

SUMMER 2024

# MOTHERS AND BABIES

## NEWSLETTER

### INNOVATION UPDATES

#### MB-TXT: Mothers and Babies Text

**MB-TXT** is a series of texts that complements MB content and focuses on skill reinforcement, homework reminders, and self-monitoring. All texts are available in English or Spanish.

**If interested in MB-TXT, please contact us at:**  
[mbtxt@northwestern.edu](mailto:mbtxt@northwestern.edu)

(\*FREE for MIECHV programs in Illinois)

#### FAB: Fathers and Babies

**FAB** is a stress management intervention that can be delivered alongside Mothers and Babies (MB), or as a standalone intervention. FAB is nine sessions and can be delivered in person/by phone, via text or as a combination of both. Preliminary findings from our FAB pilot with 30 father-mother dyads showed decreases in stress, depression, and anxiety.  
[Click here to access the Article.](#)

**If interested in learning more, please contact us at:**  
[fathersandbabies@northwestern.edu](mailto:fathersandbabies@northwestern.edu)

### CURRENT RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

#### ENRICH: Early Intervention to Promote Cardiovascular Health of Mothers and Children

**Northwestern University** is providing an opportunity for HFA or PAT home visiting programs to partner with ENRICH.

**ENRICH** provides a toolkit of behavioral, social, and mindful approaches to promote cardiovascular health among pregnant individuals, new mothers, and their children. To learn more, including involvement and responsibilities, please click the title hyperlink above.

**If interested in participating, please contact us:**  
[mbENRICH@northwestern.edu](mailto:mbENRICH@northwestern.edu)

The **Parents and Babies (PAB) Study** at Northwestern University is recruiting parents to help create a curriculum that will support gender and sexuality expansive families with their perinatal mental health.

Participants may be eligible if they:

- identify as a queer and/or trans parent
- are pregnant or have given birth in the last five years
- are 18 years old or older
- Currently reside in the US

Interested participants can take the screening tool at [redcap.link/pabscreener](https://redcap.link/pabscreener) or by scanning the QR code.

For more information email  
[parentsandbabies@northwestern.edu](mailto:parentsandbabies@northwestern.edu)



@mothersandbabiesnu



[www.mothersandbabiesprogram.org](http://www.mothersandbabiesprogram.org)

# SUMMER ACTIVITY

## SCAVENGER HUNT

**Find something...**



☐ Green



☐ Red



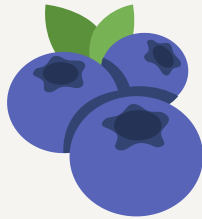
☐ Purple



☐ Yellow



☐ Fluffy



☐ Round



☐ Soft



☐ Tall



☐ With wheels



☐ With four legs



☐ With wings



☐ Starts with a "B"

**Bonus! Find something that...**



☐ Makes you smile



☐ Smells good



☐ Plays music



☐ Beeps

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

## EASTERSEALS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Easterseals Rio Grande Valley (Easterseals RGV) has been making remarkable strides in supporting maternal mental health through the implementation of the Mothers and Babies (MB) program. Brenda Vera, a Licensed Professional Counselor at Easterseals RGV, shares her journey and insights as one of the facilitators of the MB program. Brenda highlights the dual delivery format—offering the program both individually and in group settings. She emphasizes how providing mothers with the participant workbook to monitor their progress has been a key factor in keeping them accountable and engaged.

Easterseals RGV has effectively addressed logistical challenges to create a welcoming group environment for mothers and their children. Key strategies include:

- **Kid-Friendly Spaces:** The sessions are held in spaces specifically designed to accommodate children, addressing a common barrier that families face when attending community programs. Unlike libraries or other kid-friendly places that may have limitations regarding noise and activity, these spaces at Easterseals RGV are tailored to be safe, flexible, and accommodating for both mothers and children.
- **Flexible Session Formats:** While the MB group is coordinated to be attended in-person, the facilitators provide options for participants to attend virtually or in-person, providing flexibility to meet the varying needs of participants.
- **Supportive Environment:** The group setting encourages vulnerability and openness, allowing mothers to share their experiences and build strong social support networks. Facilitators maintain engagement with mothers no matter where they are standing or sitting in the room to continue making them feel part of the group as they attend to their child.

The feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. They appreciated the structured approach and the focus on building social support networks. The MB groups not only provided practical tools for managing stress but also created a sense of community among the mothers, enhancing their overall well-being.

Easterseals RGV's commitment to adapting and implementing the Mothers and Babies program underscores its dedication to maternal mental health. By facilitating both individual and group MB sessions and creating child-friendly environments, Easterseals RGV ensures that every mother receives the support and resources she needs to thrive.

We're incredibly proud of their fantastic achievements and can't wait to see them continue shining in this important work!

*Fall 2024 Group:*

*Participants (left to right): Maria Cristina Farias, Elizabeth Salazar, Stephanie Sandoval, Yaneth Murillo (Program Supervisor), Sophia Vasquez, Lana Rodriguez (Counselor/MB Facilitator)*

*Below: Brenda Vera (Counselor/MB Facilitator), Valerie Davila*

