

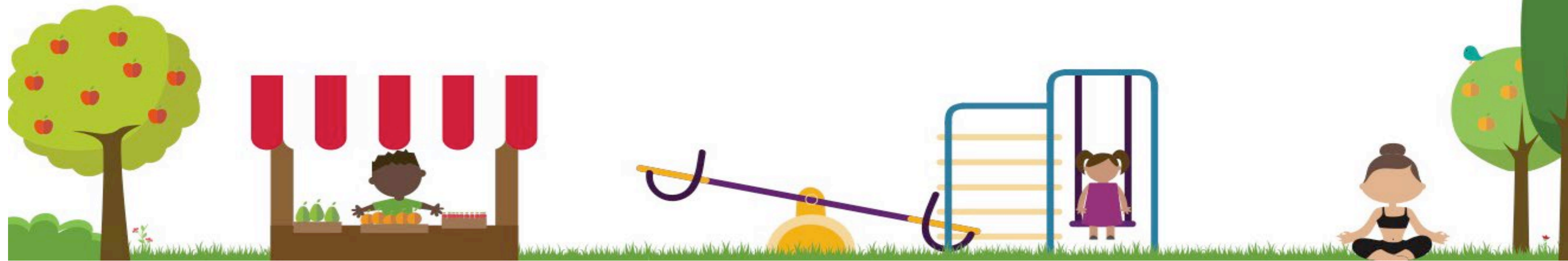


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CENTER *for* HEALTHY LIVING



Healthy children in a healthy world.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



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*Leading Change and
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Michael & Susan Dell Center Webinar Series

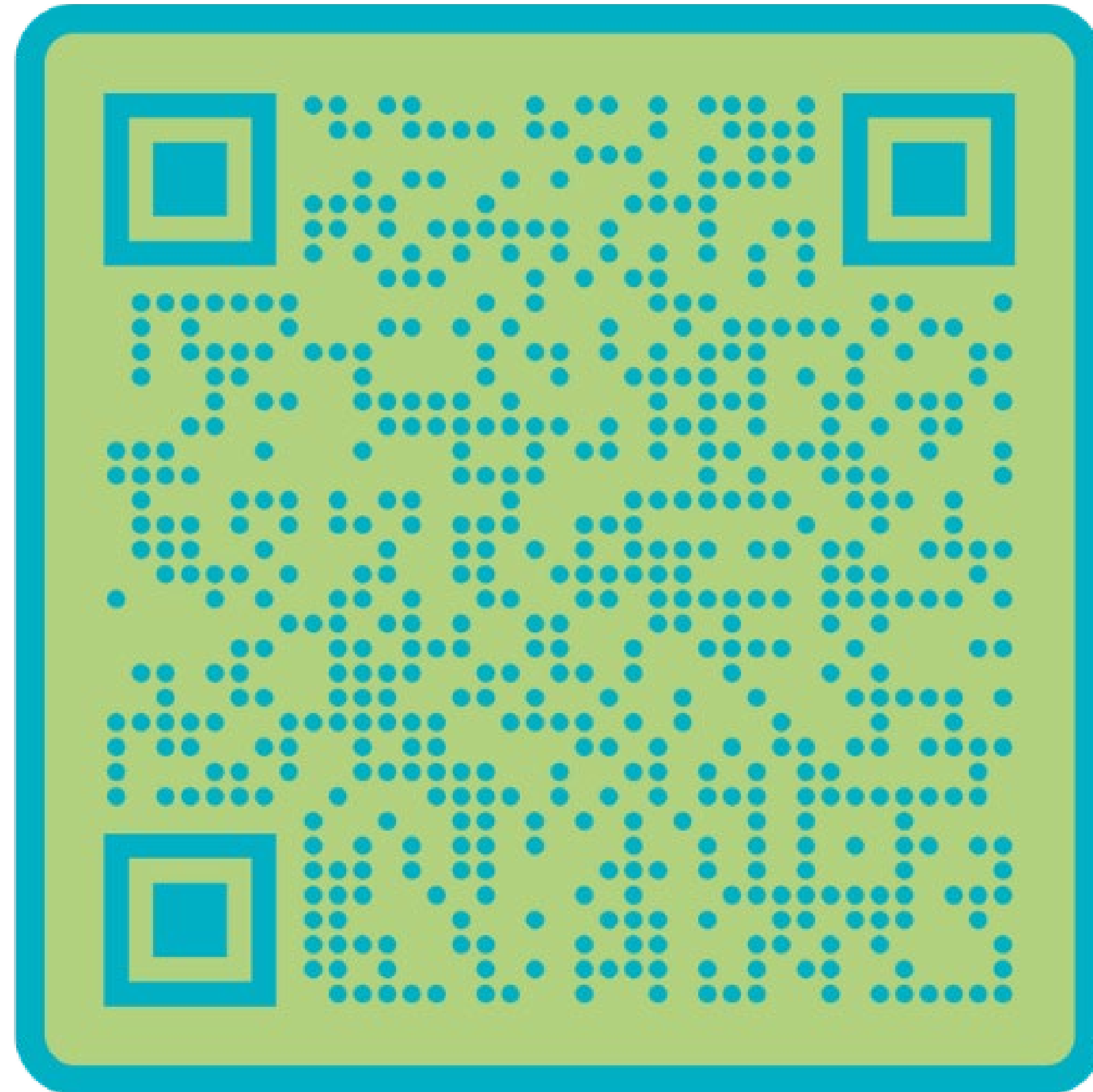
go.uth.edu/RPCnewsletter



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**Safe
Babies**

Including Fathers in Pregnancy and Early Childhood Health Promotion

Dorothy J. Mandell, PhD

Associate Professor

UTHealth Houston School of Public Health



Safe Babies Department of Family & Protective Services

The views expressed here are those of the presenter and do not represent official policy or position of the Department of Family & Protective Services or of the state of Texas



