



# News Release

**KENNETH W. JENKINS, Westchester County Executive**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **WESTCHESTER COUNTY MARKS BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK WITH NEW MATERNAL HEALTH DASHBOARD ON HEALTH DEPARTMENT WEBSITE**

*Black Maternal Health Week April 11 through April 17*

(White Plains, NY) – Westchester County Executive Ken Jenkins will mark Black Maternal Health Week with the launch of a new maternal health dashboard on the County Health Department website, that offers a deep dive into data about maternal health and births in Westchester.

Jenkins said: “This dashboard will help us track our progress as we work to improve Black maternal and child health outcomes and reduce racial healthcare inequities. This powerful tool can assist policy makers, advocates, grant funders and program managers by informing their decisions with granular information about the root causes of birth outcomes, and can also point the way toward solutions.”

[\*\*View the Maternal Health Dashboard Here.\*\*](#)

The County launched the Black Maternal Child Health Initiative in 2023 to address the increased risks that Black women face during pregnancy and childbirth. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), in 2021, Black women were 2.6 times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than White women. Researchers have found that Black women are also more likely to experience serious pregnancy complications, such as asthma, hypertension and gestational diabetes. Funded with \$2 million through the County Health Department, the initiative is a partnership with Sister to Sister International, Birth from the Earth, the Children’s Health Research Foundation/Lower Hudson Valley Perinatal Network, and St. John’s Riverside Hospital.

Health Commissioner Dr. Sherlita Amler said: “The programs funded by this initiative can lift up Westchester women and families. Through a combination of provider training to increase patient participation in medical

decision-making and improve the birth experience, along with an increase in home visits, prenatal and birthing consultations, health screenings, support groups for mothers and new fathers and referrals to other resources, these programs help families develop a solid foundation that can give each child a healthy start in life.”

[Founder of Sister to Sister International and the Westchester Black Maternal and Child Center of Excellence Dr. Cheryl Brannan said:](#) “Sister to Sister International (STSI) applauds County Executive Jenkins, Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Amler and their teams for their commitment to birth equity in Westchester County. Through our Westchester Black Maternal and Child Center of Excellence (WBMCCCE) we have recommended partners for County funding, worked collaboratively on activities and events with the DOH, and are excited about their launch of the maternal health dashboard during Black Maternal Health Week.”

The other partners are:

- [Birth from the Earth](#) offers prenatal/birthing consultations, group prenatal sessions and post-partum support groups. More than 134 families have been served and nearly 90 birth workers attended trainings. For more information, please go to [www.birthfromtheearth.org](http://www.birthfromtheearth.org).
- [The Children’s Health Research Foundation/Lower Hudson Valley Perinatal Network](#) expanded its prenatal and postpartum home-visits for residents in areas where adverse birth outcomes such as low-birthweight and premature births are more common. [A Baby Café](#) also offers virtual and in-person breastfeeding support. Since the contract started, CHRF hosted 192 Baby Café sessions and parents made 1,876 visits to Baby Cafes. County support has enabled 18 women have one-on-one support from a doula during their pregnancies. For more information, please go to [www.hudsonvalleychrf.org](http://www.hudsonvalleychrf.org).
- [St. John’s Riverside Hospital Maternity Department](#) is working to help strengthen data analytics, and administrative and program capacity of their health equity initiatives. The aim is to identify areas of improvement to improve birth outcomes for Black women, using focus groups and data analysis. More than 150 hospital medical and administrative staff have participated in implicit bias training. For more information, please go to [www.riversidehealth.org](http://www.riversidehealth.org).

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