

# Appendix 1. Supplementary Photos & Quotations

Critchlow E, Birkenstock L, Hotz M, Sablone L, Henderson Riley A, Mercier R, et al. Experiences of new mothers during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. *Obstet Gynecol* 2022;139.

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# STRESSORS

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# Worry & Fear

*“My baby, she doesn’t have the ability to protect herself the way I can protect myself, so that’s what made me tighten up on the restrictions with COVID now that um she’s here. ....She can’t even cover her nose when she sneeze.” (018)*

*“If I’m watching the news, a lot of anxiety come from that or too many sirens...before COVID...we was dealing with...other things, but now [COVID] is just giving us even more to look over our shoulder with...you gotta be extra guarded, constantly.” (042, photo below)*

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# Worry & Fear

*“So that part is, it's awful. [My newborn], he wants to be met and some, some things, like he just hasn't had any sunlight since he's been here because we have to put everything around him and on him, make sure he's covered...” (071)*

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# Worry & Fear

*“These babies is bored. And they’re forced to just be quiet and just go with the flow and it’s sad. There should be more options and more support and, you know, more ideas given to moms during COVID.” (042)*

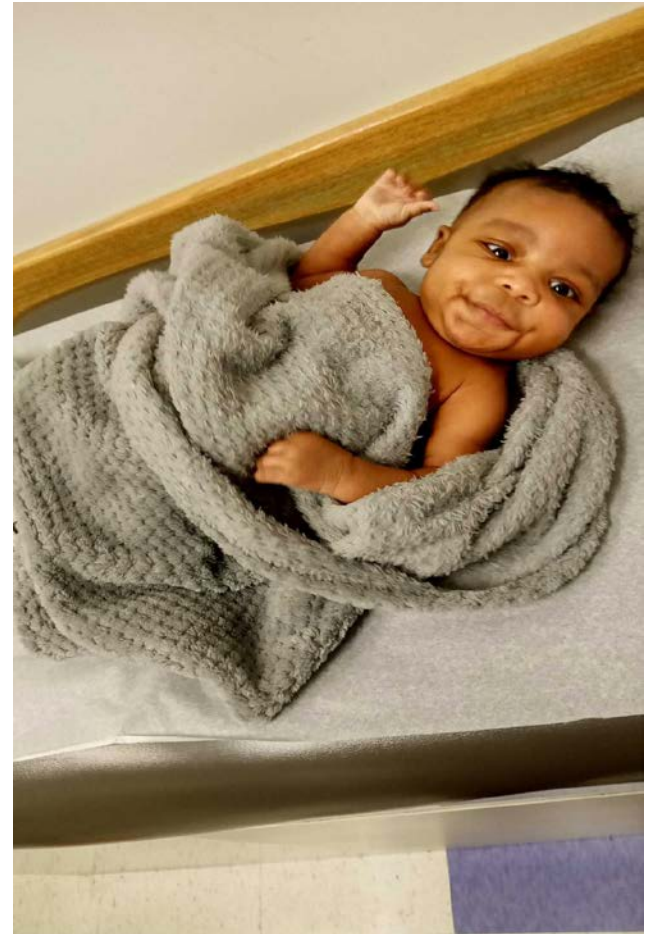
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# Worry & Fear

*“It’s uncomfortable going to appointments right now because of COVID...My family doesn’t go anywhere...but when I’m outside it’s things I can’t control...I don’t know what I’m really touching or what, you know anybody just exposing to, you know, as well as my baby- for my baby’s sake too” (042)*

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# Childcare



*“I can kind of make it work, it’s just now it’s making it work with...no help whatsoever except for myself and my husband...before we got pregnant...I had a lot of tricks up my sleeve, to work it out, and now a lot of that stuff is gone out the window.” (003, photo to left)*

*“...will this person be comfortable in a mask or without a mask or limiting their social contacts, or what am I supposed to ask them, or do I have to pay them more because of hazard pay, or should I mention to my neighbors that I have someone coming in or will that make them freaked out about seeing us...” (010)*

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# Other Children

*“The suffocating feeling sometimes, as lovely as this is...there’s always somebody on you...requests for needs to be met all the time...it’s easy to get...lost yourself a little bit...even more during this time where you can’t leave the house.” (028, photo below)*



