

Perinatal Bereavement Care Initiative

Human Milk Donation and Community Support

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Human Milk Donation



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Texas Department of State
Health Services

Breast Milk Transition After Birth

- The birth of the baby and removal of the placenta signal the body to produce breast milk.
- Breast milk moves from colostrum to mature milk around day 3-5.
- The mother's breasts will feel warm and heavy.
- Every parent will experience this differently.
- Sharing this information supports the family in the days after the loss of their baby.
- Milk donation should be shared as an option.



Texas Department of State
Health Services

Healing after Loss

Women who choose to lactate and donate while grieving find relief and healing by making milk for other women's sick babies. - Mothers Milk Bank of Austin



Source: Mothers' Milk Bank Austin (MMBA)

Breast Milk Donation

If the parent expresses interest in breast milk donation:

- Share that milk can be expressed for however long the parent wants;
- Advise that hand expression or hand pumping work best with colostrum;
- Provide information about breast stimulation and building a milk supply;
- Support parents in getting a breast pump and other supplies;
- Connect parents with closest milk bank; and
- Give a list of local resources.

Breast Milk Suppression

If the mother chooses not to express and/or donate their milk:

- Advise not to stimulate breasts;
- Suggest they wear a supportive bra;
- Binding breasts is an outdated practice;
- Provide nursing pads to absorb leaking milk;
- Explain that cold compresses will ease discomfort;
- Support their decision; and
- Provide outpatient resources.

Be Mindful

Be mindful of the parent's experience:

- Materials should not reference feeding at breast;
- Avoid photos of mother's feeding baby at breast or by bottle;
- Use baby's name when talking about donation;
- Reassure them there is no "right" decision;
- Let them know they can change their mind at any point; and
- Provide appropriate resources.



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Milk Banking in Texas

Mothers' Milk Bank at Austin

- In operation since 1999.
- Provides breast milk to over 175 hospitals across the United States.
- Partners with sites across Texas and beyond for convenient donation.
- **Teardrops and Milkdrops Bereavement Program:**
 - ▶ Offers simplified path to donating milk;
 - ▶ Waives all requirements related to milk volume, medications, and herbs;
 - ▶ Uses donated milk in research if no able to safely give to babies; and
 - ▶ Invites bereaved donors to participate in memory garden.

◇ <https://milkbank.org/lactation-tears/>



Milk Banking in Texas Cont.

Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas

- In operation since 2004.
- Located in southwest Fort Worth.
- Operates depot sites across north Texas.
- **Bereaved Family Resources:**
 - ▶ Bereaved Parent Support Group held monthly;
 - ▶ Streamlined process;
 - ▶ Breast milk can be shipped or dropped off; and
 - ▶ Parents can add a “leaf” to Carmen’s Tree Memorial.



Circle of Support



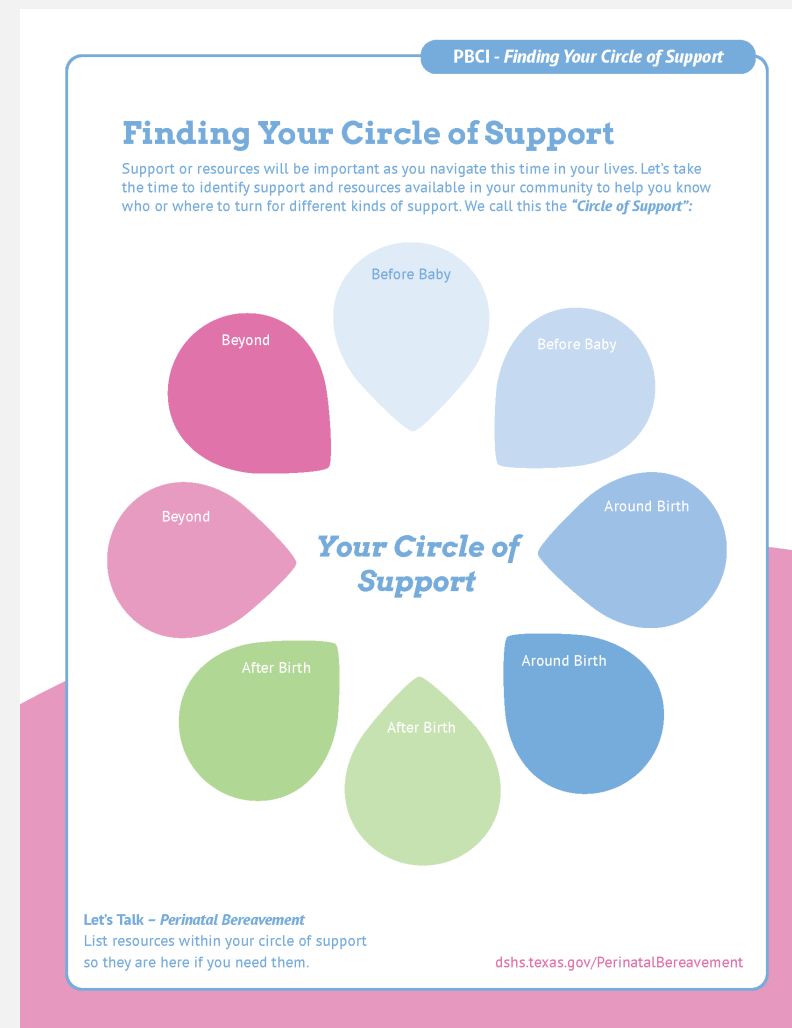
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Circle of Support Mapping

