

# Birth in Pieces



## Discussion Guide

1. According to a [2017 NPR/ProPublica investigation](#), maternal mortality is dropping in every other wealthy country (and many less affluent ones). Yet, in the US maternal deaths rose from 2000 to 2014. The research shows stark racial disparities when it comes to maternal mortality: African American women are more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than women in any other ethnic or racial group.

How could obstetric violence be tied to racial discrimination during pregnancy, birth and postpartum?

2. According to research by Dr. Kathleen Kendall-Tackett, 27% of moms, over 1 out of 4, suffers post-trauma symptoms after birth.

How is birth trauma recognized? What can be done to lower the number of mothers experiencing birth trauma?

### *Sources:*

Kendall-Tackett, Kathleen, PhD, IBCLC, RLC, FAPA, "Childbirth-Related Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: symptoms and impact on breastfeeding," pp 51-55, in Clinical Lactation, Vol. 5, Issue 2, 2014, Online ISSN: 215-0537

Kendall-Tackett, Kathleen, PhD, IBCLC, RLC, FAPA, "Childbirth-Related Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: symptoms and impact on breastfeeding," pp 51-55, in Clinical Lactation, Vol. 5, Issue 2, 2014, Online ISSN: 215-0537

3. Giving birth the US is costly. An average uncomplicated delivery runs just over \$10,800. That doesn't factor in prenatal or postnatal care, and costs vary greatly by state according to this [2020 Business Insider report](#).

How is the US system of maternal healthcare failing the mother? Are there any redeeming qualities to the current model of care in the US, which is costly, has a high rate of birth trauma, and is disparate in terms of outcomes along racial lines?

4. What type of changes and paradigm shifts are necessary to make the needed changes to the US maternal healthcare system and birth culture in general? Where and how do you think we start?

### *Questions?*

For more information on film screenings or purchasing the film, please reach out to El Jardin Birth & Family Resource Center, a non-profit organization, at [eljardinbirthingandfamily@gmail.com](mailto:eljardinbirthingandfamily@gmail.com). You can also visit us at [eljardinbirthingandfamily.org](http://eljardinbirthingandfamily.org).