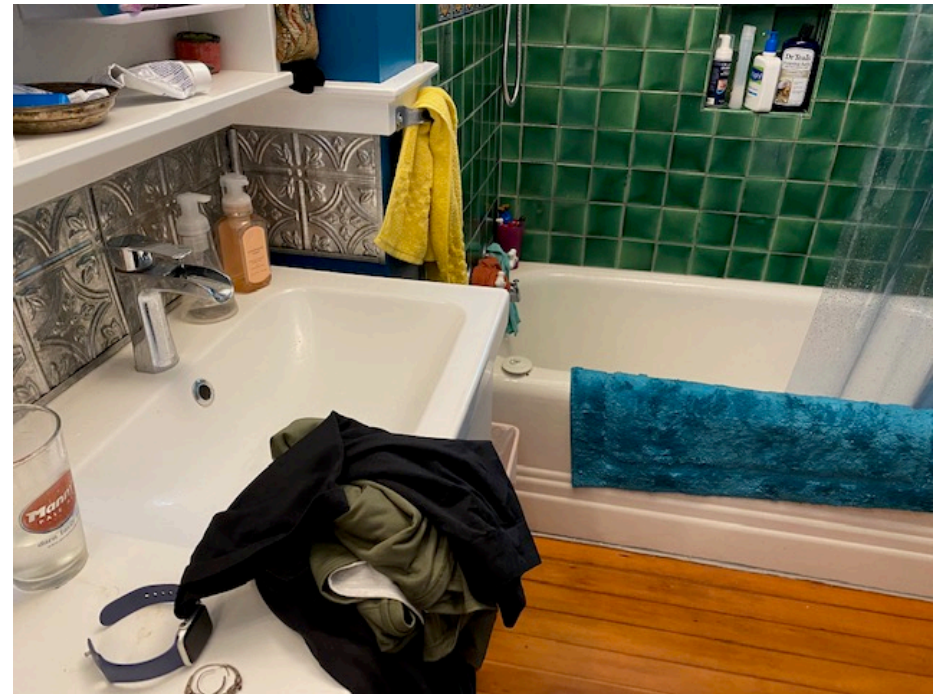
*“With the whole pandemic going on, everything is stuck, which means you’re in the house with your kids twenty-four seven, and it’s just like you don’t get a break, it’s just a lot. It’s just like whatever you’re dealing with mentally, physically, emotionally in yourself, you just gonna have to suck it up...” (017)*

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# Other Children

*“This tiny, tiny little room is like my one little place to be alone right now...At like any given point, like from the moment I wake up to when I go to sleep, someone needs something...taking a shower is the one time when I just don’t have to be doing anything for anybody.” (041)*



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# Other Children

*"I still really haven't taken like my kids to the park or kind of let them play with any of the neighborhood kids...I don't want my kids- my other kids- to pick anything up to bring that they could bring home to the baby" (007, photo below)*

*"...we're always telling [my older son], "Just go play quietly somewhere or something so we can take care of the baby." (010)*

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# Loss

*“Once we decided to cancel [the baby shower], I was very sad, but I was also- and I was a little bit stressed out because I was like scared that we wouldn't be able to afford everything that we needed.” (071)*

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# Loss

*"I think I feel guilty that we like can't share him in the way we want to, um, like, human contact to human contact."  
(035, photo below)*

*"...it just feels weird and like very impersonal... I just wish that they could just hold their grandbaby like normal...I feel like she's, she's not gonna recognize people for a long time just because everyone has their masks on."  
(046, photo below)*



