So we tuned out and tuned in to our heart space
We slowed down
Walks in nature, the colors more brilliant than before
Sitting by the river, listening to the music of the standing waves
Could’t sit with our Mamas
But checked in with her more in a month than we did in a year
Got us thinking this is how it always should have been
The community and neighbors jumped into action to make sure the children and elderly were fed
More mothers delivered healthy babies
As fragile lives were lost to the virus
The Circle of Life has new meaning

Still, Still and Still was written by Jori An K. Cotton to remember the struggles and triumphs of Hamilton County families in 2020. Read the entire poem and more at @voices_of_healing_by_jori_an
Hamilton County realized a record low infant mortality rate in 2020.

7.4 deaths per 1,000 live births
Hamilton County, 2020

9.0 deaths per 1,000 live births
Hamilton County, 2015-2019

76 Babies died in Hamilton County, down 18% from 2015-2019
This is the fewest by far since modern record-keeping began.**

20 Fewer Babies Died in 2020 than 2019

Far Fewer Black Babies Died than Ever Before in 2020.

10.6 Black deaths per 1,000 live births
Hamilton County, 2015-2019

15.8 Black deaths per 1,000 live births
Hamilton County, 2020

36 Black babies died in Hamilton County, down 33% from 2015-2019

**Data source: Hamilton County Fetal and Infant Mortality Review.
**Comparable rates have been reported since 1968

Focus on Black Babies
Reducing Black infant deaths has been a specific focus of Cradle Cincinnati’s partners because, both nationally and locally, Black babies have long been subject to more than twice the rate of death due to the widespread effects of racism. Even these greatly improved rates are still at more than twice that of all other racial categories, so our focus on Black families will continue.

Extreme Preterm Birth Fell Sharply
Extreme preterm birth is defined as a baby born before the end of their mother’s second trimester. This is the leading cause of infant death. Total deaths due to this cause fell nearly in half since 2017 because of the hard work of committed partners.

Sleep-Related Infant Deaths Rose Sharply
21 Hamilton County infants died from a sleep-related cause, the highest number in over a decade. The most common cause of sleep-related death is suffocation when an adult shares a sleep surface with an infant and rolls over on the child.

Birth Defect Rates Match the National Average
Why did more babies live in 2020? Because you showed up.

2020 was a difficult year but our community worked hard to meet the needs of mothers and babies. Hundreds of professionals and thousands of families worked together to save the lives of babies in our city.
Cradle Cincinnati Connections is a team of community health workers, social workers, dietician and lactation counselors and nurse case managers who serve pregnant women and families with children under the age of two. This neighborhood-based approach to connecting vital services fills in systems gaps like housing assistance, depression screenings, breastfeeding support and access to essentials like cribs and diapers.

Families can reach Cradle Cincinnati Connections at 513-832-0539

About the Women Served by Cradle Cincinnati Connections

- 95% have health insurance
- 80% have a medical home, which means fewer ER visits
- 90% have kids who are attending well-child visits
- 645 total women served

Celebrating Babies & Safe Sleep
The Connections team hosted two safe and socially-distanced drive-thru baby showers for the Bond Hill and Price Hill neighborhoods. Participants received safe sleep training, cribs, food boxes, and diaper bags loaded with essential baby supplies, sanitizer, fans and more. They were also invited to participate in support groups with other women in the neighborhood.

A New Focus on Mental Health
Though 2020 was a challenging year, there were strong and capable women behind every door doing their best to check in on friends, family and neighbors. The Cradle Cincinnati Connections team focused more on mental wellbeing than ever before – including hosting support groups, leading Facebook Live discussions and caring for each other throughout the pandemic.

Staying In Touch and Meeting New Needs
When the COVID-19 virus kept the Cradle Cincinnati Connections team from making home visits, they quickly pivoted to video conferencing, telephone calls, consistent text messaging and porch drop-offs. That wasn't the only way the team had to change. The team also found creative ways to meet new needs like food, masks and hand sanitizer.

Black Maternity Matters
Connections partnered with Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library to disseminate information and engage in conversation on important prenatal and maternal health topics such as breastfeeding, baby-proofing your home, safe sleep, nutrition and more. These sessions will extend through the end of 2021.

