

April Team of the Month: Nashville Strong Babies

Which of the following criteria does your nominee most embody?

Excellence in Motivation

Exemplifying the Mission and Core Values of MPHD

Please provide a specific example that illustrates why you feel this team should be the MPHD Team of the Month:

It is my sincere honor to humbly submit the Nashville Strong Babies team and internal partners for consideration for the MPHD Team of the Month. Nashville Strong Babies (NSB) is comprised of 7 direct service staff, 2 program services managers and a host of contractors who coordinate and deliver care directly to families. In June 2024, NSB expanded services from a limited 7-zip code area to services being available to anyone living in Davidson County. The program service area more than quadrupled in size with increased expectations for serving more pregnant women in a truncated time while the program team remained short staffed. Undeterred by the daunting demand, the NSB team got to work! Under the leadership of Program Manager Angela Williams and support from Nurse Manager Angela Boffah, the NSB team supported 438 case managed families over the last 11 months, exceeding the enrolled participant goal by 106% for the first year! Additionally, 92% of Nashville Strong Babies infants were born full term; 96% were born a healthy birth weight, and overall, Nashville Strong Babies continues to maintain a 100% infant and maternal vitality rate (we have not had a single mom or baby die)! In comparison: 1). A Davidson County family experiences the death of their infant every 5 days in our city (overall infant mortality rate is 7.1/1,000; Re: 2019-2021); 2). On average, 4 Davidson County moms die from a pregnancy related death (2021), 9% of Davidson County babies are born low birth weight and nearly 11% are born prematurely. The impact is evidence of the difference our collective public health services make for Davidson County families.

The ability to exceed program enrollment and maintain quality services is both a reflection of the community demand for services, the strength and motivation of the NSB staff as well as excellent internal customer service – demonstrating intradepartmental coordination between the Central Referral Systems, the Division of Epidemiology, WIC, Behavioral Health and Wellness Division, Divisions of Health Access and Prevention and Wellness, Sexual Health Clinics, Communications Office, Finance and many more!

One Nashville Strong Babies family typifies how we collectively protect, improve and sustain the health and well-being of all people in Nashville and Davidson County. The following story is shared with permission to use the family's middle name. Before enrolling in Nashville Strong Babies prenatal care management services, LaShae says "As a [new] mom, you really don't know what you don't know, and I didn't know where to turn." While the recent high school graduate was excited to be pregnant, she was also navigating intimate partner violence and trying to find help. LaShae found Nashville Strong Babies and met her Care Manager, Zuri Jones. Zuri worked with LaShae to create a step-by-step plan for services and resources needed to help her accomplish her goals. According to LaShae, the resources provided by Nashville Strong Babies - birth plan education, doula services, baby item essentials, exercise, and nutrition support - have made all difference. At one point in her pregnancy, LaShae, like an increasing number of families, also experienced homelessness. Recognizing the desperate need for housing, Zuri worked with the case consultation team and partners to find housing just in time for LaShae to welcome her healthy full term baby boy. "Before, when I think about coming from where I was, I couldn't imagine how I was going to keep it together. Now I have housing, I'm enrolled in college, and I have grown to advocate and advise other moms at my school about what they need to care for themselves and their family."

Thank you to the following NSB staff for exemplary service: Angela Boffah, Angela Williams, Crystal Witt, Dawn Smith, Donna Jean-Jumeau, Indigo Harris, Latonya Ensley, and Zuri Jones. Thank you to Jenny Avedisian for being a great finance partner and to the entire WIC team for being an excellent referral partner.

Nominated by: D'Yuanna Allen-Robb

