



A group of women become childbirth educators through a program run by the International Center for Traditional Childbearing.

# Improving childbirth outcomes by breaking cultural barriers

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THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The International Center for Traditional Childbearing is celebrating a victory, having just received a grant for its African American Childbirth Educators Program.

A new Train the Trainers program will help address infant mortality within communities of color by providing increased access to culturally competent child birth education.

“The purpose of this program is to increase the number of African American childbirth educators in

**Healthy  
Babies  
Ahead!**

the community in an effort to improve birth outcomes through culturally competent prenatal education,” says Shafia M. Monroe, president and founder of the Portland-based organization.

According to a 2011 survey, over 60 percent of black women in Oregon do not attend childbirth education classes.

“Child birth education classes support healthy pregnancy, labor, and postnatal outcomes while also providing information on strategies to reduce outcomes like pre-mature and low birth weight babies, which is the leading cause of African American infant mortality,” Monroe said.

A \$30,000 grant by Kaiser Permanente will support the Train the Trainers program, a six-month process that includes online learning and clinical experience.

One goal of the program will be for students to audit

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