

## **Elyse Springer, MA-CLP, LMFT, PMH-C (she/her)**

Title: PSI-CA Policy & Advocacy Chair, Board of Directors & Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

Email: [therapy@elysespringer.com](mailto:therapy@elysespringer.com)

Instagram/social media for tagging in post: **@espringermft**

Photo:



Bio:

Elyse Springer currently serves as the Policy and Advocacy Chair for the California chapter of Postpartum Support International and is a licensed marriage and family therapist (licensed in CA (48196)/OR(T1776)/WA(LF61100009)) with focus on perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, pregnancy and infant loss, LGBTQIA+, depression, trauma, anxiety, OCD, and HIV/AIDS. Elyse is an Emeritus Governing Council member for Maternal Mental Health NOW after serving an eight-year Governing Council term, and maintains her role training for the organization. Elyse served as a Board Member of national maternal mental health policy and advocacy non-profit, 2020 Mom, from 2014-2019, and Clinical Advisory panel member from 2019-2021. In addition, Elyse is Emeritus Board Member for national perinatal loss organization Return to Zero: H.O.P.E., and current training faculty, as well as training faculty for paternal-focused non-profit, Love, Dad. Elyse is certified in perinatal mental health, an EMDRIA-approved Therapist and EMDRIA-approved Consultant, certified in Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) by the IPT Institute and an IPT Supervisor-in-training. She lives and works in Los Angeles, California.

## Brittany Welch (she/her)

Title: PSI-CA Climb Out of the Darkness Chair, Board of Directors & P-PTSD survivor

Email: [bwelch@psicachapter.com](mailto:bwelch@psicachapter.com)

Instagram/social media for tagging in post: @Pstheclimbcentralvalley

Photo:



Bio:

Brittany is a former teacher and current work from home mom. Her first pregnancy presented with high risk complications and a traumatic birth experience which led to postpartum PTSD with suicidal ideation. During her second pregnancy, Brittany was hospitalized for suicidal ideation and graduated from El Camino Hospitals perinatal inpatient unit and MOMs outpatient program after three months. Brittany joined Postpartum Support International (PSI) as a volunteer for The Climb while still pregnant with her second in 2022 and became the Climb liaison for the California Chapter Board of Directors in 2023. Brittany then added on facilitating PSI support groups for Moms with PMHDs and in December of 2023 joined the PSI staff as the West Coast Regional Manager for The Climb. When Brittany isn't devoting her time to spreading awareness about perinatal mental health and the resources that PSI offers, she can be found in the garden, on a hike, or at one of the local children's activity centers with her 2 year old and 5 year old.

## **Dr. Neha Kansara (she/her)**

Title: Perinatal Psychiatrist, M.D.

Email: [drnehakansara@gmail.com](mailto:drnehakansara@gmail.com)

Instagram/social media for tagging in post: **@drnehakansara**

Photo:



Bio:

Dr. Neha Kansara is a double board-certified Psychiatrist practicing at Amen clinics in Dallas. She specializes in Perinatal, Infant, Child, Adolescent, and Adult Psychiatry. After her successful completion of medical school in India, she moved to the United States to gather experience in the field of Psychiatry, which she is so passionate about. She also carries an in-depth research background from SUNY Upstate in New York, Duke University in Durham, and served the Veterans Affairs hospital in Washington D.C. where her devotedness for trauma and PTSD stems from. Her journey continued to the University of Mississippi Medical Center, in Jackson, MS where she completed her Adult Psychiatry Residency. She was on top of her residency program for the in-service examination called PRITE. She continued to travel and arrived in New Orleans, where she endured her love for the pediatric age group and dedicated 2 years to studying infant, child, and adolescent Psychiatry at LSU (Louisiana State University).

Having successfully completed training in both Adult and Infant, Child, Adolescent Psychiatry, she also has a profound affinity towards treating conditions during the Prenatal/pregnancy/postpartum period, aka PMAD's (post-partum maternal anxiety and depression). A few other conditions she specializes in and has an immense interest in are – Developmental disorders of Infancy, Autism, ADHD, Trauma-PTSD, Transgender, OCD, eating disorders, and other common psychiatric conditions such as mood and anxiety disorders catering to both the pediatric and adult populations. She is also certified in Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) for resistant depression and trained in Deep Brain Stimulation, (DBS). Additionally, she is also a speaker for a pharmacogenomic company, TEMPUS.

