

From Postpartum Depression to Two-generation, Integrative, Trauma Healing— The Redleaf Center for Family Healing Offers a New Model of Care

Perinatal depression and anxiety are the most common complications of childbirth¹ affecting one in seven mothers² and one in 10 fathers.³ Despite this prevalence and increased risk of maternal and infant mortality and morbidity, families struggle to receive the help they need. In fact, it is estimated that 50% of mothers with symptoms of depression and anxiety do not seek mental health treatment.⁴

In efforts to respond to this profound need, Dr. Helen Kim and Jesse Kuendig, LICSW founded the Mother-Baby program at Hennepin Healthcare in 2013, Minnesota's first parent-child partial hospital program and the fourth program in the nation. To date, this successful program has served over 600 pregnant and parenting mothers and families, and has had over 3,000 callers to the HopeLine, a phone line for mothers, families and providers. Through this work, the urgent need to enhance the approach to healing for families through holistic and community/family-centered interventions was identified. The mission for the Mother-Baby Program was subsequently enriched to reflect this need and conceptualized the Redleaf Center for Family Healing.

Through a transformative gift from the Lynne and Andrew Redleaf Foundation, The Redleaf Center for Family Healing will expand the current mental health services of the Mother-Baby Program and

create a new model of care to heal families through two-generation, trauma-informed mental health services for pregnant women and families of children 0-5 years old. The Center will expect to support more than 6,000 families a year. Through the Redleaf Center's unique collaborative model, families will have access to care from multiple programs of Hennepin Healthcare, all within one location. These services include: psychiatry, integrative health, pediatrics, nutrition, family medicine, and OB/GYN. The Center will be located on the Hennepin Healthcare Minneapolis campus, an institution well-poised to deliver care to all families who need it, with completion expected in 2020.

Mission: To support young children, parents, and families by nurturing the mental health and parenting capacity of families expecting a baby and parenting young children. We will advance healing through family-centered, trauma-informed, integrative approaches grounded in lived experience, social justice, and research.

Babies can't wait. They need emotionally stable parents for healthy brain development. Perinatal depression and anxiety coincide with a critical window of rapid brain development in children and rob parents of joy when their children need it most. In addition, research shows that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)



Katie Thorsness, MD



Helen Kim, MD

cause toxic stress, or prolonged and persistent stress in the absence of protective relationships. Repeated exposure to toxic stress, such as experiencing abuse, witnessing domestic violence, or living with a parent with mental illness, negatively impacts the brains and bodies of children. Seven out of the 10 causes of death in the US are connected with childhood toxic stress.⁵ By focusing on early childhood brain development and parent mental and emotional well-being, the Redleaf Center will help parents heal from their own emotional wounds, with a focus on underlying causes that can undermine both health and resilience, so they can become the protective and supportive caregivers their children need.

Services will specifically focus on enhancing adult capacity and mental health in addition to nurturing healthy relationships between parents (or preferred caregivers) and children through the following programming:

By Katie Thorsness, MD and
Helen Kim, MD

Clinical Services: Fostering mental health, supportive relationships and parent capacity for families expecting a baby or parenting children ages 0-5 years old. Core clinical service elements will include expanded programming for mothers, fathers, and new models of care to address the needs of specific populations of pregnant and postpartum mothers such as those struggling with addiction.

Integrative Health Services: The Redleaf Center for Family Healing will offer whole-person and family support through integrative healing modalities to focus on self-care and healthy relationships along with mind, body, spirit practices that are culturally meaningful. This will include:

- A nutrition and food program that will promote healthy adult relationships with food and positive feeding practices between parents and children. The space will include a community meeting and eating space, as well as a teaching kitchen. Here, Center staff and rotating professionals from a variety of disciplines will work collaboratively to provide opportunities to nurture participants both physically and emotionally.
- Yoga and meditation classes will be offered to women, children, and families.
- A Healing Arts Program, led by Syl Jones, will incorporate storytelling and other healing arts in the ongoing support of patients, families, and staff. The Healing Arts Program will

bring heart into medical practice by infusing it with compassion, the arts and sciences, as well as the stories and disparate voices of patients, families and healthcare providers.

On-Site Childcare Services: The Center will provide childcare for children of Hennepin County Medical Center patients and staff through:

- Drop-in childcare for children ages 6 weeks to 10 years old whose parents are in the Emergency Department or attending appointments at Hennepin Healthcare's Clinic & Specialty Center.
- Back-up childcare for Hennepin Healthcare staff when their regular childcare is unexpectedly unavailable.