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# Loss

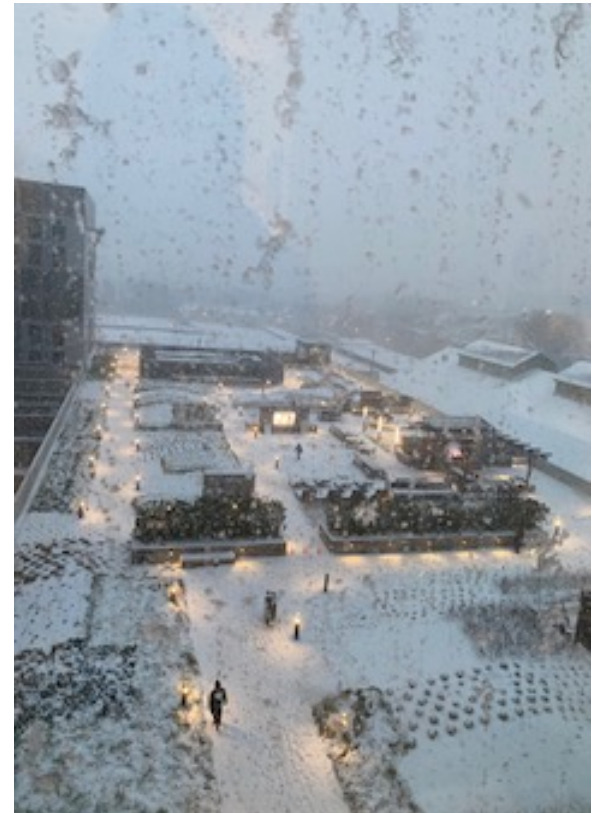
*"I would've preferred to have professional pictures taken of her in this cute outfit... but because of this COVID, I didn't want a photographer coming over here, and I definitely didn't want to take her out to go anywhere else. So I had to pretty much make the best of what I had here...so that was the best that I could come up with to feel safe."  
(018)*





# Isolation & Mental Health

*“I guess it’s just sadness, I can’t really go outside and do anything. And it’s just too cold to bring [the baby] outside anyways, so. It just-it just makes me feel a little isolated, this picture.” (030, photo below)*



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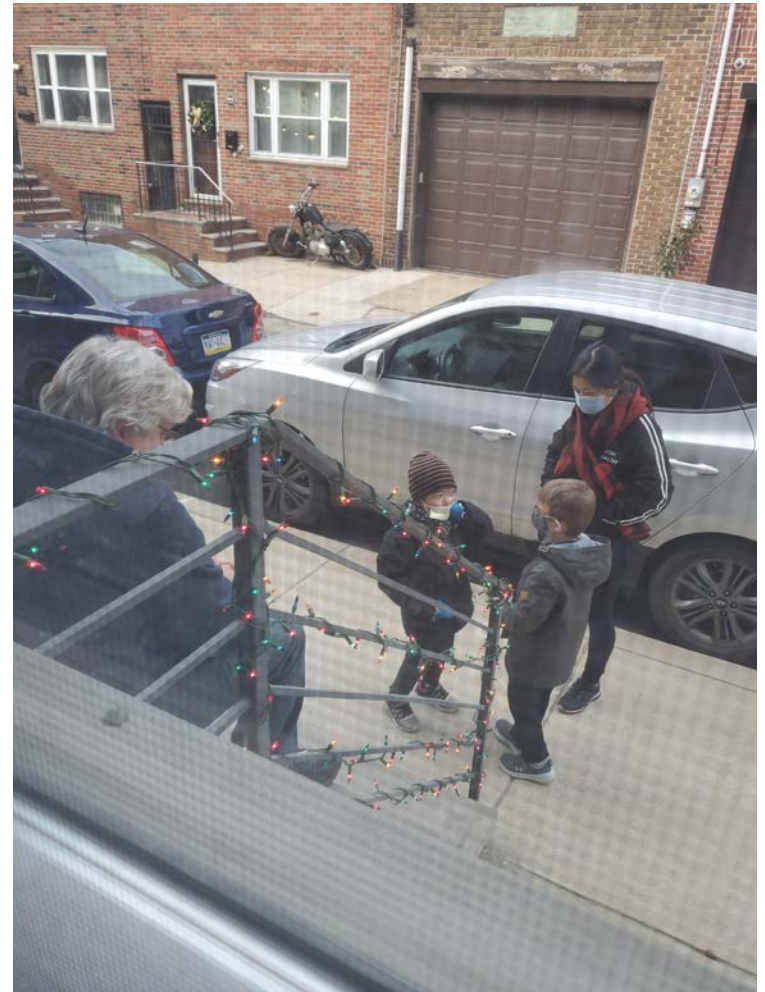
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# Isolation & Mental Health

*"I just feel like this kinda captures the cabin fever we're in, you know, like you're desperate for interaction, but it's really like subpar interaction and like, it's just we're inside so much." (010)*

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# Isolation & Mental Health

*“So I feel like yeah, COVID did play a big part and it, because it was like the more I sat in the house, the more I thought, thought, thought and was thinking. And that's how it made me fall, like deep in my feelings and stuff like that.” (079)*

