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## FACT SHEET

**Mission:** To provide physical and emotional support for families and create a sense of community through education and mentorship regardless of race, income, religion or family type.

**Approach:** To develop relationships between experienced mothers or those passionate about the bond between mom and baby with mothers with newborns to provide skills, services, and friendship that will enhance the entire family and by extension, strengthen the community.

**Service Area:** Primarily Kent County; extends into lakeshore communities based on volunteer availability

### Programs:

~ **Flourishing Families** — Goal: To enhance family strengths and promote optimal family and infant health in the early post-partum period. Services: Connects volunteer experienced mothers, or others passionate about the bond between mother and child, with new mothers and families in need of social, emotional, and physical support. Volunteers meet with families weekly for two to six hours and provide non-judgmental support and companionship, assist with newborn care, meal preparation and light household tasks, infant feeding support and care for siblings. Volunteers also provide parent education, teach coping skills and soothing techniques, and identify connections to community resources as needed.

~ **Connecting Families** – Connect families within communities for the opportunity to have playgroups, share resources, and develop friendships.

~ **Educational Classes** – Parenting classes are offered in partnership with baby beloved, inc. and other businesses within Kent County and surrounding areas.

~ **Volunteer Recruitment and Training** – MomsBloom has developed a pool of multi-talented, trained volunteers, which are called upon to meet direct calls for help and referrals for health professionals and community organizations. Service capacity is only limited by volunteer capacity/availability. Volunteers linked with families based on early intake procedure and information from referral sources.

~ **Additional Services** – Includes support for families who have recently adopted a child and families who have experienced loss through miscarriage or stillbirth. Volunteers provide the support. These volunteers have received specialized training.

**Founded:** This grassroots organization was founded in 2008 by the current staff: Sara Binkley-Tow, Executive Director and Angie Walters, Volunteer Coordinator

### The Need

- Research has shown a causal relationship between parental confidence and parent child bonding to the physical, psychological, and social development of children.

- Perinatal mood disorders, more commonly referred to as postpartum depression or PPD, describes a maternal mood disorder that occurs in 15-20% of moms – about 1 million women in the US each year – get postpartum depression, but the truth is the number is even higher.

Source: [www.postpartumprogress.com](http://www.postpartumprogress.com).

- Recently it has been identified in research that slightly more than 10 percent of new dads also become more depressed before or after birth (particularly when a spouse is experiencing depression or mood disorder). Source: May 19, 2010 issue of Journal of the American Medical Association and subsequent news conference sponsored by the American Medical Association.

- Studies have found that adequate social and emotional support reduces the likelihood of attachment disorders in children, increases parent-child bonding, and improves detection and treatment of “baby blues” and “PMD”.

### Additional Local Resources / Experts (These are also MomsBloom Referral Sources)

*Moms (& Dads) flourish when they have a chance to grow.*



# MomsBloom

- Kelly Wysocki-Emery, RN, BS, IBCLC, baby beloved, inc. (616) 616.977.5683
- Nancy Roberts, RN, CCE, Coalition Contact, Spectrum Health Postpartum Emotional Support Program (616) 391-1771  
[nancy.roberts@spectrum-health.org](mailto:nancy.roberts@spectrum-health.org)
- Barb Hawkins-Palmer, Executive Director Healthy Kent 2010 (616) 632-7281

## Postpartum Support International (PSI)

Postpartum Support International is dedicated to helping women suffering from perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, including postpartum depression, the most common complication of childbirth. We also work to educate family, friends and healthcare providers so that moms and moms-to-be can get the support they need and recover.

- Michigan State Co-Coordinator: Nancy Roberts, RN, Spectrum Health Butterworth Hospital, Healthier Communities, 665 Seward Ave NW, Grand Rapids, Mi 49504 (616) 391.5000

- National: <http://www.postpartumprogress.com>

**Katherine Stone, author of Postpartum Progress**, the most widely read blog on postpartum depression and other mental illnesses related to childbirth.

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## Additional Resources

### Causal Impact of Parental Health and Depression on Child Development — and the Health of Communities at Large

Postpartum depression isn't just bad for mothers. It has important consequences for the development of infants. Studies conducted over the years catalogue many of the effects of parental depression:

- Avoidant and disengaged, depressed mothers do not touch their babies as frequently or with the same affection as non-depressed moms—a deficiency that alone can throw off infant development.
- Infants of depressed mothers commonly show cognitive delays, including prolonged time to get used to new information, increased time to detect objects and faces, and low levels of exploration of and engagement with their surroundings.
- Infants of depressed mothers also exhibit behavioral problems from preschool through high school. This is the case whether the depression began prenatally or postnatally.

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