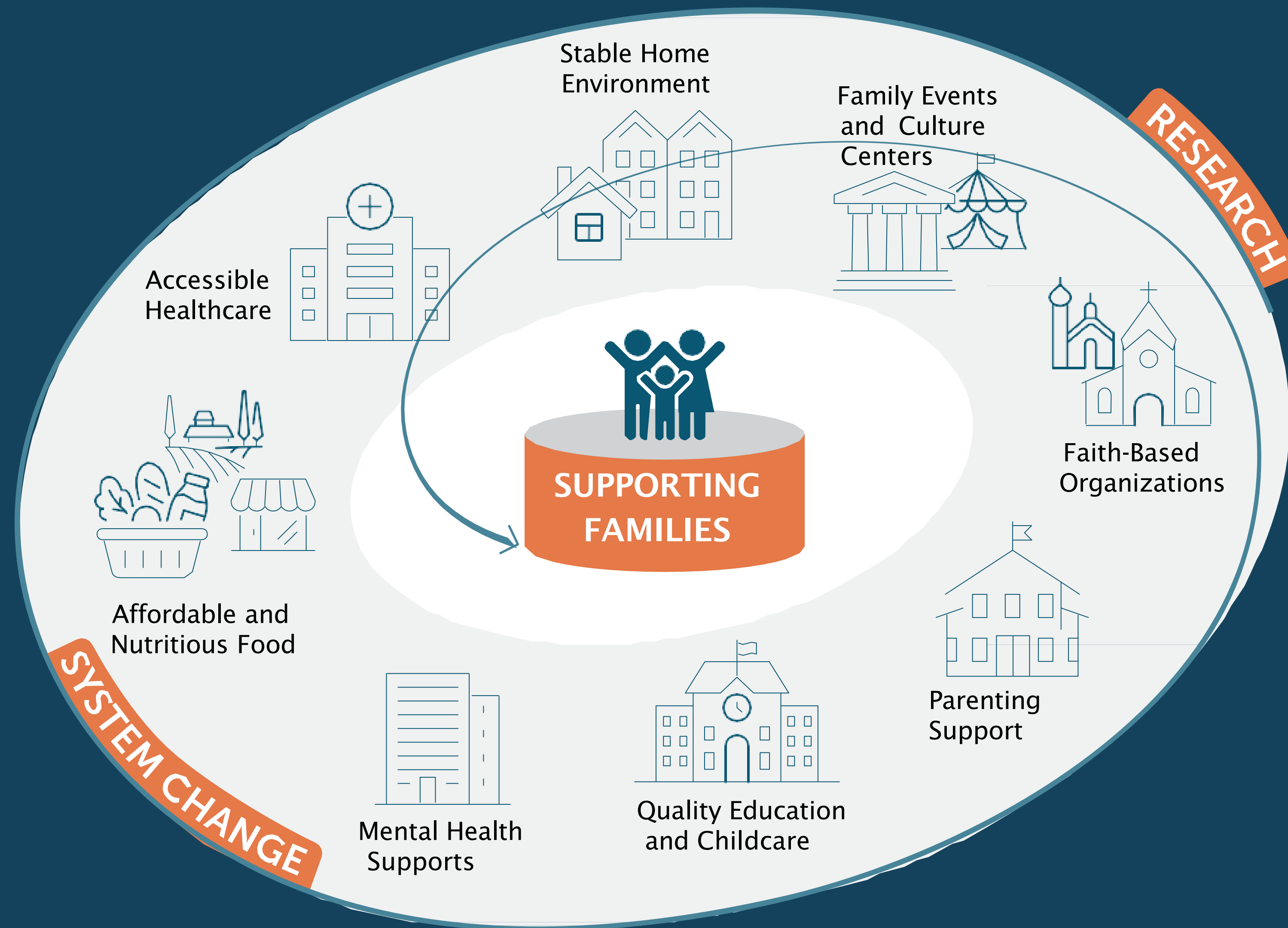
Safe Babies

Babies cannot exist or thrive without...

- A family
- A community
- A system of care

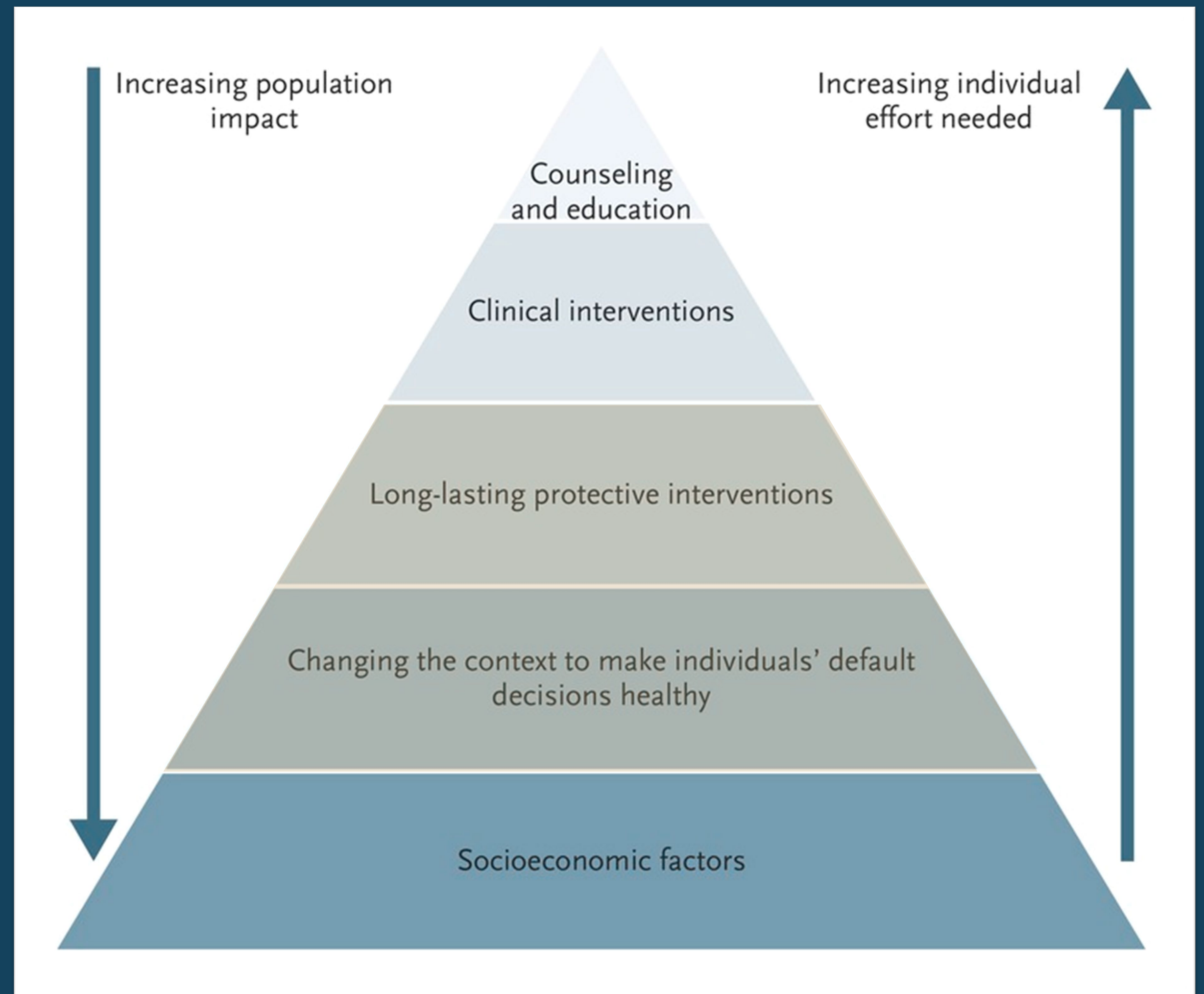
Early childhood work must be

- 2-generational
- Include the community
- Involve system change



Understanding Where Our Approaches Impact Health

- Intense individual focused programs will impact individuals, but will have small impacts on the population at large
- Less intense wide-spread programs will have small impacts on the individual, but will move the population



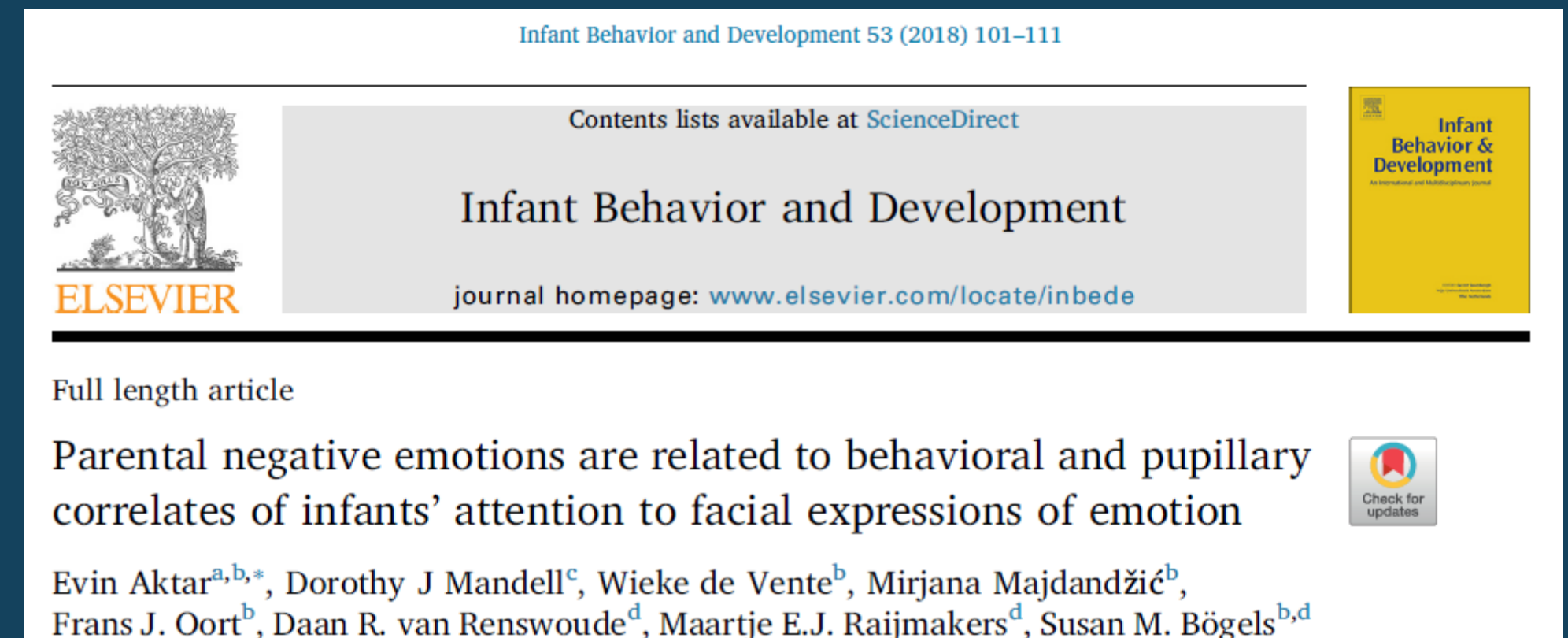
Frieden (2010). A framework for public health action: Health impact pyramid, *Am J. Public Health*

