



Infertility Awareness Nonprofit Expanding to Atlanta

Chapter Launch will Feature Speaker Dr. Desireé McCarthy-Keith, who pioneered research on infertility in African American women

(Atlanta, Ga. - March 16, 2015) – Fertility for Colored Girls (FFCG), the Chicago-based nonprofit group dedicated to offering information and hope to minority women struggling to conceive, is bringing a chapter to Atlanta, Georgia -- a city with one of the highest populations of African-Americans in the U.S.

The chapter launch is set for 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 18, 2015 at the Interdominational Theological Center, Costen Center Room 101-103 at 700 Martin Luther King Drive SW in Atlanta. This chapter will join the FFCG movement, which has reached seven states and established three other chapters, including the home base of Chicago, Richmond, Va. and the DMV (Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia) area.

Atlanta's launch will feature reproductive endocrinologist Dr. Desireé McCarthy-Keith, whose groundbreaking research shined a spotlight on the unmet need of infertility awareness in African-American women.

The Rev. Dr. Stacey Edwards-Dunn, FFCG Founder and President, is among those women of color fighting infertility. At 43, she and her husband, Earl recently welcomed a baby girl, Shiloh -- after seven years and eight round of in vitro fertilization (IVF).

"I began to encounter a number of women and couples who were struggling with infertility and many of them didn't know that I was struggling... One of the things I found was that many of them felt like they were walking this journey alone," Rev. Stacey says.

Rev. Stacey is delighted to expand this mission to Atlanta and offer hope and access to resources in a city with one of the highest populations of African Americans in the country.

"FFCG is on the move to raise awareness and encourage African American women/couples to take charge of our fertility and reproductive health," she says.

Launched in 2013, FFCG exists to address the cold reality highlighted by McCarthy-Keith's research: black women have higher rates of infertility as compared to their white counterparts. Studies show 11.5 percent of black women have reported issues with infertility as compared to 7 percent of white women.

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“As long as disparities in reproductive health exist, we need organizations like Fertility for Colored Girls to increase awareness and access to fertility care among women of color,” said McCarthy-Keith.

“I applaud FFCG for removing the stigma from infertility and for encouraging women to share their experiences,” she added. “My goal in partnering with FFCG is to provide accurate information and support to women who are facing infertility and to encourage women to support each other. I am privileged to represent women of color in reproductive medicine and proud to be a reflection of the women I serve.”

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FFCG Fast Facts

What is Fertility for Colored Girls (FFCG)? Fertility for Colored Girls is a national organization founded in 2013 that provides education, awareness, support and encouragement to African American women/couples experiencing infertility. Based in Chicago, FFCG currently has a chapter in Richmond, VA, the DMV area (Washington D.C., Maryland, Virginia) and is launching a chapter in Atlanta in April 2015. Please note that FFCG is **NOT** a medical organization and we **DO NOT** give health advice.

How does FFCG accomplish its mission?

FFCG accomplishes its mission of offering hope and access to options to women and couples trying to conceive through the following:

1. Education: Live Programming/Webinars
2. Support: Private Support Group Meetings & Prayer Circles
3. Resources: Family Building Grant, Ask the Doctor & access to health experts through programming

How did FFCG get started?

Our founder, the Rev. Dr. Stacey Edwards-Dunn, was experiencing her own fertility challenges with her husband. They spent six years before the launch of FFCG trying to conceive. During that painful time, Rev. Stacey realized there were very few women of color she could turn to for help and became concerned that conversation surrounding black women and infertility were not taking place. After seven years and eight IVF treatments, Rev. Stacey and her husband Earl welcomed a baby girl, Shiloh, in the fall of 2014.

What are key statistics surrounding black women and infertility in the U.S.?

- Black women have twice the odds of infertility compared to white women
- 11.5% of black women report infertility compared to 7% of white women but yet studies indicate that black women use infertility services less often
- A leading cause of infertility in black women is uterine fibroids

Where can I direct people to for more information?

FFCG has a website www.fertilityforcoloredgirls.org and an active Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/FertilityForColoredGirlsNfp>

updated 1/2015



FFCG in the News

To read, listen to and/or watch our coverage in its entirety, please log on to www.fertilityforcoloredgirls.org. FFCG has been featured on:

CBS News Chicago

“You & Me This Morning” *Inspiring U* segment, WCIU

“Infertility Through the Prism of Race,” *New York Times*

WVON Cliff Kelley Show

WVON Perri Small Show

Doug Banks Radio Show

“Black women, infertility organization strives to create more awareness,” *Chicago Defender*

Tom Joyner Morning Show Community Watch

“Working Women Waiting Longer to Have Children Face Infertility Issues,” TBT News Service

Clip Samples

"Infertility Endured Through a Prism of Race" - *New York Times* - 2014



"Black women, infertility organization strives to create more awareness.", *Chicago Defender*, 2014

Black women, infertility organization strives to create more awareness

By Andrea V. Watson
DEFENDER STAFF REPORTER

Like most couples, Brandi Harris and her husband Roy planned to have a baby shortly after getting married. Neither expected to encounter any problems with conceiving so when they discovered that Brandi was infertile, both were shocked.

Research shows that Black women are twice as likely to deal with infertility as white women, but they are less likely to get help and explore their options.

According to research by Georgia Reproductive Specialists, an infertility and reproductive endocrine healthcare facility, infertility affects one in eight couples or 7.3 million people in the U.S. About 12 percent of women of reproductive age experience difficulty having a baby and Black women have twice the odds of infertility compared to white women. The data reveal that 11.5 percent of Black women report infertility compared to 7 percent of white women, yet research still shows that Black women use infertility services much less than their white counterparts.

National Infertility Awareness Week is from April 20-27 and organizations like Fertility for Colored Girls are doing their part in reaching out to women. It joins RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association in recognizing the infertility issue.

"National Infertility Awareness Week is one of RESOLVE's pinnacle events each year and has such wide spread recognition and acceptance in the infertility community," Barbara Collura, president of RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association, said in a statement.

"By coming together and speaking as one voice, we can all truly make a difference as it relates to public understanding, awareness and education about the disease of infertility," she said.

Events will take place locally and nationwide.

Beth Heller, owner of Pulling Down the Moon, a company that offers fertility information and provides holistic treatment, will host a free yoga class from 6 to 8:30 p.m. April 24 at her company, 900 N. Kingsbury, Suite Riverwalk 6A, Chicago. Fertility Centers of Illinois

clinical psychologist Ariadna Cymet Lanski will join her. The class called "Balance During Fertility Treatment" will be an interactive event that will allow attendees the opportunity to discuss their emotions.

"A recent study shows that stress may make it harder for women to get pregnant and fertility treatment is very stressful so we offer these programs to help women to feel less stressed and to have more control over their fertility," Heller said.

Like mental illness, infertility is another taboo topic the Black community has silently decided to ignore. Harris said most African Americans are spiritual and believe prayer solves everything, which can be detrimental to the community.

"I think it's rather embarrassing for a lot of people to talk about," she said. "No one talks about getting medical help."

Harris recalled a woman suggesting positions she should try in the bedroom to increase her chances of getting pregnant.

"You hear all these crazy things and some

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