

2.21.23

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Website: [African American Babies Coalition and Projects | Promoting the healthy development of African American babies \(aabcprojects.org\)](https://www.aabcprojects.org)

1. Please tell us about organization

The African American Babies Coalition and Projects (AABC) is a group of African American community stakeholders which include educators, nonprofit and civic leaders, researchers, childcare providers, parents and grandparents and public health professionals, from across Minnesota who are committed to promoting the healthy development of African American babies. As of July 2020, the African American Babies Coalition and Projects is a program of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

The AABC started in 2005 with 21 African American women talking about where they would like to see the community focus in on and how to heal and bring awareness of brain development in young children. They started this on a campaign in 2017 and received Upper Midwest Academy Award PSA's and since then the AABC and Projects became part of the Healthy Black Pregnancies team having four sites. The teams work with health care workers, childcare development of the baby and brain and successful outcomes for black and brown mothers who need to make sure they have healthy prenatal care and building pathways within the clinic and hospital workforce.

2. What is your organization focused on?

The coalition was instrumental in completing three phases of work to develop a campaign focused on building healthy brains for children from conception through the early years of development targeted to the African American public.

African Americans often have negative responses to research because of historical occurrences and the disturbing actions and opinions prompted by it. AABC's number one priority was to develop steps to engage families and assist them to trust the

research process – and the information that exists about the brain development of our babies.

3. What is your mission?

African American families and communities will claim our cultural heritage so that our babies will thrive, excel, and lead us into the future.

A major goal of the campaign also seeks to make sure African American families are aware of early traumatic experiences that can short circuit young brain development. The Brains are Built campaign highlights what it takes to change behaviors that are inappropriate to a young child's evolving brain. The outcome is to support adults living with toxic stress to recognize risky behaviors that distress their child(s) growth and development in an informal and non-judgmental way.

4. What are some resources and/or programs you offer?

There are community resources and shared content on our website, and we are very proud of the recent openings of R.A.W. Libraries, housed in early child care centers, a partnership between Planting People Growing Justice and St Paul Promise Neighborhoods.

5. Any other information you'd like us to share with our community and members?

We also have done work in maternal health: we have developed three curriculums 'Moving Beyond Crises, Birthing Fruition and It's All About Me'. We train healthcare and early childhood professionals as Doulas and Lactation receiving certifications and have Annual Black and Brown Birthing Summits in the Fall to name a few of our projects.