*“... within the last year, I started therapy...and this was right before the pandemic hit and that's why when it first hit it was really hard for me 'cause panic sets in, it's like oh my goodness, I'm finally getting myself together. What am I going to do now? And then, you find out you're pregnant, and it's like okay, what's gonna, what like, you just don't know what's next, but going to therapy and doing the work in myself is like you can't look that far ahead.” (064)*

# Isolation & Mental Health

*“I truly believe that mental health is also really important in all this and obviously COVID is scary as well but like for me ...it’s worth a little bit of the risk of like having a few of my closest people over because like I need that, you know?” (044)*



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# Work

*“My hours got cut back with work because of COVID...I didn’t have set hours- so it wasn’t like I could keep the kids at home one day or send them in, because, with daycare, you always have to pay for your spot...but now our daycare prices are going up... so prices are going up for things but yet paychecks aren’t going up.”  
(007)*

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# **SUPPORT: SELF-CARE & COPING**

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*“But when this all happened, it was like...sort of a similar grieving proc-process for like, all [of] your favorite places are shut down, you can’t go anywhere, you can’t see your family or friends or anything and it was very isolating, but we were all being isolated at the same time (laughter). Um, and other people were really dealing with stuff with like deaths in their families and couldn’t have memorials and get together so...it was kind of like we were all dealing with a grief at the same time, you know?” (003)*

*“And it was just like hundreds of women talking about it, so like I didn’t feel alone. Um, and getting other people’s takes about how it’s been for them and tricks that they did...so that has been super helpful, I love that app.” (016)*

*“If I could offer a word of encouragement, I would just say, you know, for all the new moms that we’re in this together...you’re not alone, we’re all experiencing this together, and it’s impacting us differently, but we’re all experiencing this together.” (018)*

*“...My friend did my hair for me...not everything that you do every day has to be for the kids, when you have a moment to do something for yourself do it...It gives you a little bit of a, of a chance to-to separate yourself from being a mom and just being your own person...I guess-I guess it just helps with uh remembering that...while being a mother is a full-time job whether you have another job or not, it's also your responsibility to um take care of yourself... because you need to be okay to be able to take care of the kids.” (049)*



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*“I feel like there are a lot of things that are really hard to do right now and it’s hard to make time for...But for this I felt like, okay, I’m taking the time to do this, but it’s not just like for fun...I’m doing something for me to help me help my baby...it turned into some really nice thing that I’m able to do for myself now.”  
(016)*



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*“I was trying to do a Christmas picture myself at home...getting him in this outfit...oh just throw this scarf on an ottoman and throw some Christmas lights on it...I had literally ten minutes to do this and I kinda threw it together and at the end I was like, ‘man, I’m pretty proud of myself’” (003)*



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*“There was like two days in a row where I just I didn’t leave the house, and I could just feel my mood. I mean I was cranky, I was um...depressed...I feel like that’s something that has been really important for me to recognize for my mental health too.” (028)*



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# **SUPPORT: INTERPERSONAL**

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# Partners

*“Dad is a great help, he’s doing bottles, he’s going to doctor’s appointments by himself. Um, he’s changing diapers, he’s washing her up, he’s all the way great. He’s a great support system, I don’t give him enough credit.” (024, photo below)*