Learn about upcoming workshops at cradlecincinnati.org/calendar

Spotlight On a Neighborhood Leader
Kai Staudemire with Naturally Homegrown Co generously helped teach moms in her community about making baby food and incorporating fresh produce as part of their daily lives. Her passion for healthy families benefits all the women around her.

Learn more here

Infant CPR Training
Together with the American Heart Association, the Connections team is hosting Infant CPR and Safe Sleep Training. Participants receive a CPR mannequin, virtual training, safe sleep guidelines, and a portable crib.

Learn more here
The Cradle Cincinnati Learning Collaborative is a network of 200+ healthcare providers committed to transforming prenatal and postpartum care for women and their families. It brings together representatives from hospitals, community health centers, home health agencies and social support organizations across Hamilton County. By using data and centering patients’ experiences, the team aims to reduce extreme preterm births with a specific focus on addressing racial disparities in birth outcomes.

In 2020 the Learning Collaborative saw:

- 60 new members representing 8 organizations
- 5 virtual collaborative meetings, attended by 100 prenatal care providers
- 5600+ views of COVID-19 educational content produced for families
- 9 newsletter communications highlighting data, tools and learning opportunities
- 4500+ women who received care

Reducing Implicit Bias That Affects Black Women
The Stand for Queens Campaign in partnership with Queens Village invited allies (including those who work in medicine) to join us in supporting and centering Black women.

Prenatal Care Rates Were Strong
Despite the challenges of COVID, Hamilton County saw a 29% decline in the number of women missing out on prenatal care in 2020.

Showing Up Every Day
2020 presented new challenges for the Cradle Cincinnati Learning Collaborative care teams who make women’s health care happen. Across organizations these professionals showed up for their patients every day despite inherent risks and overall challenges presented by the pandemic. They found creative and meaningful ways to go above and beyond to care for their patients and each other. And, through the Cradle Cincinnati Learning Collaborative they were able to support one another in order to best support mothers and babies.

Communication is Critical
As questions about the risks of COVID-19 to pregnant women and babies surfaced, members of the Learning Collaborative banded together to share information with patients and one another via video, calls and newsletters.

To join the Cradle Cincinnati Learning Collaborative contact cradlelearningcollaborative@cchmc.org
Queens Village is a supportive community of powerful Black women who come together to relax, reenergize and take care of themselves and each other. They provide a safe space for Black mothers to support and be supported by their peers, to connect, to relieve stress, to process trauma and to build a better world together for themselves and their children.

Alone Together
On March 11th, the same day the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic, Queens Village launched an Alone Together Facebook Live series to bring the community together and continue to create spaces for Black women. A year and 50 episodes later, the series continues to reach Black mothers in the community.

The Kitchen Table
In May 2020 Queens Village created a private, casual, sacred space online for Black women to laugh, cry and share advice and resources. Today, the Facebook page has nearly 1000 members.

Wellness Wins
Nearly 40 Black women participated in Wellness Journeys and developed positive lifestyle habits through building community, reducing stress, and sharing both creative and therapeutic tools.

“I found a community of supportive women for the first time in my life”

Changing the Narrative About Black Women
Our community was encouraged to get out and vote during a critical election year and center Black women’s voices with the release of The Queens Demands video in October.

In partnership with Voices of Healing, in Spring of 2020 Queens Village offered an online In Her Voice creative workshop for teen girls to express themselves and explore their reproductive life paths.

This incredible community ended the year with the Black Women for the Win campaign in December where Black women’s ability to persevere in the most trying of times was celebrated with care packages sent to over 200 Black women across the city and a social media campaign that celebrated their wins!

Change Happens When You Center Black Women & Ask Them to Lead
Queens Village Advisory Boards continue to meet and grow throughout the city in neighborhoods like Roselawn/Bond Hill, Westwood, North College Hill and Winton Hills. In 2020, Queens Village added 10 new members for a total of 31 advisory board members.

Creating Economic and Professional Pathways for Black Women to Succeed and Flourish
By investing $170,000 in over 120 Black women vendors, entrepreneurs and nonprofits Queens Village supports Black business leaders.

In collaboration with Cincinnati Children’s and The Urban League, a cohort of ten Black women participated in workforce training to enter the medical field while receiving support services from Queens Village. Nine of the women have secured jobs. A monthly group of 20 professional women in the workforce program support each other in setting goals, improving their financial wellness and leveling-up professionally.

