



Heather Thompson, PhD

Elephant Circle

she/they

"Cannabis in Pregnancy and Lactation: A Case Study for Policies"

Heather Thompson (she/they), MS, PhD is a molecular and cellular biologist, clinical researcher, birthworker, and queer parent with non-binary gender.

Heather has worked for equity, access and autonomy in childbirth for more than 25 years, and was part of the team that passed the historic Colorado Birth Equity Bill Package in 2021.

Currently she is the Co-Deputy Director of Elephant Circle, a birth justice organization, doing work that allows her to combine her background in birth access and equity with science and community organizing.

Heather has been educating consumers and clinicians about perinatal cannabis since its liberalization in Colorado in 2012. This community-based work on perinatal cannabis use resulted in a collaboration with the InfantRisk Center in Texas and the first cannabis and human milk pharmacokinetics paper to come out of Colorado.

Heather's application to birth justice issues goes back to her work as the Director of Research at a community birth center in Colorado (2010-2017), and participation in an NIH Task Force evaluating the evidence-based literature on SIDS and bedsharing/cosleeping in the context of AAP guidelines on infant sleep.

These experiences, in addition to 19 years of postpartum doula work, feeds Heather's passion for supporting family ecology by helping families navigate their own journey, particularly as it relates to perinatal care, birth choices, and legal cannabis. Born and raised in Colorado, Heather enjoys being outside around a campfire with her partner, two kids and larger community.



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