



2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: MADELEINE DORVAL-MOLLER



*Madeleine Dorval-Moller
Executive Director*

In January of 2021 we began with our hopes up for a better year, and the prospect of returning to normalcy. But instead, the past year has been filled with continuing weariness, fear and frustration. Although the Omicron variant has begun to subside, our plans for 2022 are still filled with uncertainties. But what is certain is NMPP's steadfast commitment to helping vulnerable families. The pandemic has surely shaken our lives. The city continues to work to return to pre-pandemic life. However, Covid-19 has left many families struggling and grappling with the losses of their loved ones. For the families we serve, who in normal times struggle to meet their basic needs, the pandemic continues to amplify their daily struggle.

During the hard days of the pandemic, we were forced to operate remotely. Our staff had to cope with their own personal losses and struggles. However, these challenges did not deter us from assisting the families who needed help. Our team rolled up their sleeves and were there for these families. When our building shut down, the NMPP team stored basic supplies for clients in their living rooms and drove around to deliver baby supplies to our families. We could not be more proud of the resiliency of our incredible team members, and of our dedicated Board Members. We at NMPP want to renew our commitment to fighting persistent systemic inequities, which result in less access to critical care, education, food, housing, and employment for our communities.

In this 2021 Year in Review, we highlight last year's accomplishments, including the launching of our Maternal Action Network (MAN) Telehealth Project, a collaborative initiative with New York Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) and University Albany at SUNY. We believe this project will help elevate the voices of women of color, and give them better control of the management of their health care. For that we are most grateful to NYP and the New York State Health Foundation for supporting this project. We thank each of our funders for the support and confidence they have shown in NMPP.

Raising Women's Voices for Respectful Delivery of their Health Care In Partnership with New York Presbyterian & the University of Albany at SUNY



Women of color and lower socioeconomic status are disproportionately affected by adverse pregnancy outcomes. Telehealth is an innovative way to provide improved access to prenatal and perinatal care. However, it may be unavailable to lower-income women of color who lack necessary access, technology, or skills. Since telehealth is likely to remain a post-pandemic modality for accessing health care, this digital divide threatens to increase racial inequities.

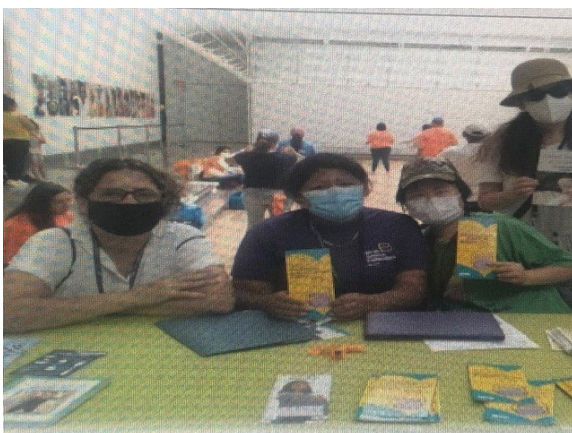
In April 2021 NMPP received a grant from the New York State Health Foundation to support a telehealth initiative. The Northern Manhattan Maternal Action Network Telehealth Project will identify telehealth barriers and benefits, and elevate voices of women of color in both development of telehealth services and in day-to-day interactions with providers.

The project will:

- ❖ Create a patient/provider partnership to identify barriers to telehealth utilization by women of color in the context of prenatal and perinatal health care
- ❖ Develop strategies to address these barriers that are grounded in patients' health care seeking experiences.
- ❖ Train Community Health Workers (CHWs), who are representative of the service population to provide support for patients as they navigate this new mode of health care system interaction
- ❖ Develop a new model of care, rather than implement a pre-formulated telehealth intervention.

Telehealth is a fast-evolving aspect of health care that should be informed by patients if we are to improve upon, rather than exacerbate, existing MCH outcome inequities. The CHW patient service model ensures that patient voices are prominent and empowered in health care delivery, and supports patients as partners.

The Birth Justice Defenders (BJDs)



The Birth Justice Defenders (BJDs) are community residents who create innovative ways to educate their communities about their rights, and advocate for an environment where pregnant women feel supported in asserting those rights, in order to have safe and dignified birth experiences.

