

For Immediate Release

Contact:
Ann Marie McGee
focusONe
925.975.0711
ammcgee@focusonemarketing.com

Brighter Beginnings Announces April 17 Lunch & Lecture Featuring Panel on Racism and the Effect on Birth Outcomes for African American Women

East Bay Non-Profit Invites Participation and Engagement of Community Members

Oakland, California. April 4, 2008. Brighter Beginnings, an East Bay non-profit, today announced its upcoming Lunch & Lecture on Thursday, April 17, at 11:30 a.m. at The San Franciscan Restaurant in Walnut Creek.

The second event of the year-long series continues the presentation of the organization's Life Course perspective, with a focus on identifying links between racism and premature births or low birth-weight birth outcomes. The presentation expands content featured in the PBS series, *Unnatural Causes*, currently airing on KQED on Thursday evenings at 10 p.m.

"The topic of health disparities and links to racism and class speaks to the heart of our work at Brighter Beginnings," said Barbara Bunn McCullough, Executive Director. "How we were raised and where we were raised has a profound impact on overall health. "

Barbara McCullough will serve as moderator for a panel presentation by staff members from the Alameda County Health Department and Contra Costa County Health Services.

Birth outcomes are affected by the negative impact of racism and chronic stress over one's lifetime, not just during pregnancy. Racism in America is an added source of chronic stress for people of color. Racial and social justice and civic engagement are both key tools for improving health and birth outcomes.

When the Bough Breaks, the second segment of *Unnatural Causes*, focuses on birth outcomes for African American women. Like other health indicators, birth outcomes follow the wealth-health gradient. Wealthier and more educated mothers have better outcomes. Yet, the surprise highlighted by the segment is that there are worse outcomes for African American women than their white counterparts at every income level. Additional information is available at www.unnaturalcauses.org.

The cost of the Lunch & Lecture is \$45. Advance registration and payment is required and may be made online at www.brighter-beginnings.org or by mailing a check to Brighter Beginnings, 2648 International Blvd, Oakland, CA 94601. For additional information contact Jody Parsons at 510-903-7533.

Brighter Beginnings provides resources and services for low-income families in the East Bay. Core programs include Black Infant Health, Teen Family Support and Parenting Partnership/Child Development.

About Brighter Beginnings

Brighter Beginnings reaches out to vulnerable, low-income families, providing home-based support and center-based services to promote healthy births and the development of babies and young children. Each year the non-profit organization serves over 2,200 low-income families in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Funded historically by government grants, Brighter Beginnings has recently expanded its appeals for private donations to add essential services for families in critical need. A professional management staff with decades of experience in non-profit family support groups supervises 50 paid staff members in three East Bay locations - Oakland, Richmond and Antioch. Additional information is available at www.brighter-beginnings.org or by calling 877.427.7134.

###