

2022

MOTHER WELL

YEAR IN REVIEW





Filling up your cup so you can mother well.

We transform expecting moms & dads into confident parents through education & support.





REFLECTIONS

FROM THE DOULA

The view from where I sit writing this year-end reflection compared to last could not be more different. Not only am I heavily pregnant with a surprise fourth baby, but I'm also working from a home office versus the brick-and-mortar we labored so hard to establish. In this report, you'll also see the faces of four additional doulas who have been onboarded to the Mother Well team. Last December, I could not have pictured myself being an agency owner!

Reflecting on the births I've been privileged to support, I noticed trends that were starkly different from years prior. With roughly the same sample size of clients, my practice's c-section rate more than doubled from 2021 to 2022 (going from 9% to 23%). There was also a major jump in the induction rate (31% in the prior year to 56% in this current year). Homebirth transfers also increased. And this is the first year a client who intended a VBAC birthed via repeat Cesarean.

While those statistics might be a departure from past trends, I'm still grateful that the numbers are spot on from a public health perspective! Remember that the Healthy People 2030 target is a Cesarean birth rate of around 23.6%, and our state average Cesarean birth rate is 34.3%. I do believe the pandemic, a general sense of increased stress, and our current national healthcare crisis played a role in these outcomes. But often, there's no simple explanation for a multi-faceted experience like childbirth.

Doula care is sometimes touted as *the* way to reduce the rate of c-sections and other interventions. The reality is more like Aaron Burr in Manuel-Miranda's Hamilton put it, "I am the one thing in life I can control." Doulas can control their presence, their knowledge, and their positive contributions to birth.



REFLECTIONS

FROM THE DOULA

Likewise, doulas support clients in controlling their own responses to pregnancy, childbirth, and new parenthood.

Thinking about the families who walked through the unexpected this year, I'm struck by how attentive they were to their own instincts. I'm inspired by their courage and compassion. I saw mothers get deeply in tune with their bodies and their babies. I held space as parents made the best decisions with the best information supported by the best team available.

In my 7 years of doula experience, I've encouraged countless mothers to 'open and release' to the waves of labor - and to the ebb and flow of a birth plan. I believe this approach is the most gracious and gentle. Make plans with wisdom and in good faith. Then, release yourself from the pressure of controlling outcomes. Open your heart to receiving your baby and transforming into the parent you were made to be.

Admittedly, 2022 was a bit of a taxing year. And yet, walking with families through so many unknowns and unforeseen turns only solidified my love of birthwork and the belief that expecting families deserve high-quality support. After maternity leave, my eyes are set on ways to further bolster expecting parents during this monumental life event.

Warm wishes to you and yours,

Victoria

Victoria Wilson CD(DONA)
Owner and Lead Doula
Mother Well Doula Service

💙 16

💖 15

1ST BIRTH: 61%

PRIOR BIRTHS: 39%

VAGINAL: 77%

CESAREAN: 23% (7)

VBAC: 66% (2/3)

BACKUP DOULA

USED: 1 CLIENT

Adorable Babies: 100%



WHERE DID MY CLIENTS GIVE BIRTH?



WHO GAVE MY CLIENTS CARE?

MIDWIFE: 61% **DOCTOR: 10%**

COLLABORATIVE CARE: 29%

Working with Victoria was such a wonderful experience! She took the time to get to know me and also provided me with resources specific to my needs so I felt as prepared as possible before the birth. I had a really long home birth, and she was with me every step of the way. She was my cheerleader and coach. I was amazed at how present and intuitive she was during my labor. I highly recommend Victoria to any momma out there searching for a doula who has a kind heart, listens well, and makes you feel supported and comfortable. She has such a love and passion for supporting mommas! Thank you, Victoria, for making my first birthing experience a joyous one!



Lindsay



BIRTH-Y MILESTONES

1st Time Catching a Baby

Thanks to a quickly progressing homebirth, I unexpectedly caught a baby about twenty mins before the midwife arrived! I'm thankful that I was able to remain calm and competent in that unexpected situation. I was also grateful for my certification in the Neonatal Resuscitation Program in case the baby needed some extra help. All was well, mom and baby were fabulous!

Neared 100 Doula Babies Born

I closed the year with 97 families supported in birth. And I've already got clients on next year's calendar that will push me over the edge to 100 total! (Though counting the times I've been a homebirth midwife assistant, I have surpassed 100 births attended.)

'Oldest' Post-Dates Baby Born

One mama made it to 42 weeks and 3 days before her little one was ready to be born!

'Youngest' Premature Baby Born

Despite not being able to attend in person due to the situation, a client of mine this year delivered a baby at 30 weeks.