In late summer 2021, NMPP was funded by the New York Academy of Medicine and NYC Department of Health to be a Birth Justice Hub. As a hub, NMPP supports the Manhattan, Bronx, and Staten Island Birth Justice

Defenders throughout their process of skill building, networking, and visioning of impactful community-centered initiatives. We provide a platform to support regular meetings, trainings, and activities. We support activities that focus on respectful care at birth.

2021 Accomplishments:

- ❖ Held outreach meetings to discuss the successes and challenges faced by the BJDs, and the support needed
- ❖ Held 2 virtual educational baby showers reaching 27 pregnant women
- ❖ Held virtual workshops covering breast feeding and self-care for 22 participants
- ❖ Trained 20 community members to become postpartum doulas
- ❖ Held a lactation training for the postpartum doulas.

Services to Reduce Disparities in Maternal Morbidity & Mortality



Nationally, maternal deaths for black mothers are three to four times the rate of white mothers. However, in New York City the statistics reveal more alarming trends, where black women are eight times more likely to die in childbirth or have adverse health outcomes. According to the CDC, almost two thirds of pregnancy related deaths are preventable. Therefore it's critical that pregnant women and postpartum women be educated to recognize urgent maternal warning signs.

NMPP's target communities of Central and East Harlem are characterized by significant disparities in perinatal outcomes compared to the city and national measures. In 2019, through our Healthy Start Program, HRSA provided supplemental funding for a Nurse Midwife (CNM) and a Registered Dietician (RD) to address the health care needs of high risk pregnant women.

Throughout the year our Nurse Midwife provides one-on-one consultation for our pregnant clients and conducts workshops covering topics such as "Know Your Rights During Pregnancy", and other topics of pregnancy related complications. The goal is to empower our clients to advocate for themselves for respectful care at birth, as well as to be more knowledgeable of early signs of obstetric complications.

Clinical Services

Accomplishments:

Our Nurse Midwife served 115 pregnant women through one-on-one consultations and conducted eight 4-week child birth education workshops on topics ranging from:

- ❖ Maternal Warning Signs
- ❖ Know Your Rights at Birth
- ❖ Gestational Diabetes
- ❖ Pre-eclampsia
- ❖ Pregnancy and cardiovascular
- ❖ Child birth spacing and more

Our Registered Dietitian provided workshops for 110 pregnant women with topics including:

- ❖ Risks associated with overweight and obesity prior to pregnancy
- ❖ Foods associated with increased and decreased risk of gestational diabetes
- ❖ Food safety during pregnancy; which foods to avoid due to harmful bacteria
- ❖ How to prepare food safely to prevent foodborne illness and more

The inclusion of the Certified Nurse Midwife, Registered Dietitian and Doulas into our program offerings aims to address the needs of these high-risk women in our target area.

Doula Care



In June 2020, NMPP in partnership with NYP Allen Obstetric Department and the Charles Rangel Clinic launched The Community Maternal Mortality Collaborative (CMMC). The project aims to improve access to, and engagement in primary care for medically underserved pregnant women, to decrease the percentage of no shows for postpartum visits. Through screenings, the patients' unmet social determinants of health (which are often the barriers that prevent this target population from attending visits) are assessed and addressed.

Services include a health navigator, community health workers (CHW), and postpartum doulas to assist women and their families to effectively access continuous and coordinated healthcare and other services, as well as home visiting/virtual visiting to ensure prenatal and postpartum visits are attended. The postpartum doulas provide weekly visits during the postpartum period to assist and ensure that the patient attends the postpartum visit and to assess for post-delivery complications.

The doulas also assist with breast feeding support and address issues of postpartum depression, supporting the mental and physical wellbeing of the mothers. Participants are connected to a case management/home visiting program that best addresses their social needs.

Accomplishments:

- ❖ 193 women completed the doula program
- ❖ 100% completed their postpartum visit
- ❖ 153 were referred for CHW support

Because of the success of the CMMC, the project has been expanded and is now called EMBRACE - Empowering Mother's Birth Rights through Advocacy, Community and Education. This year EMBRACE will serve 1,000 women receiving services through the Ambulatory Care Network clinics, NYP-Allen Hospital, NYP-Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital, and NYP- Weill Cornell. The project will ensure positive birth outcome and completion of postpartum care.

Family Wellness Support



Toddler time at NMPP consist of music and movement, arts and craft, and story time. Moms also have an opportunity to share experiences and support each other.

