

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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**THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 2021
COMMITTEE ROOM 'A'
YELLOWKNIFE, NT
9:00 AM**

AGENDA

1. Prayer
2. Review and Adoption of Agenda
3. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
4. Public Matters:
 - a. Child and Family Services Review Presentation from The Northern Birthwork Collective:
 - Attachment #1
 - b. Child and Family Services Review Presentation from Foster Family Coalition of the NWT
 - c. Technical Briefing Hosted by the Department of Justice regarding Integrated Service Delivery Model
 - Attachment #2
5. *In-Camera* Matters:
 - a. Briefing from the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation:
 - Attachment #3
 - Attachment #4
 - Attachment #5
6. Date and Time of Next Meeting: Friday, April 30, 2021 at 10:00 AM
7. Adjournment

Accessible and Culturally Appropriate Birthwork

by Sabrina Flack & Dehga Scott



Who We Are

Sabrina Flack
Project Director

- Certified Full Spectrum Doula
- Advocate for pregnant, birthing and postpartum people
- I am a mixed-race Black woman
- Passionate about just and equitable care for BIPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ folks



Dehga Scott
Research and Development

- I am Tlicho Dene
- Mother
- Indigenous Governance Degree Student at Yukon U
- Passionate about revitalizing Indigenous birth practices in the north

VISION

Our collective vision is for all families, pregnant and birthing people from underserved communities to have access to holistic and dignified support, that is respectful and free of oppression and racism.

MISSION

Our mission is to provide cost supported programming and services for all stages of the reproductive journey including conception, pregnancy, birth, postpartum, miscarriage, loss, abortion, and parenting.

We intend to provide continuous education to members of our community and grow a territory wide network of birthworkers who are able to provide collective care that is grounded in our values.

We acknowledge that colonization has had a great impact on our bodies and traditions, and believe that revitalizing traditional knowledge is a crucial step in our collective healing.

VALUES

Advocacy

Anti-Racism

Inclusivity

Cultural Safety

Client and Family Centred

Holistic

Respect

What is a Doula?

A Doula (or Birthworker) is a trained professional who supports individuals and families throughout their pregnancy, labour, and birth as well as providing additional support during the postpartum period and through abortion, miscarriage and loss.

Doulas are trained to provide emotional, informational, and physical (non-medical) support, as well as to advocate for their clients. Their priority is to support the birthing person but they also support partners, other children, and other members of the family going through the transition.



The Racist History of Obstetrics and Gyneacology —————

- "Father of American Gyneacology" John Marion Sims experimented on slaves
- Our Canadian Healthcare System stems from these practices
- Black and Indigenous birthers have worse outcomes and experience more harm than White birthers
- It's not just historical



The Importance of Trust and Continuity of Care ———

- The effects of fear and judgement on labour are detrimental to the health of parents and babies
- Many Indigenous and Black folks have distrust in the system, with good reason
- Not being able to express difficult feelings due to worry around being seen as "hysterical" and having your child taken away is one of the many ways this fear and distrust manifests
- Having a trusted companion through this process can help to create feelings of safety and trust for the birth giver



How Birthwork Can Help Children and Families

- Doulas provide continuous care through pregnancy and all pregnancy outcomes
- Doulas can be trained to practice harm reduction and have trauma informed practice
- Doulas are advocates, know their clients history, wishes and meet them where they are at
- Doulas continue to support postpartum when the stress from bringing a baby home can take a toll



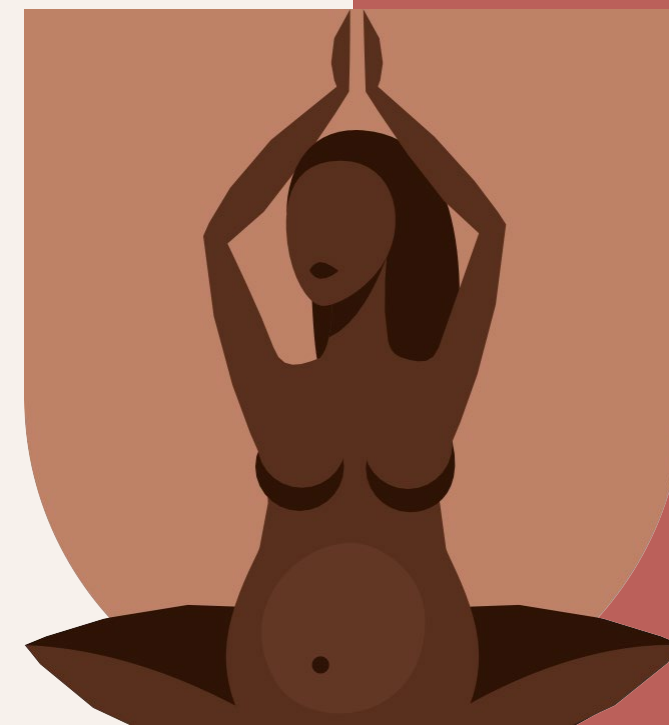
Indigenous Doulas and Revitalizing Traditional Knowledge ———

- There are very few Indigenous Doulas in the NWT
- NBC in the process of developing an Indigenous Doula Training specific to the NWT
- Important to see yourself reflected in your care providers
- The reproductive and family building journey is a time to gain a great sense of belonging and healing
- Doulas trained with traditional knowledge, and the families supported by them connect more to their cultural practices



Valuing Care Work and Emotional Labour ———

- Doulas are not covered by health insurance
- Access to services that promote healing is crucial
- Care work, or work traditionally seen as "feminine" has gone undervalued for too long
- The NBC exists to bridge this gap. Provide families with access to doula and other reproductive wellness support as well as compensate doulas fairly



Thank you for listening to our presentation.

QUESTIONS?

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