



Lamaze Family Center

Celebrating 40 years!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Lamaze Family Center Ann Arbor and Doulas Care
Announce Collaborative Alliance;
*Hosting Community & Professional Open House on May 20***

April 22, 2009—The Lamaze Family Center Ann Arbor (LFCAA) is proud to announce its collaborative alliance with Doulas Care, an Ann Arbor-based nonprofit. With similar missions, both organizations serve pregnant and postpartum families and forming this landmark alliance helps further support both organizations in their mission to support childbearing women and their families as they seek high quality, evidence-based maternity care.

“As part of our evidence-based curriculum, we educate families on the importance of having continuous labor support, before, during and after birth,” says Stephanie Schaldenbrand, MA, LCCE, CD(DONA), executive director of LFCAA. “Doulas can be an integral part of labor support and our alliance with Doulas Care will allow our families increased access to doulas services regardless of their economic backgrounds.”

Both organizations are affiliated with larger national organizations, Lamaze International and DONA International, and serve as an example nationally for others to form partnerships between community based non-profit organizations serving pregnant and postpartum families.

The goal of the alliance, in addition to providing resources and support by Lamaze® certified childbirth educators and volunteer birth and postpartum doulas, is to increase our one stop shopping approach to educating and supporting families from pregnancy to preschool.

Both organizations maintain separate fiscal identities and Board of Director oversight while sharing office space at 2500 Packard Road. Collaboration between the two organizations through continuing education of both the public and medical community will be unveiled later this year and will focus on providing information and resources for families who working towards an optimal pregnancy and birth experience as the first step in their transition to becoming parents.

“With our focus on supporting, educating and empowering childbearing women and their families, it is only logical to align ourselves with community partners that also promote that process,” says Lisa Kane Low, PhD, CNM, FACNM, Volunteer Executive Director of Doulas Care. “The Lamaze Family Center provides an expansive array of educational resources and classes for families and our Doulas Care doulas will be build on that education and provide

individual support to those families who desire to achieve their desired maternity care experience."

The two organizations will be hosting a Community & Professional Open House on Wednesday, May 20 from 4:30-6:30pm at their joint offices at 2500 Packard, Suite 101. The executive directors will make a short presentation and then answer questions about the alliance at 5:00pm. Light refreshments will be served and all are welcome to attend the reception. Ann Arbor business and nonprofit leaders, elected officials and members of the Ann Arbor medical community have been invited.

The Lamaze Family Center Ann Arbor, a non-profit organization founded in 1967, is staffed by rigorously trained professionals who promote the well-being of the family and the concept of family-centered care from pregnancy to preschool. The organization has fostered a solid reputation as a leader in childbirth education, while also evolving to incorporate many other aspects of prenatal and postpartum support. In addition to Lamaze Childbirth Education, LFC offers breastfeeding, infant care, new mother support classes, as well as mother's groups, parent-toddler playgroups, and a sibling class for soon-to-be big brothers and sisters.

For more information, please go to www.lamazefamilycenter.org.

Doulas Care, an Ann Arbor-based non-profit that serves families throughout Southeastern Michigan, works to improve maternal and infant health outcomes and reduce health disparities by matching qualified volunteer doulas with pregnant women and adolescents who have limited resources. As special mentors, doulas provide educational, emotional, physical, and logistical support to women and their families. Doulas Care also helps the volunteers by providing the opportunity to gain hands-on experience soon after training and opens a professional pathway in the field of maternal and infant health.

For more information, please go to <http://doulascare.org>.

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