Throughout the year our health educators and case managers promote family wellness using the Parenting Journey and 24/7 Dads curricula to communicate effective parenting practices, targeting mothers as well as fathers. Topics covered included: effective parenting, infant attachment, and maintaining good mental health. Depression screening tools are administered for all pregnant and postpartum women, as well as Intimate partner violence screening tools, as needed, on a confidential, one-on-one basis. Our certified

lactation counselor promotes breastfeeding by providing both one-on-one support, and support groups, for first time parents.

Accomplishments:

- ❖ 557 pregnant and postpartum women were screened for depression
- ❖ 5 parenting education workshops were provided for 43 participants
- ❖ 30 dads were engaged individually or in virtual group using the 24/7 Dads curricula
- ❖ 557 women were screened for intimate partner violence
- ❖ 6 sessions on healthy meals preparation were provided for 36 parents

Infant Care



Health education and promotion around infant care is equally comprehensive, targeting both mothers and fathers. Our Case Managers/Community Health Care Workers make substantial efforts to educate our

families on an individual basis. They conduct on going workshops related to infant care, such as: safe sleep practices, breastfeeding, bottle-feeding and oral health, adhering to recommended schedules for well child visits, interconception reproductive planning, the importance of reading to language development and early literacy, and the importance of father involvement to social-emotional development.

Accomplishments

- ❖ Held 7 safe sleep practices workshops for 126 parents
- ❖ 94% of our families completed well child visits
- ❖ 94% of the children received their immunization shots within the recommended schedules
- ❖ Held 18 breastfeeding education and New Born Care Support sessions for 159 parents
- ❖ 80% of parents received training in oral care for their infant
- ❖ 95% of our clients maintained reproductive birth plans



Healthy Families staff, Ms. Jaime, working with a family during a clothing drive during the holidays.

Children with Special Needs

In 2015 Northern Manhattan Perinatal Partnership (NMPP) and the Center for Community Health Navigation (CCHN) at New York Presbyterian Hospital, co-developed and implemented a DSRIP (SKATE) funded Community Health Worker (CHW) led program to support children with special health care needs. In 2018 with funding from the Oberkotter Foundation, NMPP and CCHN co-developed a project for children with hearing loss. All newborns are screened for hearing loss.

The goals of the Pediatric CHW Program are to help patients and their caregivers address the social needs that interfere with health management and well-being and to support coordination of care. Throughout the year the CHWs conducted home/virtual visits, and accompanied clients to their appointments. Specifically, the CWHs worked on delivering & reinforcing education around three key messages to the families:

- Know your child's condition (s) & what to do when your child is sick
- Know how to access health care for your child and have control over medical complexity.
- Keep your child's condition (s) under control

Accomplishments:

- ❖ 96 families enrolled in the SKATE Program
- ❖ 8 Families with children with hearing loss enrolled into the long-term case management program

Education

Northern Manhattan Early Childhood Center (NMECC) Formerly Northern Manhattan Head Start (NMHS)



Northern Manhattan Early Childhood Center (NMECC) is a multi-funded program established in 2000 under the umbrella of NMPP. Our vision is to work as a collaborative unit of staff members, parents, community and stakeholders to provide quality early childhood education for the children and families in our community. The foundation of our process is early childhood education best practices undergirded by family engagement, health and nutrition services, while working closely with our community partners.

Our mission is to support families in transitioning their children appropriately into the educational system, and to holistically prepare them to enter the larger educational environment ready to learn. Since its inception, NMECC has delivered both center and home-based Head Start/UPK services under the auspices of both ACS and DOE.

In 2019, NMHS responded to the DOE's Request for Proposal and was awarded a combination of continuing Head Start as well as Childcare seats with a contractual implementation date of July 1st. This change in program option has resulted in a name change to fully encompass our service delivery model of both Head Start and Child Care...Northern Manhattan Early Childhood Center (NMECC)

Program Highlights

- ❖ We are one of the few programs that completed the last NYC Federal Review with no non-compliances nor deficiencies. We have also maintained a “no findings” status with our monitoring agencies: the Department of Health (DOH) and the Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP), consecutively for the past five years.