Overall, Queens Village rose to meet the ongoing needs and wants of Black moms through the pandemic with doula support, hygiene care, food, check-in calls, creating one-on-one connections, resources and care packages.
A New Safe Sleep Movement

Sadly, the number of babies who died from sleep-related accidents across Hamilton County increased in 2020. Parents can recite the ABCs of Safe Sleep (Alone, Back, Crib), but it’s hard work to practice safe sleep.

Hamilton County Job & Family Services has partnered with Cradle Cincinnati to spread awareness about the preventability of sleep-related deaths through a widespread advertising campaign paired with community engagement.

More than 24 partners were involved in the design and development process led by two moms, Brittany Berry and Vagee Ferguson.

Safe Sleep is Hard, but Your Baby is Worth It

A fully integrated campaign will launch this spring across multiple channels. Traditional advertising includes billboards, bus ads, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Pamphlets, t-shirts and a website will engage families to learn what safe sleep is, why it’s important and how to do it with tips and tools for getting through the challenges.

Thank you to the funders that make Cradle Cincinnati possible.

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Buckeye Health Plan
CareSource
Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center
The Christ Hospital
The de Cavel Family SIDS Foundation/eat. play. give.
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7 Principles Foundation
Schwab Charitable Fund
TriHealth
UC Health
United Healthcare
United Way of Greater Cincinnati
U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration

This report was developed by Cradle Cincinnati in partnership with Hamilton County Public Health. It was produced by Becca Russo and Rachel Peters with cover photo by Kenyatta Davis.

Contributors include Ayanna Morgan, Stuart Taylor, Whitney Rémy, Tom Boeshart, Lauren Everett, Patrice Pennington, Meredith Shockley-Smith, Ryan Adcock & Jessica Seeberger.

Get involved or learn more about our work at cradlecincinnati.org and blackwomenforthewin.com.

f @cradlecincinnati @queensvillagecincinnati
o @cradlecincy @queensvillagecincinnati
y @cradlecincy @qvcincy

Join the movement at cradlecincinnati.org/sleep
### Infant Health

#### Breastfeeding Rates (upon hospital discharge)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ohio 2015-2019</th>
<th>Hamilton County 2015-2019</th>
<th>Hamilton County 2020</th>
<th>Hamilton County, Asian 2020</th>
<th>Hamilton County, Hispanic 2020</th>
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<td>87.9</td>
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#### Multiple Births (twins, triplets, etc.)

|                      | 3.6          | 4.0          | 4.0          | 2.6          | 1.7          | 1.7          | 4.5          |

#### Birth Defect/Congenital Anomaly Rates

|                      | 0.5          | 0.9          | 0.9          | 0.3          | 0.5          | 1.3          | 1.0          |

#### Pre-Pregnancy Body Mass Index

|                      | 1.7          | 2.0          | 1.2          | 1.2          | 1.2          | 1.2          | 1.2          |

#### Reported consistently placing infant on his or her back for sleep


#### Reported always placing a baby in crib for sleep


#### Reported receiving paid leave from employer after baby was born


### Women's Health

#### Birth-Related Infant Deaths (deaths per 1,000 live births)

|                      | 1.6          | 1.3          | 2.0          | --           | --           | --           | --           |

#### Pregnancy-related mortality

|                      | 11.6 (2016)  | --           | --           | --           | --           | --           | --           |

### Pregnancy Health

#### Preterm Birth Rate

|                      | 10.4         | 10.8         | 11.0         | 8.9          | 14.7         | 10.5         | 9.0          |

#### Pregnancy-related mortality

|                      | 11.6 (2016)  | --           | --           | --           | --           | --           | --           |

### Community Health

#### Pregnancy-related mortality

|                      | 11.6 (2016)  | --           | --           | --           | --           | --           | --           |

#### Substance Abuse Rates (among all women)


#### Postpartum Depression (among women who had live births)


#### Substance Abuse Rates (among women who had live births)


#### Substance Abuse Rates (among women who had live births)


#### Substance Abuse Rates (among women who had live births)


### Data Sources

Green = better compared to 2015-2016, Red = worse compared to 2015-2016. A4 numbers are percentages unless otherwise indicated. To read definitions of each indicator, download our data dictionary at cradlecincyta.org.