

KENNETH W. JENKINS, Westchester County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WESTCHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES MATERNAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY ON JANUARY 23

(White Plains, NY) – Westchester County Executive Ken Jenkins is marking Maternal Health Awareness Day, and reaffirming his commitment to improve Black maternal health outcomes in Westchester. On January 23, and throughout the year, Jenkins is encouraging women and families to participate in the County’s initiatives that are designed to improve Black maternal and child health, reduce racial healthcare inequities, and create lasting partnerships with key community partners in the field.

The Westchester County Black Maternal Child Health Initiative, in collaboration with Sister to Sister International, includes more than \$1 million in funding through the end of 2025 for partnerships with Birth from the Earth, the Children’s Health Research Foundation/Lower Hudson Valley Perinatal Network, and St. John’s Riverside Hospital.

Jenkins said: “All children deserve to have a healthy start in life, and prenatal care and health equity are essential to ensuring a healthy mother and baby. As we recognize Maternal Health Awareness Day, it is important to shine a light on the work being done by our partners on behalf of Westchester County’s families, with additional support from the County Health Department.”

- Birth from the Earth offers prenatal/birthing consultations, group prenatal sessions and post-partum support groups. In 2024, 150 birth workers attended 15 workshops and more than 130 families were served through visits, consultations and other programs. For more information, please go to www.birthfromtheearth.org.
- The Children’s Health Research Foundation/Lower Hudson Valley Perinatal Network is expanding 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 home visits and breastfeeding support. At any time, about 50 families are enrolled in the home visiting program.

Through the end of 2024 ,718 home visits were conducted and 1,876 parent visits were made to Baby Cafes. For more information, please go to 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 advance birth outcomes for Black women. Conducting focus groups of Black women who have given birth and data analysis, the hospital shared its findings with physicians to identify trends in caesarean sections and opportunities for improvement, as well as conducted staff training on implicit bias. For more information, please go to www.riversidehealth.org.

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