Involved Fathers

What happens when the father is involved?

Fathers impact their infants' development

- Positive paternal mental health buffers maternal depression's impact on infant emotional development
- Negative paternal mental health impacts infant attention and emotional development



Fathers impact later development & achievement

Executive Functioning

Emotional Development

School Achievement

Mental Health

Children with involved fathers are
more motivated to try hard in school

Children with involved fathers have
more positive attitudes and participate in school more



Father involvement improves children's
behavioral and emotional
outcomes

Children with involved fathers have
fewer conduct problems

Children with involved fathers have
less anxiety

Sources:

Alfaro, E. C., Umaña-Taylor, A. J., & Bámaca, M. Y. (2006). The influence of academic support on Latino adolescents' academic motivation. *Family Relations*, 55(3), 279-291.

Flouri, E. (2005). Father's involvement and psychological adjustment in Indian and White British secondary school age children. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 10(1), 32-39.

Formoso, D., Gonzales, N. A., Barrera Jr, M., & Dumka, L. E. (2007). Interparental relations, maternal employment, and fathering in Mexican American families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 69(1), 26-39.

Paternity Establishment and Involvement

- Paternity is automatically established for married couples
- System and administrative barriers exist for unmarried couples
- For unmarried couples
 - Father being present at one prenatal visit is predictive of paternity establishment
 - Father being present at birth is predictive of paternity establishment
 - Paternity establishment is predictive of father involvement after birth

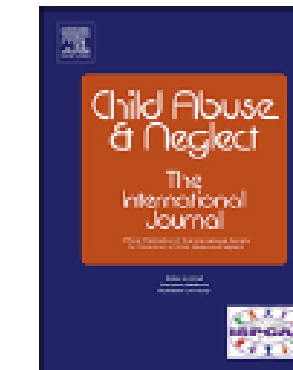
• *Child Family Research Partnership*



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Child Abuse & Neglect

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/chiabuneg



Paternity establishment at birth and early maltreatment: Risk and protective effects by maternal race and ethnicity*



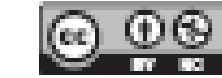
Katharine W. Buek*, David L. Lakey, Dorothy J. Mandell

- Paternity Establishment is protective of maltreatment for all race/ethnic groups
- Infants of white mothers are at the highest risk of maltreatment when paternity is NOT established at birth
- Take Home:
 - There are important culturally-specific family dynamics (especially in African American families) that we should look at as strengths
 - Help dads
 - Help moms

Perinatal Health Profiles Associated With Removal From the Home and Subsequent Child Protective Services Report in Maltreated Infants

Katharine W. Buek¹  and Dorothy J. Mandell¹ 

Child Maltreatment
2023, Vol. 0(0) 1–13
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DOI: 10.1177/10775595221150232
journals.sagepub.com/home/cmj



Maternal healthy profile with lowest rate of removal and lowest rate of subsequent investigation, had:

- Highest rates of paternity establishment
- Low rates of smoking
- High rates of acceptable prenatal care use
- High rates of breastfeeding in the hospital

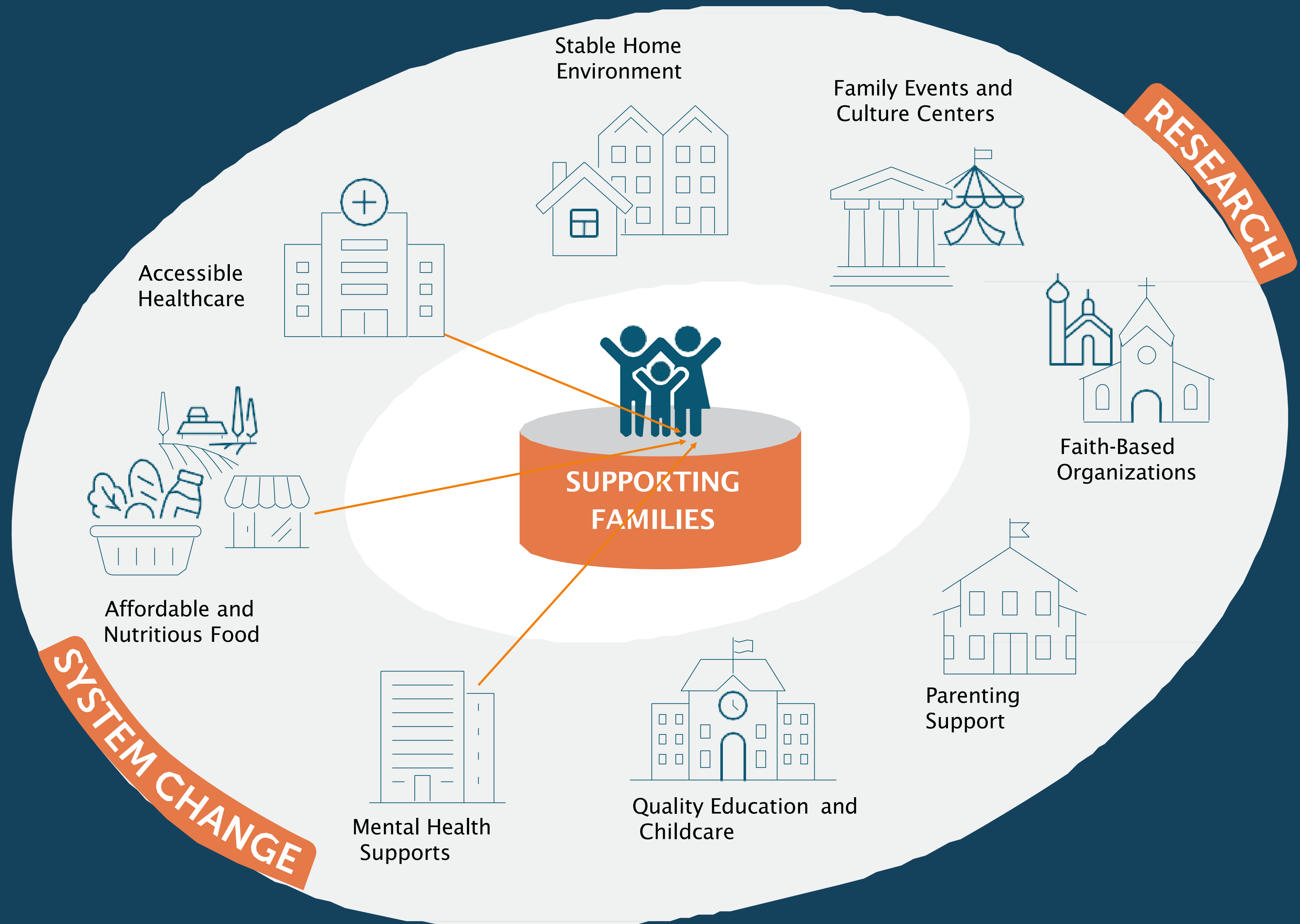
When paternity is established the good things are better

How do we get to making the good things better?