Treating an individual as a whole is her approach to mental health. A complete Bio-psycho-social and holistic approach is the model she follows with her patient care. She truly believes, "Your brain health is in your hands and a sound mind is a sound soul that can create a sound body."

**Emily Simms, DNP, CNM, APRN, IBCLC (she/her)**

Title: Certified Nurse Midwife & Board Certified Lactation Consultant

Email: [emily.simms.cnm@gmail.com](mailto:emily.simms.cnm@gmail.com)

Instagram/social media for tagging in post: @emilysimmscnm

Photo:



Bio:

As a certified nurse midwife, board certified lactation consultant, and mother of three, Emily is both personally and professionally invested in supporting perinatal mental health. She unfortunately struggled with severe depression and suicidal ideation during her second pregnancy. She survived that dark time with the assistance of her midwife, and hopes to be a light in the darkness for her own patients now. She has been working in women's health for over a decade, starting as a labor nurse in 2012 before graduating with my Doctor of Nursing Practice in 2021. Now practicing in the Houston area as a certified nurse midwife, Emily helps empower women to be as healthy as possible during pregnancy, postpartum, and throughout their lives

**Jessica Walker**



Title: Maternal Mental Health Advocate, Co-Chair Sacramento Maternal Mental Health collaborative,  
Co-founder BeMomAware

Email: [jawspeaksdigital@gmail.com](mailto:jawspeaksdigital@gmail.com)

Instagram/social media for tagging in post: **@maternalhealthspeaker**

Photo:



Bio:

Jessica A. Walker, also known as Jawspeaksdigital, is a maternal health advocate, author of *I Wish Somebody Would've Told Me*, and digital media expert. A mom of six, her advocacy began with her own battle with postpartum depression. She has worked with Stop Stigma Sacramento, 2020 MOM, and served on the California Task Force on Maternal Mental Health Care and has been a contributing content creator for Baby Center.

Jessica now serves as the co-chair of the Sacramento Maternal Mental Health Collaborative, founder of Bemomaware.com .

**Jessica M Ruiz, EdD she/her**

Title: Maternal Near Miss (MNM) Survivor

Email: [jessicarui.edu@gmail.com](mailto:jessicarui.edu@gmail.com)

Instagram/social media for tagging in post: @jmarina85

Photo:



Bio:

On April 19th, 2023, after an emergency delivery of her first baby, Jessica woke up in the Intensive Care Unit. With her husband on her left and sister on her right, they explained: she was in cardiac arrest for 4 minutes, lost 80% of her blood and had a hysterectomy performed on her. The sacred organ that bestowed her human power to conceive, including her cervix and fallopian tube, the organs that had been part of her body for 38 years, were all gone now. She felt she walked around with The Scarlet Letter, at times the shame and hopelessness were unbearable. She imagined everyone knew she was hiding her inability to carry again. She didn't know any other woman in her life who's uterus was removed just at the very beginning of starting her family.

Jessica's goal is to enlighten others on her experience so that they do not feel the loneliness or shame that accompanies intrusive thinking during the perinatal/postpartum period.

**Facilitator/panel moderator:**

**Daniella K Bermudez, LMFT, PMH-C (She/her)**

Title: Associate Director of Crisis Services- CSS, PSI-CA Board of Directors & Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

Email: [dbermudez@crisissupport.org](mailto:dbermudez@crisissupport.org)

Instagram/social media for tagging in post: **@daniellakbermudezlmft**

Photo:



Bio:

Daniella has been with CSS for over 12 years and works within the Crisis Services Department providing strategic leadership on 988 program implementation and the clinical and administrative oversight of the 24/7 Crisis Line. In addition to her role at CSS, she is as an on-call clinician on the CARE Team for Alameda Family Services, working in conjunction with the Alameda Fire Department to provide consultations regarding clinical interventions and the verification of the need for voluntary/involuntary holds (5150/5585) with the primary goal of reducing both unnecessary hospitalizations and police involvement in mental health crisis response.

As a mental health advocate who is passionate about perinatal mental health, she sits on the Board of Directors for Postpartum Support International's California Chapter, serving as the Policy & Advocacy Committee Secretary. In her practice as a LMFT, she has clinical experience in crisis management, suicide prevention, trauma, grief, affirming care, and reproductive health and is certified perinatal mental health. Daniella is a mom of two with her own lived experience and works to spread awareness and education of Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs).