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Helping Women, and Families, With Birth Experiences

by Bethany Mitros

Donna Favilla has been helping women have happier pregnancies, deliveries and recoveries for decades and now she's bringing her sought-after services to a new brick-and-mortar location in Haddonfield with Perinatal Health LLC.

The full-service center focuses on resources for new and expecting parents that help create extraordinary experiences for the entire family before, during and after birth through classes, individual coaching, and parent and dad groups.

She was inspired to work with birthing mothers through her own birth experiences and her mother's experiences. "My mom had previous miscarriages and it made me wonder how I could help other future moms," she explained. "I wanted to make a difference for moms and their families."

At Perinatal Health, clients can take classes in HypnoBirthing, Spinning Babies and Mindset Birth. Favilla also offers birth meditation and is planning a future "dad chat" class that will allow dads to talk about what it will be like to



PROFESSIONAL PRACTITIONER: Donna Favilla is excited to have a new central location for her birthing services and classes in downtown Haddonfield, where expecting parents can learn how to create extraordinary birth experiences and adjust to life with a newborn.

be a first-time dad and how fathers can facilitate and help with the birth process and when the baby comes home from the hospital.

Favilla's class offerings

extend to babies as well. She also offers baby yoga, reflexology and massage therapy. Gift certificates for classes are popular gifts for new grandparents to give to expecting parents.

The experienced massage therapist, labor doula and reflexologist started Perinatal Health in 2016 after working with expecting mothers at Virtua hospital, providing complimentary massages for high-risk patients and during the postpartum recovery period. "The program did very well," said Favilla. "We had a 98 percent acceptance rate."

Before that, she worked in labor and delivery and owned the Haddonfield Massage and Wellness Center. "I have always worked with pregnant moms," Favilla explained. She even worked as a unit secretary for labor and delivery at West

Jersey Hospital (now Virtua) right out of high school and then at Penn Hospital. "I got the opportunity to learn about birth and business and how to relate to pregnant women."

Favilla also saw what was missing from prenatal and postpartum care. "They needed a lot of care. At the time, epidurals and c-sections were the comfort measures because women weren't allowed much movement. There was not a lot of autonomy or free will and not a lot of choices for moms to make."

Things have changed, however, and expecting mothers now have more choices surrounding birth. Favilla is proud that her holistic practices contributed to that change in mindset. "Now moms can have a whole experience. That's what my goal is with my business: to create a nice, pleasant experience for the mom," she explained. "It's the birth of your child. You want to feel good about it."

Testimonials on the Perinatal Health website show that Favilla has been more than effective in her work. One calls her an "amazing doula and educator." Multi-



ple women commented that they felt confident when it came time to give birth due to Favilla's "caring, supportive and professional" teaching.

Favilla's clients are not the only ones who have positive experiences, however. Favilla is passionate about her work and enjoys connecting with the couples she encounters. "I have attended over 200 births. It's a privilege and an honor. It's something I don't take lightly. I am very grateful," she said.

Perinatal Health, located at 225 Kings Highway East, will hold a ribbon cutting and open house on November 5, with a ribbon cutting at 11 a.m. For more information, visit perinatalhealthllc.com.

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