- Paternity establishment does not start at birth
- Paternal involvement does not start at birth
 - It is a journey
- How to we create the environment to make that journey positive?

Including Fathers

How are perinatal systems including fathers?



Stable Home Environment

Family Events and Culture Centers

Accessible Healthcare

Faith-Based Organizations

Parenting Support

Quality Education and Childcare

Mental Health Supports

Affordable and Nutritious Food

SYSTEM CHANGE

RESEARCH

Male involvement and the perinatal care systems

What we know

- Men want to be involved
- Men feel underprepared when the baby is born
- Men experience postnatal depression/anxiety, too

What we don't know

- Are men being included in PNC visits?
- Are they learning about caring for their children in perinatal systems?
- What are the external motivating factors to attend PNC visits?
- What information “sticks” with men during PNC visits?
- What is the best way to present warning signs of complications to men?
- ...

Fathers are not universally included in the perinatal system

- Fathers are expected to “know”... but not always taught
- Fathers are “othered” in a health setting... but expected to be there
- Providers are not adept at talking to or including fathers... but know they should

Buek et al. *BMC Nursing* (2021) 20:35
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12912-021-00553-y> BMC Nursing

RESEARCH ARTICLE Open Access

NICU and postpartum nurse perspectives on involving fathers in newborn care: a qualitative study

Katharine W. Buek^{1*}, Dagoberto Cortez² and Dorothy J. Mandell¹



Buek et al. *BMC Nursing* (2022) 21:99
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12912-022-00875-5> BMC Nursing

RESEARCH Open Access

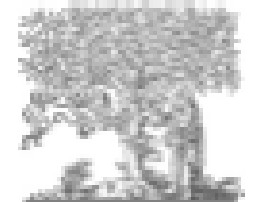
Opportunities and challenges for family-centered postpartum care during the COVID-19 pandemic: a qualitative study of nurse perspectives

Katharine W. Buek^a, Molly O'Neil and Dorothy J. Mandell



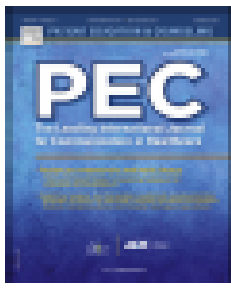
Patient Education and Counseling 104 (2021) 1826–1830

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

 ELSEVIER

Patient Education and Counseling


journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/pateducou



Discussion

The prenatal triad: The importance of provider-patient communication with expectant fathers throughout the prenatal care process

Sarah Varga^{a*}, Michael Mackert^b, Dorothy J. Mandell^c



Fathers are left out, but trying to find their way

- Fathers believe that prenatal care is the realm of the mother and baby
- Do not feel prepared for the transition to parenting
- Navigating cultural pressures, family pressures, and societal pressures
- The prenatal system is not focused on the transition to parenthood... for either parent

JOMH

Journal of Men's Health

Original Research

Fatherhood during COVID-19: fathers' perspectives on pregnancy and prenatal care

Natalie S. Poulos^{1,*}, Mike Henson García^{2,†}, Lindsay Bouchacourt^{3,†}, Michael Mackert^{3,†}, Dorothy J. Mandell^{1,†}

Poulos NS, Donovan EE, Mackert M, Mandell DJ (under review). Thematic Analysis of Fatherhood Interviews: A Story of Missed Opportunity for Father Engagement During Perinatal Care.

Poulos, NS, & Mandell, DJ (in prep) Paternal perceptions of parenting control during the transition to fatherhood

Between 5 and 15%
of new fathers
experience depression
before or after the baby is born

Fathers need help, too

- 41.8% of fathers did not have a social support network of other dads they can rely on for support and advice about parenting
- 41.2% of fathers did not have a social support network they can reach out to when having a conflict with their partner

- Cunningham et al (in Prep)



Depressed fathers are less likely to **read to their young children**

Children with a depressed father have **lower vocabulary and other language scores**

Depressed fathers are more likely to **spank their children**

Depressed fathers are less likely to **engage in responsive parenting behaviors**

Sources:

Paulson JF, Bazemore SD. Prenatal and postpartum depression in fathers and its association with maternal depression: a meta-analysis. JAMA. 2010;303(19):1961-1969.

Paulson JF, Keefe HA, Leiferman JA. Early parental depression and child language development. J Child Psychol Psychiatry. 2009;50(3):254-262.

Davis RN, Davis MM, Freed GL, Clark SJ. Fathers' depression related to positive and negative parenting behaviors with 1-year-old children. Pediatrics. 2011;127(4):612-618.

Supporting Fathers

Father's Playbook App



with
Michael Mackert
Center for Health Communication
UT Austin

Paul Toprac
SAGA Lab
UT Austin

Health Promotion for Fathers

What do we want them to do?

- Support the mother during pregnancy
- Positively engage with the pregnancy
- Seek information that will support transition to fatherhood

What do fathers want?

- Financial planning support
- Knowledge of pregnancy related changes
- To support their partner

Attend Prenatal Care

Health Promotion for Fathers

What are the barriers?

- Poor parenting transition support prenatally
- Interpersonal relationship with the mother
- Not knowing what they don't know
 - Receive information 2nd hand

How do we promote health behavior change

- ???

Father's Playbook:

Features in V1 & V2:

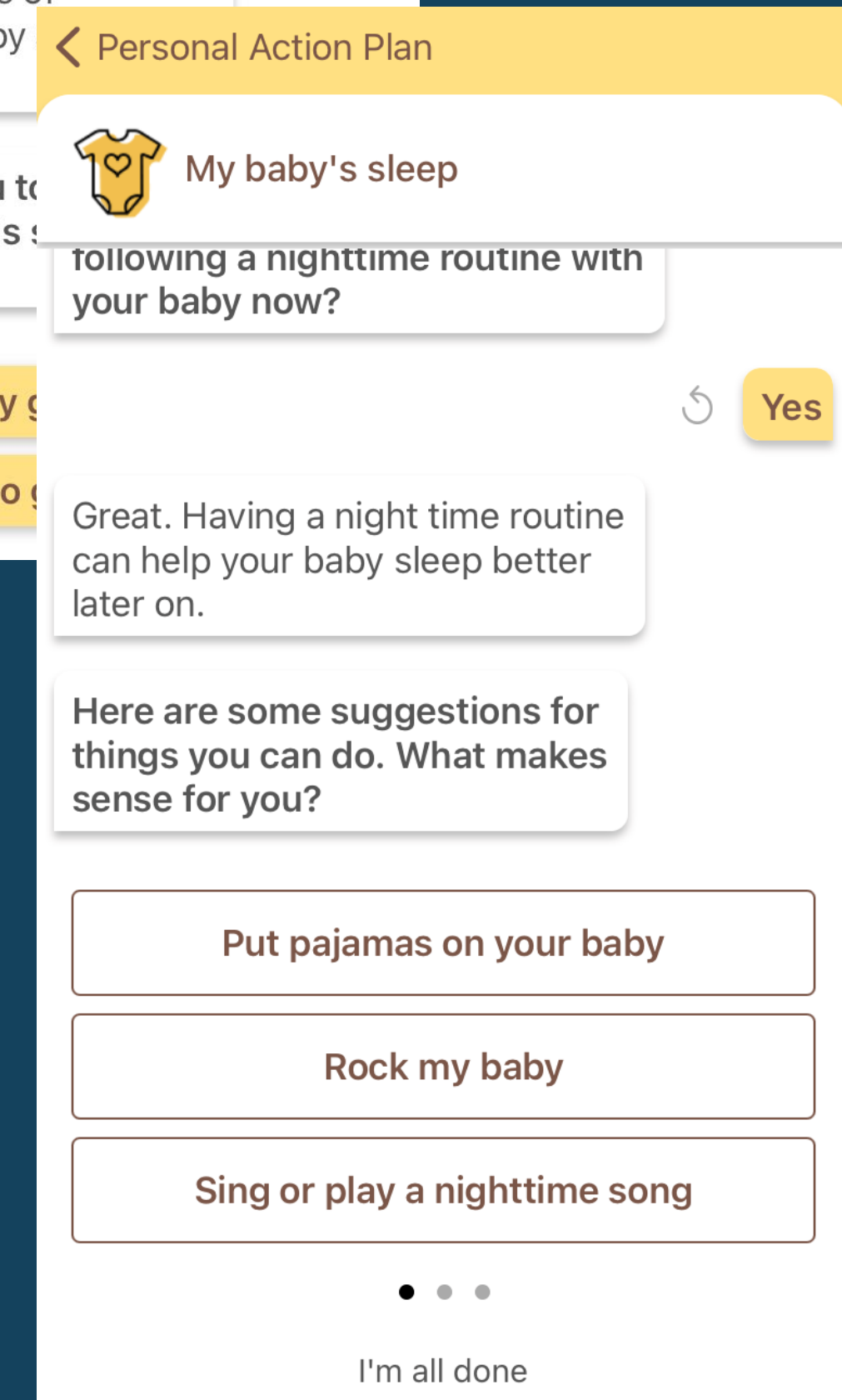
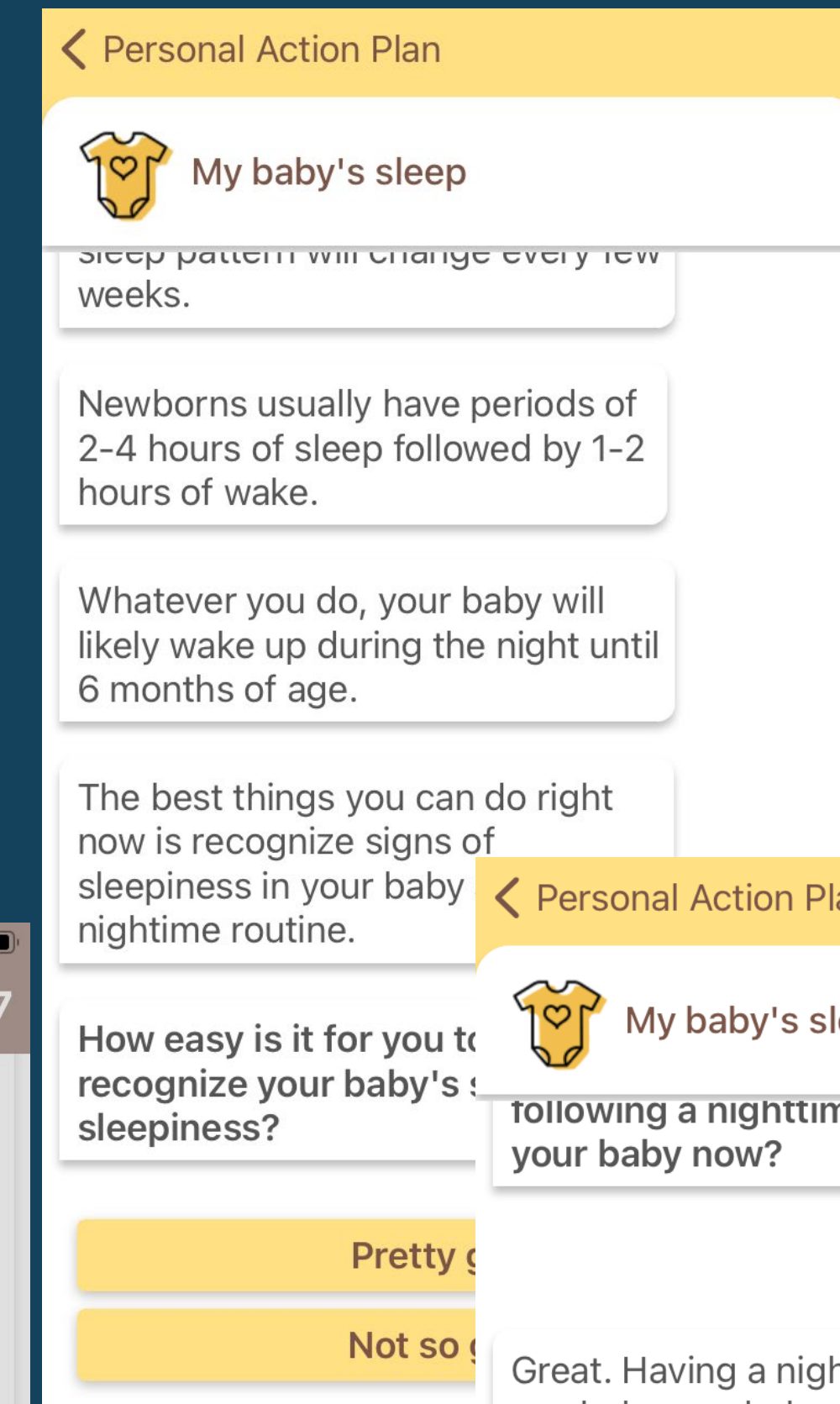
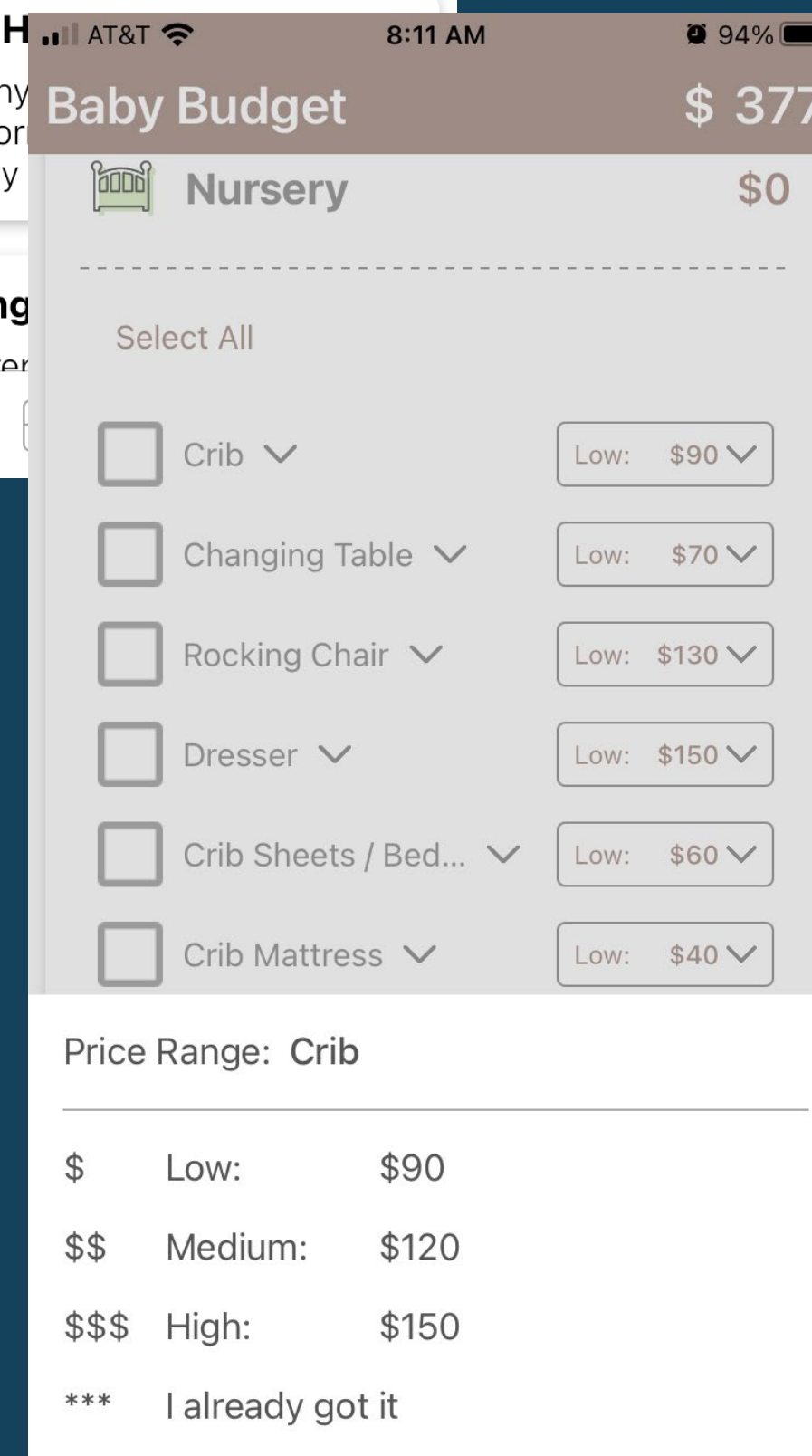
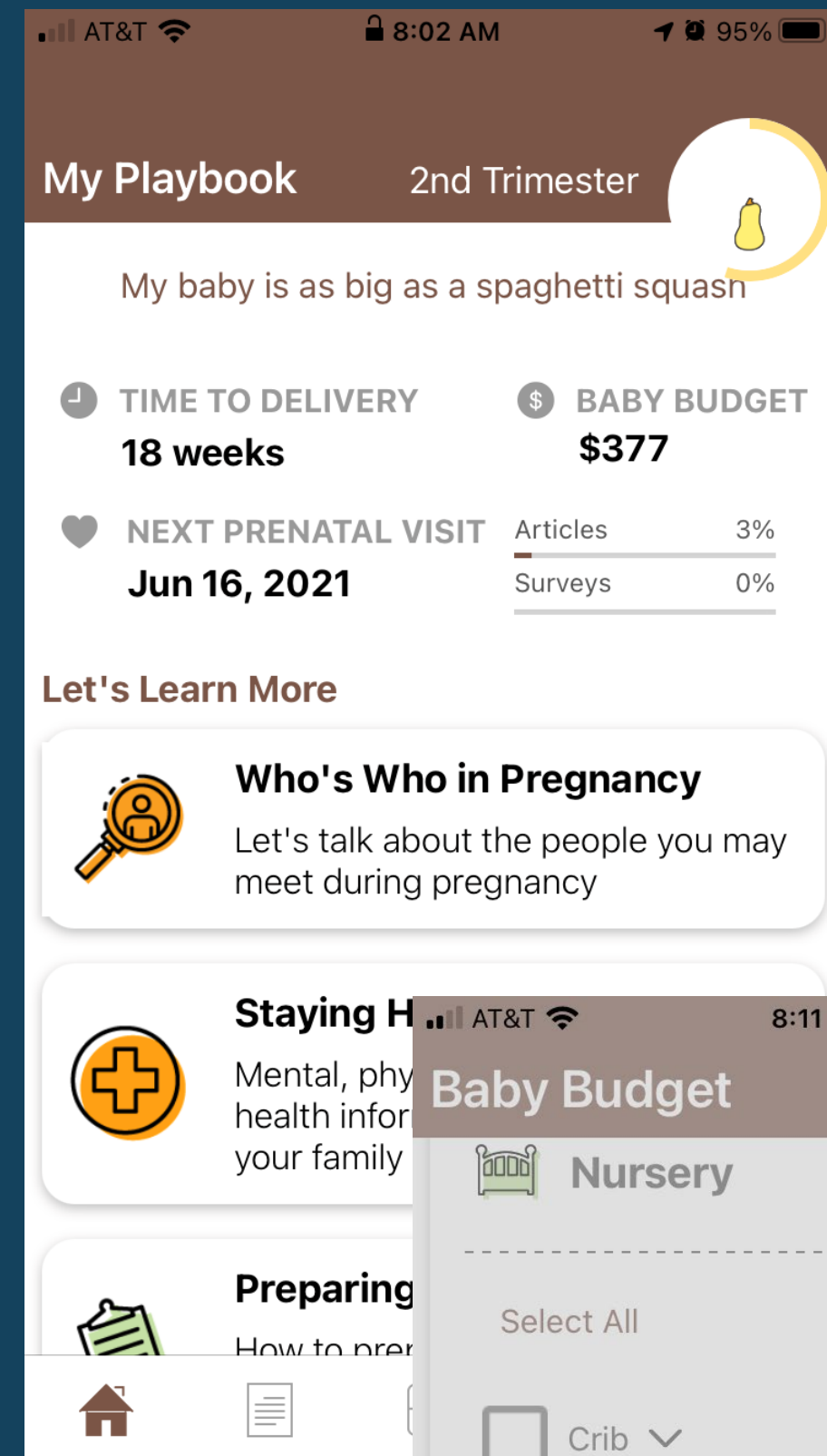
- Prenatal article
- Calculator as buying progress

Added in V3

- Parenting Action Plans
- Postnatal articles

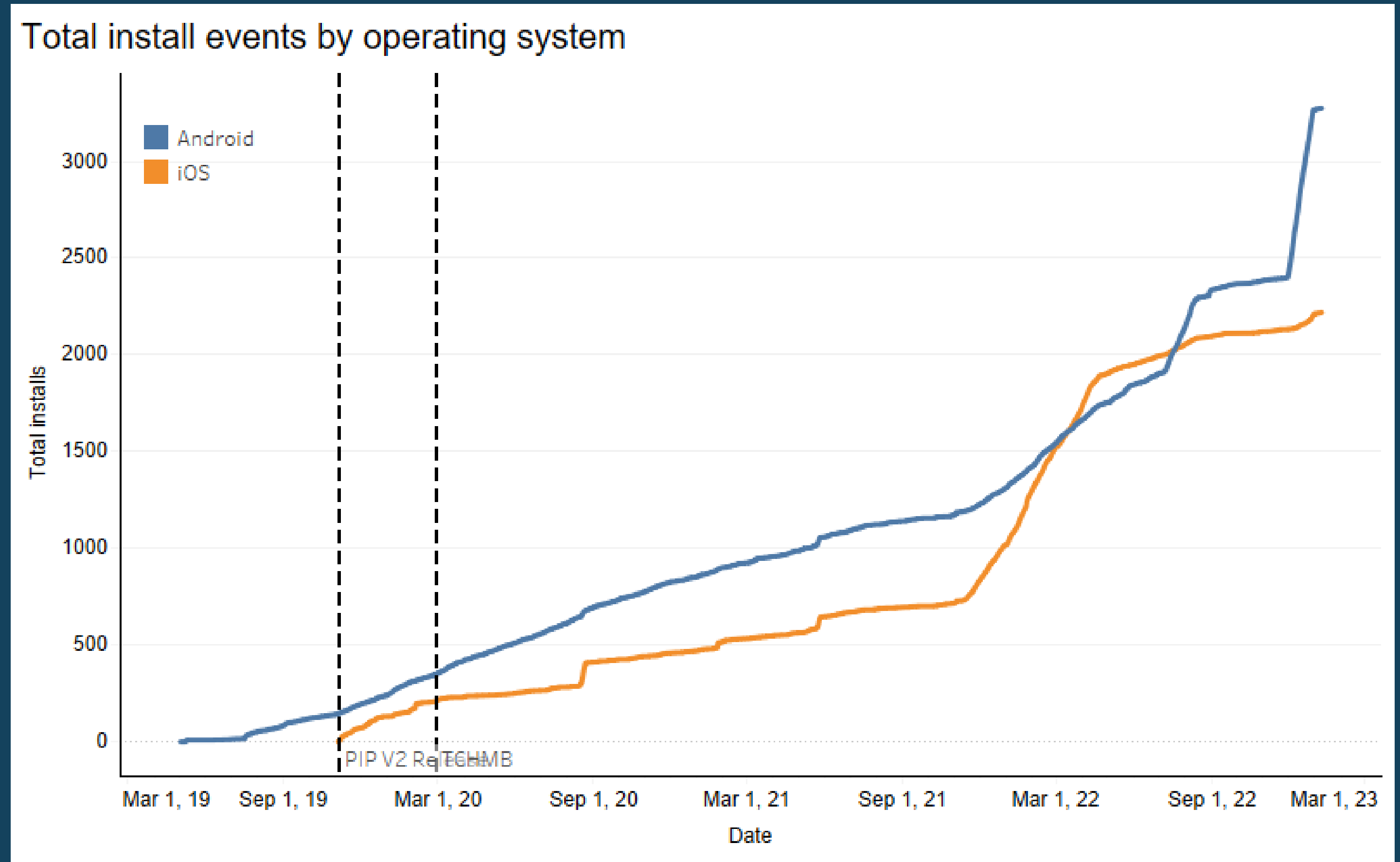
Goals:

