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## Summary of the Rigorous Research on Group Prenatal Care

Group prenatal care is an alternative model of prenatal care facilitated by a trained health care provider and delivered in a group setting. The model integrates health assessments, education, skill building, and peer social support. Group prenatal care provides pregnant people (typically with low-risk pregnancies not requiring individual monitoring) with approximately 15 to 20 hours of prenatal care over the course of their pregnancies, compared to approximately 2 to 4 hours in traditional individual care.



### EMERGING EVIDENCE FOR IMPACTS ON CHILD AND FAMILY WELLBEING

CenteringPregnancy, created by the Centering Healthcare Institute, is the most prominent and widely studied model of group prenatal care. Most often, alternative models of group prenatal care are adapted from CenteringPregnancy. Each CenteringPregnancy group includes approximately 8 to 10 individuals with low-risk pregnancies at similar gestational ages. These individuals participate in their own health care by taking their weight and blood pressure before their short visit with a credentialed medical provider. Afterward, the provider and group facilitators lead a discussion, along with educational activities, to address common health topics and concerns.

Group prenatal care is a strategy with the potential to provide empowering and patient-centered care. Although more evidence is needed, group prenatal care may be particularly beneficial for Black women—who have the highest rates of inadequate prenatal care and adverse birth outcomes, such as preterm births and low birthweight.

States can provide both financial and nonfinancial support including implementing an enhanced Medicaid reimbursement rate, grants to pilot or expand group prenatal care programs, and recognizing group prenatal care as an effective strategy for improving maternal and child health outcomes.

### EVIDENCE-BASED POLICYMAKING

The Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center at Vanderbilt University analyzes rigorous evidence to determine which policies are proven to produce positive outcomes for young children, their families, and society. A comprehensive review of the evidence reveals that group prenatal care is an effective strategy to improve child and parent health and developmental outcomes.

## RIGOROUS STUDIES FIND THE FOLLOWING IMPACTS

### Group prenatal care increases access to prenatal care.

- Decreased the likelihood of receiving inadequate prenatal care by 6.4 percentage points.
- Black women with high-risk pregnancies attended approximately two more prenatal visits.

### Group prenatal care improves parental mental health outcomes.

- Substantially decreased probable depression up to 1 year postpartum.
- Increased the likelihood that high-stress women experienced decreases in depressive symptoms in the postpartum period.

### Group prenatal care improves child health and development.

- Increased rate of breastfeeding initiation by approximately 12 percentage points.

#### For more information on group prenatal care:

- Refer to our comprehensive evidence review for additional detail on and citations for the above-referenced studies: <https://pn3policy.org/policy-clearinghouse/group-prenatal-care/>.
- Refer to our Prenatal-to-3 State Policy Roadmap for state progress and variation: <https://pn3policy.org/pn-3-state-policy-roadmap-2023/us/group-prenatal-care/>.
- Refer to our state policy lever checklist for necessary considerations to maximize the effectiveness of group prenatal care: <https://pn3policy.org/state-policy-lever-checklist-gpnc/>.