- ❖ Secured a 4 out of 5 Star Rating from New York’s Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS) geared towards early childhood programs to provide support and sustain high quality across the State.
- ❖ Our program has maintained an overall “Excellent” rating on the NYC DOE Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ)/Great Schools. The rating is determined based on the DOE’s assessment of how well aligned our program is to the framework. We have exceeded expectations in all six domain areas, namely:
 1. **Rigorous Instruction:** Teaching teams create engaging activities to help children develop language, social, and thinking skills based on the Pre-K learning standards. Specifically, the CLASS and ECERS-R Scores were either comparable to the district standards or exceeded them.
 - ✓ *The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R) scores look at the learning environment, materials, and how teachers support and interact with children.*
 - ✓ *The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) scores look at interactions that support children's learning. This includes interactions between teachers and children, and among children.*
 2. **Collaborative Teachers:** Teaching teams work well together to improve program quality.
 3. **Supportive Environment:** Children are respected, valued, and supported to meet high expectations by program staff.
 4. **Effective School Leadership:** This domain determines how well our program demonstrates strategic leadership and inspires the pre-K community with a clear vision for instruction and family engagement.
 5. **Strong Family-Community Ties:** This section looks at how well the pre-K program forms effective partnerships with families and outside organizations to support families in meeting children's needs.
 6. **Trust:** This section looks at whether relationships between administrators, educators, students, and families are based on trust and respect.



Accomplishments

- ❖ Served 222 students
- ❖ Held 11 nutrition sessions for 86 parents
- ❖ Held 11 mental health sessions for 52 parents
- ❖ Distributed 2,300 books during the pandemic
- ❖ Distributed 225 backpacks during the pandemic

Community Engagement



BBZ Parent Empowerment Workshop at the George Bruce Library located in the target area/zone.



Manhattan Borough President, Gale Brewer joins community organizations including NMPP/Best Babies Zone at community Love On The Block Family Wellness event.

The goals of the Harlem Community Action Network (HCAN) are to facilitate community transformation and promote systems change. For the past two years we have been promoting systems change for our targeted zip codes through our Harlem Best Babies Zone (Harlem BBZ) project. *Best Babies Zone (BBZ)* is a national initiative. Its approach is a multi-sector, community driven effort to reducing racial inequities in birth and life outcomes by mobilizing community residents and organizational partners to address the social determinants of health. We are grateful for the support of Mother Cabrini Health Foundation (MCHF) for our Harlem Best Babies Zone project. For the past 2 years, MCHF has provided funding to enhance our [Healthy Start Program](#) through BBZ.

Throughout this past year, Harlem BBZ focused on parent empowerment workshops that armed families with the tools, tips, and strategies needed to prepare their children for success when they enter school. The workshops educated parents on brain development during infancy and early childhood, and how it connected to social and emotional development.

These workshops have also been designed to teach parents to understand that getting their babies ready for school begins during pregnancy, and that they would be able to do intentional teaching and coaching with their children that would help ensure success in school and in life. Last year the BBZ's activities included virtual workshops on topics such as **Play is critical during the first five years, Language Development, Attachment, Temperament, Discipline and Guidance, and the 30 million Word**

Gap. The 30-million-word gap refers to a phenomenon where low-income children hear 30 million fewer words than their higher income peers by the time they enter kindergarten.

Accomplishments:

- ❖ We conducted 12 workshop series for 34 parents
- ❖ Held 4 quarterly meetings with a total of 113 individuals consisting of:
 - providers and stakeholders
 - program participants and community residents.

Community Health Workers Can Make a Difference



In implementing the Maternal Action Telehealth Project, our Community Health Workers (CHWs) will be instrumental for achieving success. CHWs often serve as a bridge between the clients and their health care providers. Due to the close work alliance CHWs tend to form with their clients, they get to know the dynamics of each family intimately, and work to help address their unmet social needs. We often say that if a health care provider is unable to be in touch

with a patient, they should contact their CHW, because they would know what is going on with the family and how to find them. To that end, we encourage health care providers, including hospitals, to develop work alliances with community based organizations. We can improve health outcomes of marginalized communities through the work of CHWs.

Please take some time to view NMPP's July presentation at the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANY) monthly minority health disparities series, in which we discussed the role of CHWs and Covid-19 [here](#).

Conversation about Maternal Health

Our [Healthy Families Central Harlem](#) program, which provides intensive home-visiting services, certainly had to adapt to providing care to our clients virtually due to COVID-19. Program Director, Lydie Pierre spoke with the Resolveera organization about mother-child bonding and maternal health challenges during Covid-19. Click [here](#) to watch.