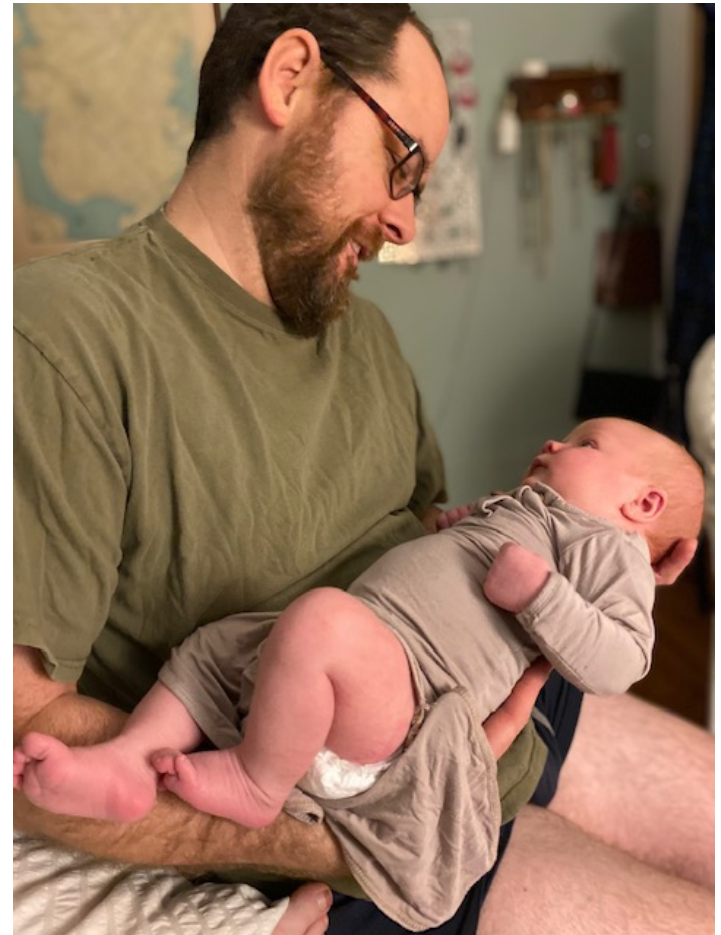
*“Um, sometimes when-when you just, you get in that headspace where you just feel like what you're doing is not enough for your child, it's nice to have uh, a partner...just have a voice of reason, um, reassure you that you're doing fine like you're doing like the kid is not starving, not hurt, not being neglected, not in any kind of trouble, that-that you're doing your job, you're doing your best and it's-and it's enough, you're doing enough, you're-you are enough.” (049)*



# Partners

*"[My husband is] just really, really involved, and...I often think about like being a single parent...and it feels like that would be impossible...On days when I feel super overwhelmed...I'm able to sort of like tap out and say like 'Hey, I need you to help...'" (041, photo to right)*

*"Yeah [my partner and I] joke, we call each other our backup generators." (016)*



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# Partners

*"I'm...medical stuff is like not my forte so [the doctors] were like telling me about all these things and it was kinda going in one ear out the other because I was just like trying to wrap my head around it and that's like once, one instance where like I really wish my husband was able to come in cuz he's better about understanding all these things and asking the right questions whereas I'm like, I get frazzled I'm like oh my God something's wrong with her like um. And he's more like composed and um I guess rational in that sense, um. So it just, it would've been nice for him to be able to go and be there for the appointment." (046, photo to right)*

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# Partners

*“They only want yourself, um, like for [my baby] for her appointment it was one, one healthy parent and the patient. She ended up getting admitted that Thursday from her appointment, so I had to call her dad he was at work and be like, oh, you know, she got admitted for seizures and still kind of remain calm and not anxious that, you know, we need blood work, we need MRIs like she showing activity, this could go either way. So that's the downside of COVID.” (056)*

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# Partners

*“...That picture means something to me because [my newborn is] with his father. But again, you see the dry wall on his shirt. He, he hasn't stopped working....He comes to the house to see him. He spends time with him and it's a risk...Do I say, no, you can't come in here or no, you can't go to work for two weeks. You have to quarantine. Like, how does that work?” (064)*



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# Friends & Family

*“Yeah I mean I’m really lucky like I’m super close with my mom...I’m lucky that I have that, and I think that’s part of why I’m able to like have a really good experience through all the craziness is having family support. But, you know, even having her a phone call away, we FaceTime like everyday, like even throughout the morning, she’ll be on FaceTime with us while we’re playing and stuff like that, even if it’s in the background, um, and you know, I think for me having my mom or, you know, and my sister, or my sister in law who’s - has kids I ask her advice all the time, like, reaching out to people, I’m not shy of doing that, you know. Um, I think that’s super important.” (044)*

*“Oh [my oldest daughter is] a great-she’s a great, great support. She’s like the backup parent. If Mom and Dad’s not there, she’s right there.” (024)*

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# Friends & Family

*“There’s nobody else that I talk to on a daily basis and like really having...having them check in not just about like, ‘Oh how’s the baby?’ But like, ‘How are you doing? Are you sleeping?’ Are you...you know, ‘How’s nursing going?’ And like they- again- they all we all have kids around the same age so they’re very like in tune with what the challenges are to have a six week old. And um...and so, you know, asking about those things but then also offering advice and suggestions, you know, ‘Here’s what worked for me,’ or ‘here’s what I did when I was going through that’ or whatever.”*  
(028)