Hospitals and Birthing Centers use:

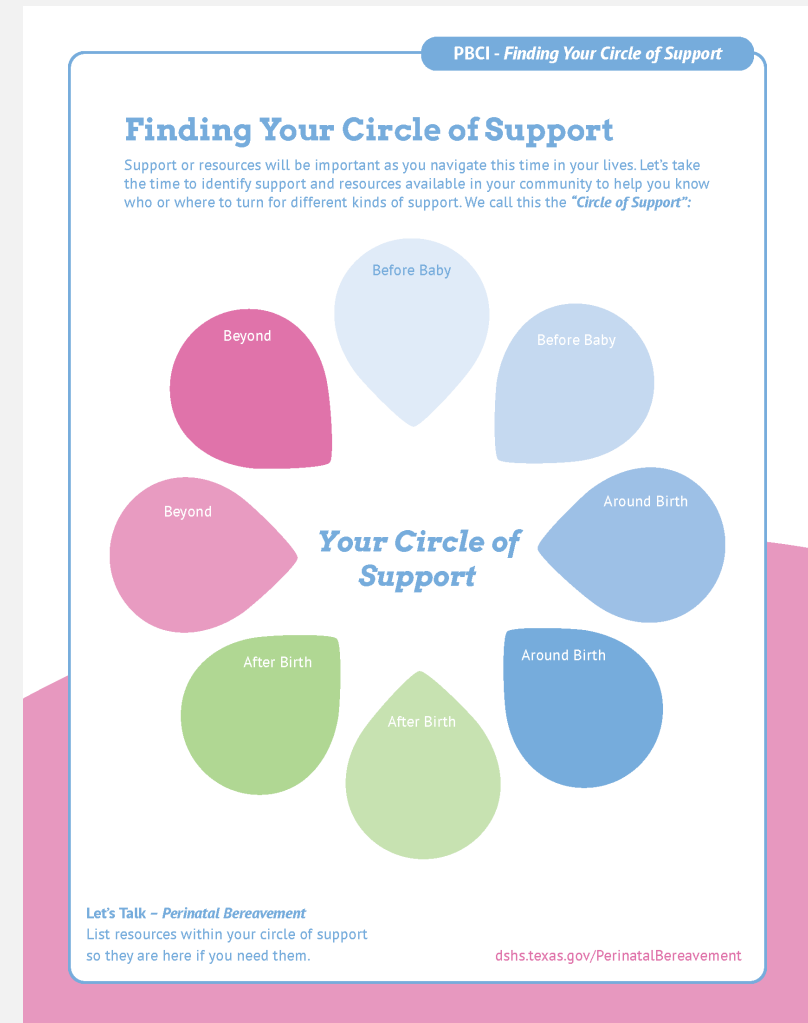
- Brainstorming tool;
- Identify organizations providing support;
- Create example for training use; and
- Use prefilled form when planning with families.



Circle of Support Cont.

Parent and family use:

- Identify personal support system;
- Keep thoughts organized;
- Visual for use while grieving; and
- Reduce fear and decision paralysis.



Perinatal Bereavement Resources

National, State, and Local Resources



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National and State Resources



- [First Candle](#)
 - [Hand to Hold](#)
 - [Star Legacy Foundation](#)
 - [Postpartum Support International](#)
 - [Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep](#)
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Texas Perinatal Psychiatry Access Network (PeriPAN)

An expansion of the Child Psychiatry Access Network (CPAN), a program of the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium

PeriPAN is for clinicians serving pregnant and postpartum women, including:

- OB/GYNs and midwives
- Pediatricians
- Family Practice Clinicians
- Psychiatrists and psychologists
- Nurses and other clinicians

Real-time, no-cost support for clinicians to guide mental health assessment and care:

- Rapid consultations with reproductive psychiatrists and other mental health experts.
- Resources and referrals – individualized to your patient or practice needs.
- Free mental health CMEs and collaborative ECHOs.
- Direct, one-time psychiatrist-patient meetings when indicated.

Call 888-901-2726

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or leave a message

Local Resources



- Provide a list of local and regional resources to families.
 - Review the list to ensure that resources are supportive of all families.
 - Include free and sliding scale resources.
 - Pairs resources with Circle of Support tool.
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Thank you

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