NMPP Staff Spotlight



Dr. Janice Gray-Pierre
Educator Award Winner
Northern Manhattan Head Start

Janice Gray-Pierre, Ph.D., Administrative Director

Northern Manhattan Head Start (now Northern Manhattan Early Childhood Center)

Janice Gray-Pierre, Ph.D. is the recent recipient of the Educator Award from [Books for Kids](#). Dr Gray-Pierre has served in the capacity of Senior Leadership for over twelve years. Her scholarly work includes Leadership and its efforts on early learning in Head Start; Strengthening the 0-8-year lifeline: An operational collaboration between Head Start and Healthy Start and the Benefits of Play in Early Childhood settings.

Motivated by her passion and unwavering commitment to her role as early childhood educator, Dr. Gray has dedicated her professional life to the cause. She is an advocate for young children and has worked in the field of Early Childhood Education for most of her adult life advocating for Children since they cannot advocate for themselves. Dr. Gray passionately believes that being on the cutting edge of lifelong learning is both enlightening and empowering and is keenly motivated

to transfer this passion to her teachers. She believes teachers have a tremendous impact on children's development during the formative years.

In her quest to achieve this goal, she has served as a mentor coach observing and assessing classroom activities and providing on-the-job guidance and training to improve teacher quality. Grounded in her earliest years as a preschool teacher herself, Dr. Gray's career has encompassed all levels of educational leadership, professional development, and management in transforming Early Childhood programs. Dr. Gray earned her doctorate in Leadership and Educational Administration from the school of Education at Cappel University, a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education from Brooklyn College and Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education from Lehman College in New York.

AN UNWAVERING MISSION



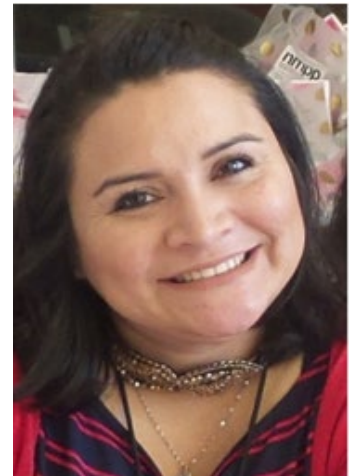
Dr. Gray-Pierre on supporting students and families during the pandemic:

"Each child was given a book bag that was either distributed at home or through curbside pickup to ensure that each family received one. The books included learning packets aligned with the curriculum, books and art & craft supplies. We also worked with families who lost their jobs to obtain food from neighboring pantries. We were also able to send home bagged meals for the remote learners and assist families in obtaining electronic devices."

Arely Moreira, CHW
MICHHC Program

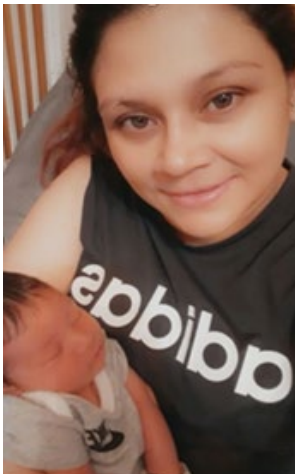
Ms. Arely Moreira has been with NMPP for six years. She is passionate about the work she does to connect families to services, increase awareness, promote & improve health and social wellbeing in the communities served by NMPP.

Thank you to Ms. Arely Moreira for all that you do as one of NMPP most valued employees.



Ms. Arely Moreira

Mom's Experience at NMPP



Bessy Martinez with her infant.

My Name is Bessy Martinez. I entered the MICHHC program at 7 months of pregnancy. Arely Moreira has been a good worker with me since she referred me to the Doula program. It helped me a lot in this country, since I am new, I do not have the experience of how hospitals work. I can say that the Doula served its purpose. Arely conveyed her knowledge, confidence, and empathy. I felt supported in a moment of great sensitivity and need. Working with Arely, I have learned that there are many opportunities out there, she has helped me and shared a bit of her experience and some talks for the care of the baby, she has also helped me with a few things for my baby since financially I have not been well. She provided excellent service.

I want to congratulate her for her work that she carries out as my worker. It is worthy of congratulations, since she brings together all the principles of human quality, values, love, hope, gratitude, help and that brings joy to those who receive it but it enhances the person who performs it. For me, more than my worker, she has become someone in my family that I can count on.

For more information about NMPP, please feel free to visit our website at www.nmppcares.org, subscribe to our newsletter, or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @nmppcares.