Training and Research: The research team will contribute to the best practice literature and training for the next generation of providers. Since opening in 2013, the Mother-Baby Program has engaged in preliminary training, research activities, and multidisciplinary training rotations. By combining an innovative and ground-breaking model for two-generation, integrative, trauma-healing with coordinated training and research activities, the Redleaf Center for Family Healing has the potential to influence hundreds of providers and staff as well as inform the



Drop-in childcare will be offered for families being supported by the Redleaf Center for Family Healing, as well as parents with appointments in the downtown campus.

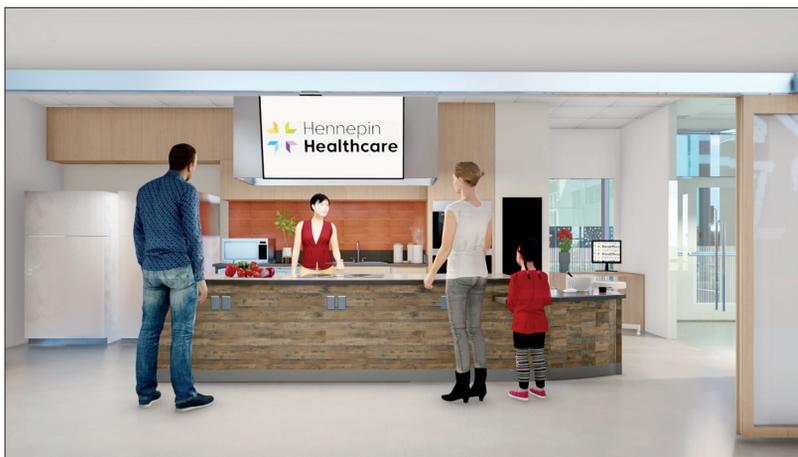
literature to significantly rewrite approaches to child and family well-being.

Trauma-Informed Care Learning Lab and Resource Hub: The Redleaf Center will be surrounded by a new network of engaged partners from within and outside of Hennepin Healthcare. Through this shared Learning Lab and Resource Hub, we will create the potential for leveraged impact and offer the potential to “raise all boats” by:

- Raising consciousness and understanding of historical trauma and structural racism in order to revise policies and practices that re-traumatize.
- Creating and piloting new models of trauma-informed health care that focus on patients and families as well as the wellbeing of staff.
- Sharing best practices and providing technical assistance in adoption and implementation of trauma-informed best practices.
- Through community partnership, developing policies and practices that shift towards and invest in new models of health care based in community.
- Creating a learning community so that programs have peers in this critical work.
- Fostering cross-referrals where needed to ensure that people have access to culturally meaningful resources.

The Redleaf Center is committed to improving the long-term health and well-being of all children and families,

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Teaching Kitchen: The Kitchen Table will foster healing and nurturing through the power of food and nutrition education.

particularly those most impacted by disparities. By empowering parents to nurture and protect their children and by creating trauma-informed policies and practices that help more and harm less, the Redleaf Center is making a long-term investment in children, our communities, and Minnesota's shared future. What could be more important?

Parents, families, and providers can refer for care at the Mother-Baby Program via the following ways:

- Calling 612-873-6262 (MAMA).
- Filling out the online referral form: <https://www.hennepinhealth-care.org/specialty/psychiatry/mother-baby-program/>.
- Call 612-873-HOPE, a free telephone support service for pregnant women and parents of young children. One of our mental health staff members will talk with you, answer questions, and help you find the support you need. You may be asked to leave a message. If so, one of our mental health staff

members will call you back within two business days.

For more information about the Redleaf Center for Family Healing, visit: <https://www.redleaffamilyhealing.org/>. ♦

Dr. Katie Thorsness specializes in perinatal psychiatry. As a member of the Mother-Baby team, she practices medicine in the context of a multidisciplinary team who helps support both mothers and families through the framework of attachment-based, psychodynamic, family system, narrative, and mindfulness practices. Dr. Thorsness provides medical care with a whole-person approach encouraging patients to consider how movement, nutrition, connection, purpose, and sometimes psychiatric medication, can relieve suffering and foster emotional wellbeing. She has additional expertise in physician trainee mental health.

Dr. Helen Kim is the co-founder and director of the Hennepin Healthcare Mother-Baby Program and Redleaf Center for Family Healing and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Minnesota. She is a

perinatal psychiatrist who is committed to empowering women and providing outstanding mental health care for all, particularly those most impacted by trauma and discrimination. Following psychiatry training at Massachusetts General Hospital, Dr. Kim has been a leader in advancing new models of integrative, two-generation (parent-child) healing that address root causes that undermine wellbeing, such as childhood trauma, toxic stress, poverty, and discrimination.

References:

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