- Increase PNC attendance
- Increase financial planning



Use information: App stores

- Doubled downloads since Jan 2022
- >5500 downloads since launch (10/1/2019)



Articles: Predicted read pattern of original articles

Pregnancy Basics

- Changing Bodies
- Changing Emotions
- Nutrition and wellness
- **Going to Prenatal Exams**
- Building a Connection with Your Baby

Preparing for Baby

- **Thinking about Finances**
- **Birth Preparation**
- **Financial Calculator**
- WIC
- Establishing Paternity
- Setting up the Nursery

Staying Healthy

- Men Change Too
- **Signs of Depression & Anxiety**
- Helping Your Partner
- Vaccines for Baby
- Vaccines for Mom & Dad

Articles: Actual read pattern of original articles

Pregnancy Basics

- **Changing Bodies**
- **Changing Emotions**
- Nutrition and wellness
- Going to Prenatal Exams
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Preparing for Baby

- **Thinking about Finances**
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Staying Healthy

- **Men Change Too**
- Signs of Depression & Anxiety
- Helping Your Partner
- Vaccines for Baby
- Vaccines for Mom & Dad

Consuming information

- All at once
 - Time on app is about 1 month
 - Most downloads are in the 1st to 2nd trimester transition
 - Articles read in about two weeks
 - Most sought after articles and information is to understand change in another person
- User Experience Testing
 - Action plans!
 - Want to customize calculator/budget
 - Information to be curated and timed with pregnancy

What we've learned about fathers

- Fathers want the best prenatal care for their partners
- Fathers want to know and do all the things
- Fathers want information about their partner and coming baby

- Perinatal systems can be alienating
- Transition to fatherhood can be socially isolating

What we've learned about fathers



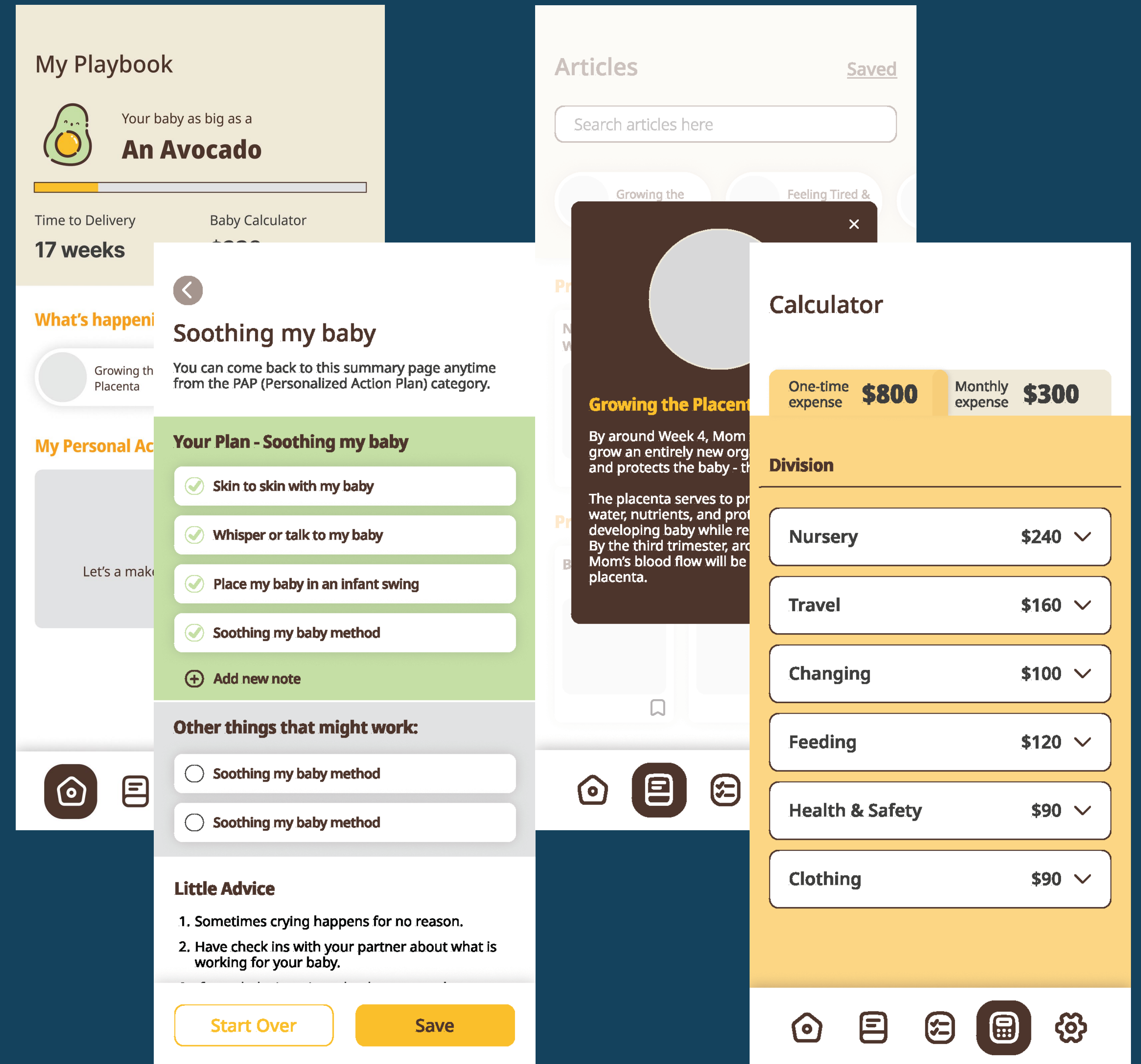
What we've learned about fathers



Next Steps

Father Playbook 4.0

- Adding timed snippets
- Timing all information
- More action plans
- Customization for budget
- Audio discussions
- Push notifications



Promoting Positive Father Involvement

Within Systems

- Education
- Tools to interact with fathers

With Fathers

- First-hand information
- Refining information be presented
- Add features to get users to the information we want them to have

How do we promote health behavior change in new & to-be fathers?

- Change benefit is in another person, not the self
 - Benefits for the pregnant partner
 - Benefits for the child
- Reach them directly
- Planning versus Education

Thank you to the team!

- UT Austin Center for Health Communication
 - Mike Mackert
 - Erin Donovan
 - Catherine Cummingham
 - Eileen Artigas
 - Weija Shi
 - Dani DeLuca
 - Ellen Shin
- UTHealth Houston SPH
 - Dorothy Mandell
 - Natalie Poulos
 - Katherine Buek
 - Jon Gibson
 - Em Karimifar
 - All our student designers!
- UT Austin SAGA Lab
 - Paul Toprac
 - All our student developers!



