



Anatomy of a Crisis: Impact of Racism on Public Health in America

Episode 7: Improving Maternal and Infant Health Inequities

Join our host Denesha Snell and Hakima Payne, Co-Founder and CEO of Uzazi Village, as they discuss maternal and infant health in Black and Brown communities, the medicalization of childbirth, and the benefits of doula maternity care.

Kansas City Public Library in partnership with the Kansas City, Missouri Health Department

Host: [Denesha Snell](#), Member, Library Board of Trustees and Program Director, American Public Square

Denesha Snell, a Kansas City native, is program director for American Public Square. Denesha has devoted her career to address community issues including parent advocacy, cultural diversity, causes of health disparities, violence prevention and improving relationships with community and civic partners. She holds a BS from Tennessee State University and a Master of Education from Rockhurst University.

Guests: Hakima Payne, Executive Director, Co-Founder and CEO of [Uzazi Village](#)

Hakima, known to her community as Mama Hakima, is a co-founder and CEO of Uzazi Village, a nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating health outcome disparities in maternal and infant health in African-American communities. She holds a B.A. in Nursing and a Master's in Nursing Education. Hakima is the creator of the Sister Doula Program (a community-based home visiting community health worker program for pregnant individuals), Chocolate Milk Café, (a breastfeeding support group for Black families), and the Village Circle (an Afro-centric group prenatal care model). She sits on her local Fetal Infant Mortality Review Board (FIMR) to address Black infant mortality, is a member of the Rockhurst University Institutional Review Board (IRB), and is an anti-racism trainer with HTP Consulting. She is an editor of the Clinical Lactation Journal and also sits on the board of Alive and Well Communities, a nonprofit dedicated to the principles of trauma-informed care and the elimination of toxic stress in Missouri residents. She is a certified trainer for Community Health Workers, and speaks nationally on the topics of Black maternal and infant health. Hakima works tirelessly to make birth safer, the village healthier, and to promote anti-racist care models for Black and African-American families. She is the creator of Melanin Uprising, a bimonthly webcast produced with Dr. Paul Scott, that explores the intersection of race, research, and healthcare. She is the subject of an upcoming documentary, "Sister Doulas," and the author of a soon to be published book, "Birthing While Black."

References:

[Uzazi Village](#)

[Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Pregnancy](#), Centers for Disease Control

[Racial Disparities in Maternal and Infant Health: An Overview](#), Kaiser Family Foundation

[Kansas City Public Library Reading and Resource List](#)

Production/Credits

Editing: Denesha Snell, David LaCrone

Podcast Artwork: Jennifer Su



Original Artwork: [Lizbeth Alvarez](#) is an art studio major at UMKC. She chose this career because it's important for her to do what she loves and show others about art. She's an aspiring teacher because and loves to see the creativity of others and how we can use art to communicate and express ourselves. She is working on completing her portfolio and looks forward to new experiences and opportunities.

Development Committee: Kamera Meaney (co-chair), Jeni Starr (co-chair), Russell Anderson, Quint Hall, Cheryl Hampton, Amelia McDaniel, Monica Miller, Rita Strickland