culturally responsive doula care leads to healthier births.**

Last year, following years of advocacy, our Birth Doula Services Program reached a major milestone. **Washington State began reimbursing Medicaid-covered doula services** at the highest reimbursement rate in the nation, expanding access to birth doula care, and advancing birth equity statewide. For those outside of the Medicaid system, donor support remains essential to ensure our holistic model of care reaches all families.

Our Community-Based Outreach Doulas also strengthened their impact by pursuing advanced training and certification, further enhancing the trusted, family-centered support they provide.

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Our Family Support Services team helps ensure families are held beyond birth through trusted connections to essential resources, community support, and care navigation.



1,060
referrals



1,500+
resource
requests



240
warm handoffs
to partners



40,000+
diapers
distributed

We hold families through every step.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

Community Education and Engagement connects families through childbirth and lactation education, support groups, and community events while building the pipeline for the next generation of community-based doulas and lactation specialists.



217

community
events or groups



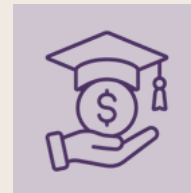
2

BIPOC cohort participants earned
International Board of Lactation
Consultant certification



158

workforce
development trainings
or educational events



\$4,000+

invested in
scholarships

LACTATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Families are held throughout their infant feeding journey with education, encouragement, and expert support from our Lactation Support team.



60+

parents and
their babies



400+

in-home visits



80+

lactation lounge sessions
in English and Spanish

“

I have been in the Open Arms program for almost three years. During this time, my doula has been incredibly helpful and an advocate. She provides emotional support when I need it and is always there to help with essentials such as diapers and other necessities.

We are committed to nurturing families and future care providers.

ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Changing systems. Creating possibility.

In 2025, Washington passed the **Dignity in Pregnancy Act** – a direct result of advocacy from many of our staff like Birth Doula Services Latinx Community Specialist Betty Hernandez, who testified in support of protecting the health, dignity, and rights of all families.

That win came against a difficult backdrop. Families this year navigated policy uncertainty, reduced social services, and immigration-related fears that made an already challenging time harder still. Even so, **key protections remain in place, including reimbursement for Medicaid-covered doula services and 12 months of postpartum coverage.**



Gov. Bob Ferguson and Betty



Amplifying Voices

We elevate the voices of families and providers to shape policies that center on equity and justice.



Building Partnerships

We collaborate across sectors to advance community-driven solutions.



Driving Policy Change

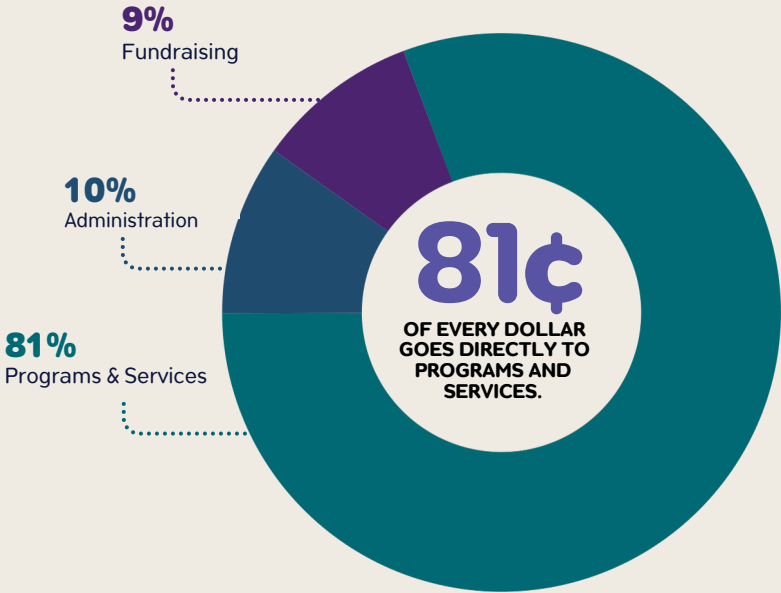
We champion policies that improve access, expand coverage, and eliminate disparities.

We don't just respond to inequity – we work to end it.

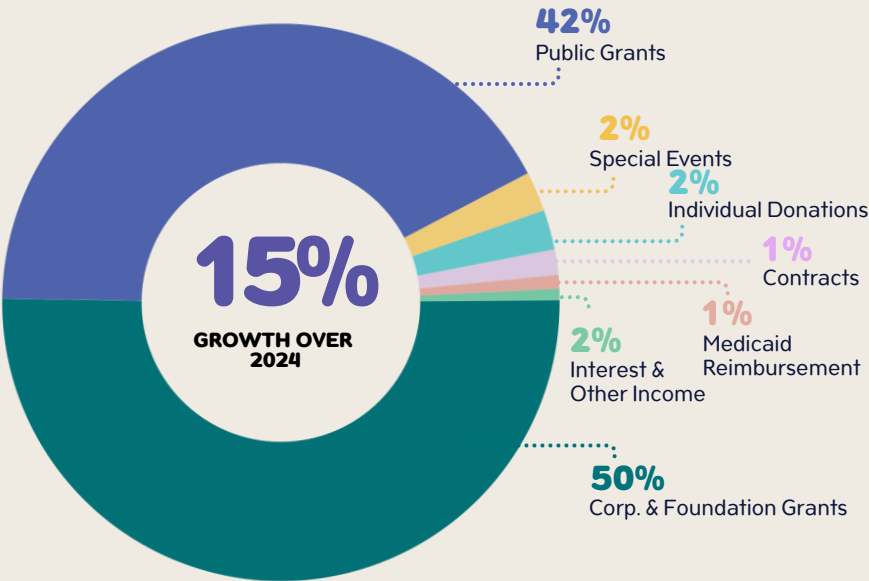
FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Strong financial health, diverse partnerships, and strategic investments in people and programs.

Expenses: \$4,381,989



Revenue: \$6,342,010



Held by community. Powered by your generosity.

GROWING PARTNERSHIPS

60+
partner organizations

In 2025, we strengthened our presence locally, statewide, and nationally through partnerships with more than 60 organizations to holistically meet the needs of families.

We also helped shape maternal and family health initiatives through advisory and leadership roles with organizations including Action for Women's Health, Seattle Children's, Public Health Seattle & King County, Best Starts for Kids, the Bezos Family Foundation, and many more. These partnerships strengthen our collective impact: **ensuring families receive comprehensive support and driving systems-level change.** This kind of work moves in two directions at once: it keeps families connected to care today, and it helps reshape the systems that determine whether care is available tomorrow.

COMMUNITY OF CARE

In 2025, our community of care continued to grow. From donors, partners, and volunteers to students, doulas, lactation providers, board members, and staff, each person played a vital role in ensuring families received the support they needed. **We couldn't do it without you!**



300
donors



52
donor
organizations



10
board
members



19
practicum
students



29
doulas &
lactation
providers



58
volunteers



Together we rise for families and advance birth justice.

open arms **FAMILY**



open arms

perinatal services



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Look what YOU helped us do!