Doula Double-Headers Continued

April and August continued to be 'Babypalooza' months at Mother Well. In both of those months, two clients gave birth within 24 hours of each other. In one of these cases, a backup doula was utilized when 2 clients were in laboring at the same time.

Most Related Clients

It's all in the family! I had the most family overlap in a client year! 2 clients were from one family, and 2 from another! So fun to support cousins!

Longest Cesarean Birth

This year, one of my clients had a 3-hour c-section due to an unexpected finding in her uterus!

Highly Recommend! Victoria was amazing before birth, during birth and during postpartum care!

Being my first pregnancy, my husband and I were nervous about the entire process. The unknown can be really scary! Victoria walked us through every step of the way to prepare us for the entire experience. She was highly knowledgeable of our hospital policies including what equipment/materials the hospital had available so we could request them when we arrived.

I had a high risk pregnancy that quickly moved to an induction due to a fetal growth restriction. My induction was verrrryyy slow. (72 hours!) Victoria checked in along the way and gave suggestions with positioning and comfort. When she arrived at the hospital, she quickly jumped into gear and began collaborating with the L&D nurses. She was a great asset to the team and took the lead on positioning (after 3 days in the hospital, I was ready to get up and moving). During birth, she provided suggestions to my midwife and made sure I remained comfortable. The one thing I kept talking about was how I wanted a Jimmy Johns turkey sandwich. As soon as I gave birth, she had my order waiting! It's the small things that make such an impact!

Not only is Victoria a great doula, but she's also a wonderful person that does so much for our community!



Jennifer

BUSINESS-Y MILESTONES

Closed our Brick & Mortar & Moved back to a Home Office

With the news of an unexpected pregnancy, we spent the first half of the year evaluating our business plans. In the second half of the year, we put those plans in place. One of those pivots was the decision to close 'The Mother Well' at 406 Chestnut Street. While this doula practice continues to go strong, we decided it wasn't the time for aggressive growth at an in-person location. But we're hopeful that if an opportunity presents itself in the future, we'll be able to again have a community hub for families.

Pivoted Online Shop Goals

With the closing of our brick-and mortar, our online shop no longer carries physical products. We are moving towards being a digital shop full of resources and classes for doulas and parents!

Onboarded New Doulas

In addition to our current team, we added four doulas! We now have three birth doulas and one postpartum doula ready to serve your family!

First Team Building Outing

In October, Mother Well hosted its very first teambuilding outing. We enjoyed making candles, getting headshots, and eating dinner together. We're very much looking forward to continuing to develop and bond as a team in the new year!

Second Bereavement Retreat

This year, we hosted our second annual bereavement retreat virtually. Again, this was a beautiful, heartbreaking, and tender time. Special thanks to Abby Jorgensen for her vision and dedication as our Community Group Facilitator and Bereavement Coordinator. Thank you to our sponsors, without whom this retreat would not have been possible: Robin Elise Weiss at The Doula Mastermind, Lactation Care with Elizabeth, The Eisenhower Family, and anonymous sponsors.



Left to Right: Keva Buckley, Alli Klever, Victoria Wilson, Mollee Johnson, Amanda Lobb

In allowing us to support your families, you are supporting ours.
Thank you for this honor. It's a joy to support you!

The Mother Well Doula



THANK YOU

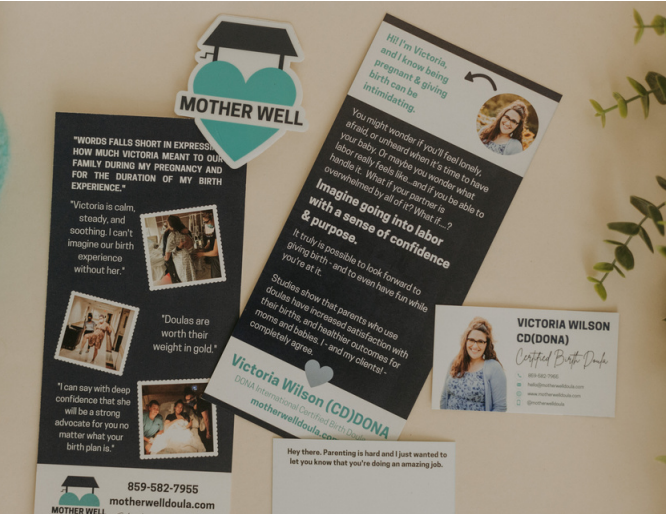


PHOTO CREDITS

— SPECIAL THANKS TO —

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The Dilly Family

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