

DOULA Labor of Love

An overview of what doula's do!

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Hello, I'm Elizabeth!



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I have been working as a therapist for over 20 years. In the last 4 years I have shifted to working primarily with moms experiencing postpartum mood and anxiety disorders. I love my moms! I am in the second half of life and I'm excited to keep learning and growing.

Budding Doula!

That led to an interest in shifting into Doula work. I recently completed my coursework towards becoming a Certified Doula through DONA International, <https://www.dona.org>

Evidence Based

The most recent review of continuous labor support summarized the experience of 15,000 women (Hadnett et al 2011), who labored without support and found they were more likely to...



have an epidural to manage pain



give birth by cecearean section



give birth with vacuum extraction/forceps



give birth to baby with lower APGAR



be dissatisfied with their childbirth expereince

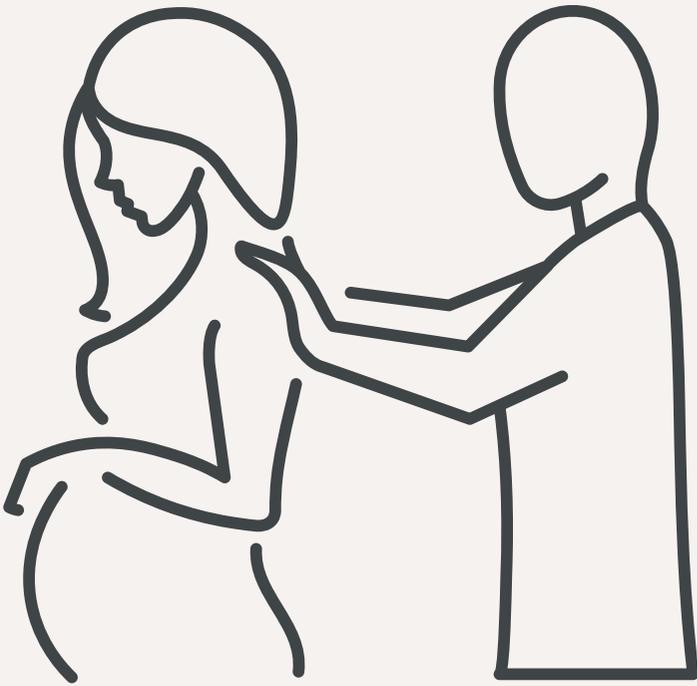


WHAT IS SATISFACTION IN CHILDBIRTH?

It can mean different things to each birthing person, but includes:

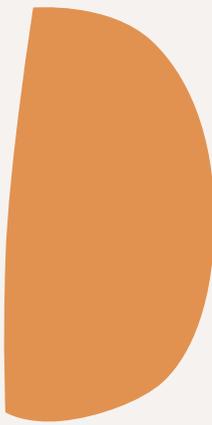
1. Having good support from caregivers.
2. Having a high quality relationship with caregivers.
3. Being involved about decision making in care.
4. Having better than expected experiences.





What doulas DO

A doula provides women-both unpartnered or partnered with continuous emotional support, physical comfort and assistance in obtaining information before during and just after childbirth.



Doula's DO

encourage

empower

validate

remind

support-emotionally &
physically

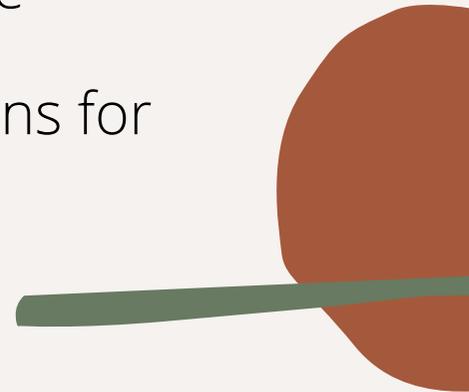
Doula's DON'T

speak for

diagnose

make decisions for

judge



A brief overview of where a doula is...

Pre-labor is the time one usually makes contact with their doula. During this time a woman may be having intermittent contractions. Doulas will help to calm, comfort and suggest to mom and partner. Phone support shifts into coming in person to assist them somewhere during early and active labor, through until the baby is birthed. This may be at the home, hospital or birth center. A doula has a big bag of comfort supports to use during the active stages of labor. Comfort touch, shower/tub, and various postures and repetitive rituals are used to support the birther through the many challenges of each of the labor stages.

Stages of labor

My commitment to you...



1st stage:

- EARLY: support, inform, remind
- ACTIVE: relaxation, rhythm, ritual
- TRANSITION: anchor and empower



2nd stage

BIRTH: reminders, rest/surrender

YOU DID IT!



3rd stage

PLACENTA: support discomfort



4th stage

RECOVERY: allow family space

Why would I need a doula if I have a partner?

THAT IS A GREAT QUESTION!

There is a lot going on, and if it's your partner's first child they will not know what to expect either.

Doulas help support partners to support the birthing person! Hospitals are really focused on the baby, while partners and doulas focus their attention and support on the well being and needs of the birther and her process.



I hope this brief overview helped to clarify why in our modern and medicalized system of childbirth, a doula can be a choice that supports your voice.