# Friends & Family

*“Uh I think...my friends like I can, I am more comfortable asking them like um...like specific questions. Like for a while I was struggling with breastfeeding and, you know, explaining to them the situation and, you know, asking them for advice like I felt very comfortable doing that whereas like on a Zoom call it's kind of awkward when you're like with a bunch of strangers.” (046)*

*“Okay, so it's like the lactation doctor, she's not 24/7. So I can't call her, like, if something's wrong. So my friend it was like any questions that I felt like I needed to ask like right then and there, like I, I needed- she was there...I didn't have anyone else that I could, like, actually call like in the middle of the night and say okay I need help with this. But [my friend] was there, so it was like...that was everything. That was another support system that I needed that I got, so it was like, that meant a lot.” (088)*

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# Friends & Family

*“...a text message that I feel like I’ve sent way too many times just being like, “No, you can’t come meet the baby because you’ve done blah blah blah”. Um, and I feel like that, uh, like-like navigating those conversations like really stinks because my husband and I both like-like we both have a, you know, our-our friend group is like so supportive and our family is so supportive, um, and just telling people they can’t come I feel like has kind of been a theme which really stinks.” (035)*

*“You know, so like, you know, you worry are they going to respect my wishes of wearing a mask? Are they going to respect my wishes when I say, you know, I’m not comfortable with x, y, and z...I’ve had a few instances where, you know, certain family members come over and they, you know, they’re not wearing a mask and I feel too awkward to say something...” (044)*

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# Friends & Family

*“Yeah, I mean, um...just the like...we know we can’t necessarily have all the people we wanna have be around [the baby] and with [the baby] or ...-get to see like right now he’s like smiling. Like I would love if my mom was here to just like witness that too. Um, so we’re making do in a sense of like, when there’s a milestone...we’re trying to capture it, we’ll take pictures or like FaceTime as much as possible so like the-making do is like finding ways to connect that like we would - like I don’t think that I would normally FaceTime my mom every single day of my life (laughter). But I know she really wants to see the baby so that’s the-that’s the device we can use, so we’re like making do with that ‘cause she can’t be here every day.” (035)*

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# Friends & Family

*“You try to make do with Zoom, but, or, you know, video calls and FaceTime, but it’s not the same.” (030)*

*“We have some family members who cannot come to the house and visit my baby, so the only way that they can see him or talk to him is via FaceTime...it's sad because I really want them to be here with him and you know carry him, getting to know him, and the only way that they can do it is by FaceTime...It's been rough because for example when we did a baby shower it was...virtually, FaceTiming, you know, seeing people on the phone, but it wasn't the same because I couldn't hug them, I couldn't- they couldn't touch my belly or anything...” (093)*

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# **SUPPORT: STRUCTURAL**

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# Organizational

*“That’s another support I can honestly say I have, the two children’s teachers...[my son’s] attention span is like so short. So his teacher, she sends me- at like six AM, she knows I’m up nursing, so she actually sends me the schedule for the day...[my son] will be like, ‘Mom, I have a break’...and I’ll look, ‘No, you belong in science, go to science.’” (024)*

*“...I didn’t have no source of income, but they didn’t wanna give me no cash assistance. I’m just like, jeez, you can’t get a job, everything’s closed down, or if it’s not closed down, it’s not hiring...it’s harder for moms and new moms during the pandemic because we don’t have like enough resources.” (017)*

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# Employer

*“A lot of like the childcare places, uh, were closed down or were temporarily closed due to like the COVID-19 situation, so I guess that might have been hard for people who had to go back to work and didn’t have anywhere to leave their babies, and maybe lost their jobs because of it. Um, so economically, I think I can see how economically would be very, very hard for certain women. Uh, luckily I’m on paid maternity leave and like I said, I have support from my partner who’s still working, but I can see how it would be really hard for other women who, who don’t have that. The, on the economic-economic side.” (057)*

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# Healthcare

*“So, uh, it was a very big decision to see who should I take to...who should be with me at the delivery room. So it- that was all so rough. I was, I was sad because I chose my partner, but at the same time I was sad and I was crying because I needed it, the support [of] my mom. So it was like, oh my gosh, I don't really know who to choose.”  
(093)*



Critchlow E, Birkenstock L, Hotz M, Sablone L, Henderson Riley A, Mercier R, et al. Experiences of new mothers during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. *Obstet Gynecol* 2022;139.

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