



## B-MORE.....Project



### Project Description:

- **B-More is a community-based participatory research (CBPR) project aimed to assess the risk behaviors associated with preconception and inter-conception health of adolescents age 16 – 24 residing in the Druid Heights, Upton, and Reservoir Hill communities in Baltimore City, Maryland.**
- The B-More project represents a partnership between DRU/Mondawmin Healthy Families (DRUM) and the Morgan State University School of Community Health and Policy. Recently, the director of DRUM Healthy Families was featured in the film “Unnatural Causes” which examines the health of people across the U.S.
- DRUM Healthy Families provides holistic and comprehensive in-home visitation services to assist families in understanding the contributing factors that are more likely to result in the birth of a healthy infant and to the safety and health of young children.

### Background: Preconception & inter-conception health of African Americans Adolescents:

- The health of a mother long before conception critically impacts the health of a baby (CDC, 2007). Preconception and inter-conception health is a tremendous concern for African Americans and other minorities residing in low socio-economic communities in urban areas, particularly in Baltimore City. The city’s infant mortality among African Americans was 15.5 per 1000 live births, which is higher than the rates of some developing countries (Maryland Department of Mental Health and Hygiene, 2007).
- In 2007, 112 babies from Baltimore City died before their first birthday. Of these, 106 were born to African American mothers (Maryland Department of Mental Health and Hygiene, 2007).
- In Baltimore, almost 20% of high school children are obese, 12% of children smoke, and 18% of babies are born to teen parents (CDC, 2007). Social determinants of health play a critical role in health disparities among African American youth. Some preconception and inter-conception risk factors for African American adolescents in Baltimore City include: exposure to violence, poverty, delinquency, substance abuse, mental health, inadequate housing, inadequate education, access to health care and other risk factors (CDC 2007, Baltimore City Health Department, 2009).
- 6,000 of Baltimore City’s 10,000 births are classified as high-risk due to poverty, previous adverse outcomes, and the aforementioned risks factors (Baltimore City Health Department, 2009).

### Research Project:

- More research is needed to understand how contextual factors and mechanisms impact the preconception and inter-conception health of African American adolescents in Baltimore City.
- B-More research focuses on identification of factors associated with African American adolescent health and well-being. This investigation will inform an understanding of the impact of risk and resilient factors associated with preconception, mental health, and overall well-being of African American adolescents in the Druid Heights, Upton, and Reservoir Hill communities in Baltimore City.
- Identification of these factors within this vulnerable population will assist in modifying and developing culturally sensitive preventive interventions to address the preconception and inter-conception health of African American Adolescent in these underserved communities.

### Policy Implications:

- Provide equal access to health care and social services for all mothers, children, and families.
- Expand funding efforts to disseminate knowledge and raise awareness about preconception health.