

'Listen Up Oakland!' Open Mic Night for Black Moms On 8/25 Celebrates 12th Annual Black Breastfeeding Week

Black parents in the Bay Area Invited to Take The Mic With Poems, Songs, Comedy & More to Celebrate Black Birth, Breastfeeding & Motherhood

NEW YORK, NY, USA, August 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On Sunday, August 25th, Black



Black Breastfeeding Week has always been about reclamation — taking back a tradition that was taken from us. In 2024, we say our stories are powerful to shift cultural norms and health outcomes.”

Kimberly Seals Allers, BBW co-founder

parents in the Bay area are invited to come out for free food, drinks, and mini-massages, as part of "Listen Up! An Open Mic Night for Black Mamas" in honor of the launch of the 12th annual Black Breastfeeding Week, the only national health campaign with an explicit focus on improving Black maternal and infant health through breastfeeding.

The 2024 theme, “Listen Up! Reclaiming Our Narrative & Centering Our Stories for Breastfeeding Justice,” honors the power of storytelling to shift cultural norms for more optimal infant feeding in Black communities. Black parents are invited to share poems, songs, birth stories,

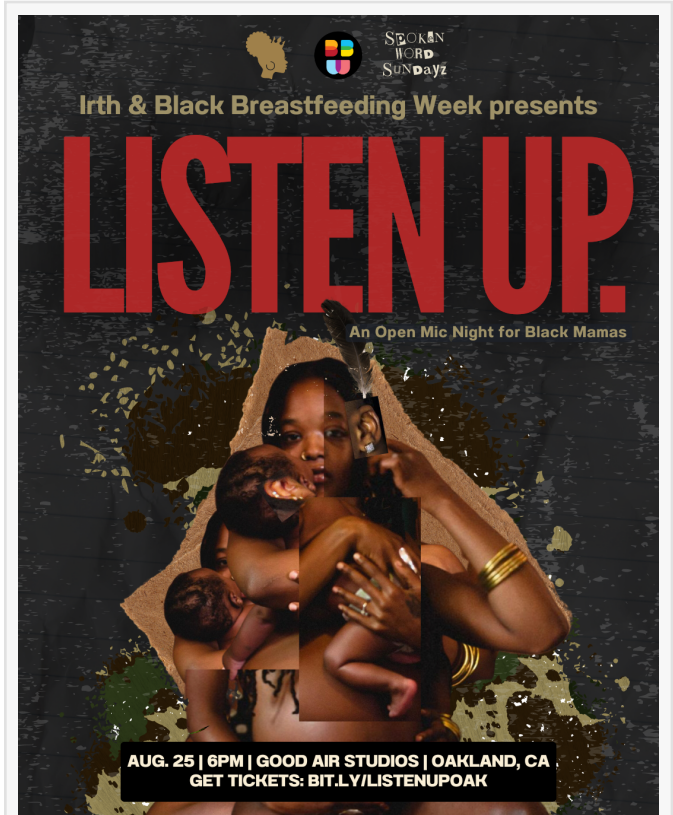
comedy shorts, AHA moments, funny parenting fails and more for a night that amplifies Black voices and stories as critical tools for shifting the narrative of Black birth, breastfeeding and motherhood in our communities.

The Oakland-area event, hosted by Irth, the #1 app for Black moms to rate and review doctors and hospitals, will take place on Sunday, August 25th from 6 to 8pm at Good Air Studios, 2040 Livingston Street, Oakland, CA 94606. It will be hosted by Tia Nomore, actress, rapper and star of the critically acclaimed 2023 movie Earth Mama. Interested performers can [sign up using this link](#).

Tickets are \$5 when you download the Irth app and [can be purchased here](#). Ticket prices support the volunteer-led work of BBW including its scholarship fund for aspiring lactation professionals in the Black community.

Free drink tickets and other prizes will be offered to the first 20 people who complete a review of a prenatal or pediatric appointment, or hospital birth experience in the Irth app.

[Irth \(as in Birth\)](#) but without the B for bias) is the first of its kind, non-profit, "Yelp-like" app for Black and brown women and birthing people to leave ratings and reviews of Ob/Gyns, birthing hospitals and pediatricians. The free app, available in the Google Play and App stores, provides critical information on where other BIPOC have had safe and respectful prenatal, birthing and pediatric experiences. On the back end, Irth app reviews are turned into robust data and strategic insights to create quality improvement programs for hospitals. Irth is currently working with 8 hospitals across 6 states including Cedars Sinai in Los Angeles, Memorial Care Children's Hospital in Long Beach and UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento.



Mixed media image by NuVisualz of a Black mother and infant

Local Irth app partners include Alameda County Public Health Department and First 5 Alameda County.

BBW occurs annually from August 25-31 and was created in 2013 by three nationally recognized breastfeeding advocates in response to the gaping racial disparities in breastfeeding rates that have existed for over 40 years, despite the proven benefits of breastfeeding for mothers and babies.

"Black Breastfeeding Week is and always has been about reclamation — taking back a tradition that we were intentionally disconnected from," says BBW co-founder Kimberly Seals Allers, a former senior editor at Essence magazine and founder of Irth, and author of *The Big Let Down--How Medicine, Big Business and Feminism Undermine Breastfeeding* (St.Martins Press). "Our stories have power. We can shift cultural norms and send a clear message to public health entities that deny culturally relevant lactation support and to corporate interests that aggressively market inferior first foods to our communities, that we can and do breastfeed."

Nationally, Black Breastfeeding Week 2024 also includes an online Storytelling Festival on social media where community members are invited to share their "Breastfeeding Joy," and an Open Mic Night for Black Mamas hosted live in New York City (August 28th) and the National Open Mic Night for Black Mamas happening virtually on August 30 at 8pm, which will be hosted by comedian and maternal health activist Angelina Spicer. The virtual event will be streamed live to

the BBW Facebook page.

To get all BBW event updates, follow @BlkBFingWeek on Instagram and learn more at www.BlackBreastfeedingWeek.org

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