**Safe
Babies**

For more information:



dorothy.j.mandell@uth.tmc.edu

www.txsafebabies.org

Pride in Self



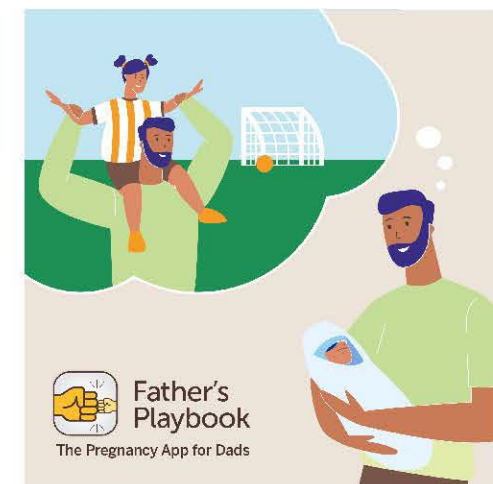
Pride in Future Kid



● PFK: First Steps



● PFK: Good Grades

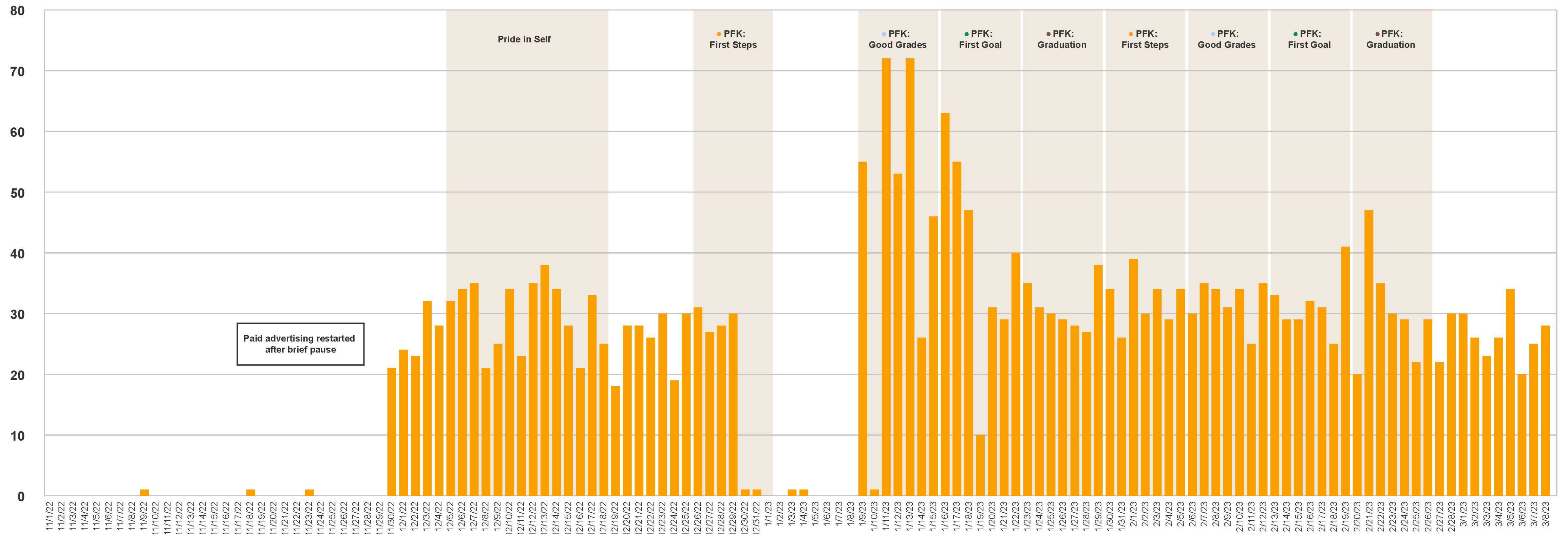


● PFK: First Goal

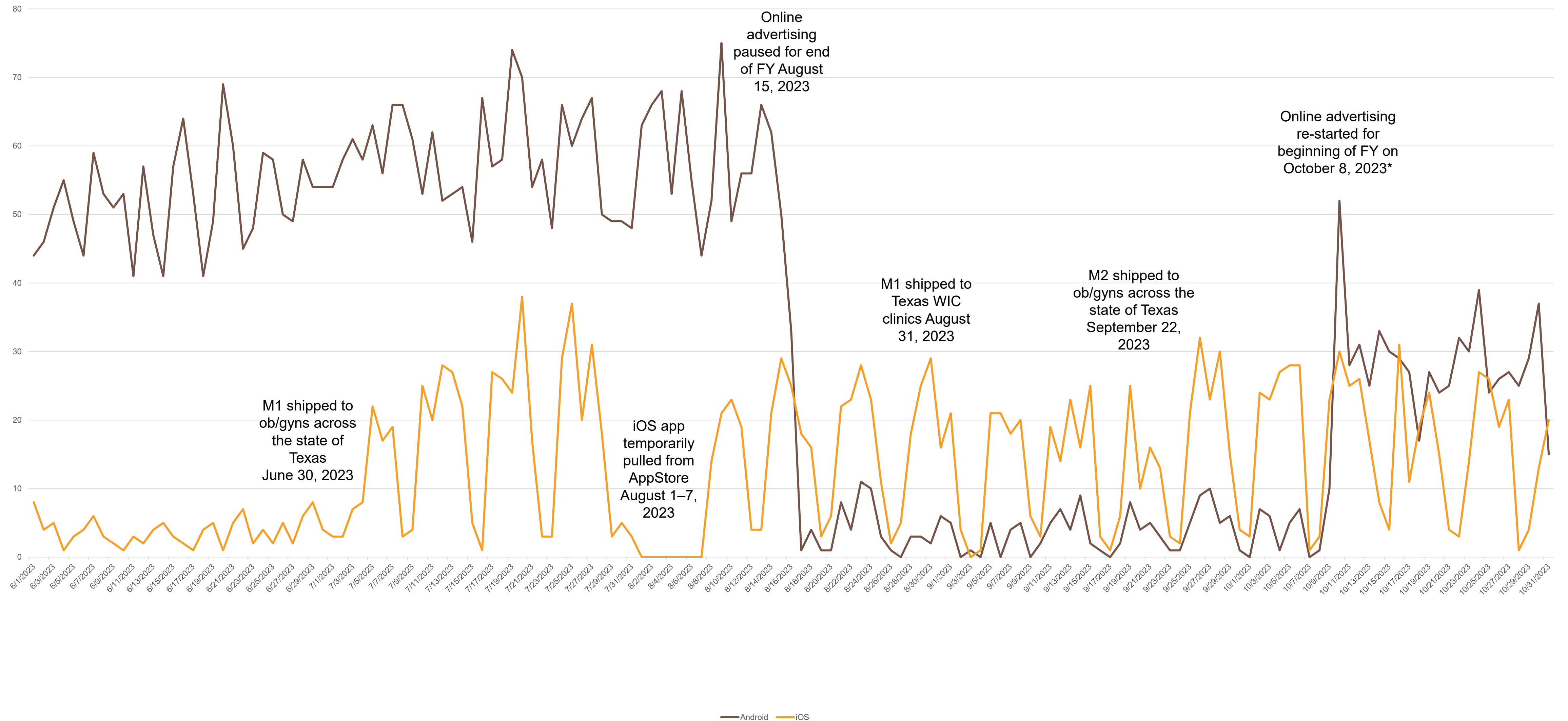


● PFK: Graduation

Android Downloads with Concurrent Campaigns



Summer + Fall 2023 Evaluation



* Online advertising restarted, but at half the previous budget