

# **CONNECTED** SUMMIT **HEALTH & FITNESS**

FEBRUARY 7-8 // LOS ANGELES

## **REFLECTING ON 2023 WITH:**

DARA COOK, FOUNDER & CEO, **EXPECT FITNESS**



## **WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO THE FITNESS AND WELLNESS INDUSTRY? WHAT DRIVES YOU TO DO WHAT YOU DO?**

I've always believed that exercise has the greatest ROI. Time is the only asset that cannot replenish, but exercise adds years to our lives, and improves the quality of those years.

Despite these benefits, expectant and new moms have been excluded from one of the most powerful things they can do for themselves and their children. This is why we launched Expect, the only pre and postnatal fitness platform where every workout is approved by OB-GYNs.

The non profit Global Wellness Institute says "The opportunity to engage in physical activity that enables a healthy life should not be a privilege or choice, but a right." Expect provides this essential right to people who stand to reap the most from fitness.

However, despite these benefits, expectant and new moms have been excluded from one of the most impactful activities for themselves and their children.

## **WHAT, TO YOU, IS THE MOST INTERESTING TREND IN FITNESS AND WELLNESS RIGHT NOW?**

New research shows that exercise is more efficient than we thought and that just a few minutes of fitness can positively impact health. Expect's medical advisor, Harvard Medical School professor I-Min Lee, told the NY Times that even small fitness snacks can "add up and make a difference."

This is particularly great news for busy moms. Expect is built around the newest science about the effectiveness of short workouts and the ongoing reality that many moms only have fragments of time. Our workouts range from under 10 minutes to over 40 minutes, all available on demand. So, whether a woman has a few moments between Zoom calls or during her toddler's nap, she can simply click on Expect and exercise.

## **AS 2023 HAS JUST COME TO A CLOSE, WHAT IN REFLECTION HAS BEEN A PIVOTAL MOMENT FOR YOU AND YOUR TEAM DURING THE YEAR? HOW DO YOU THINK THAT HAS IMPACTED BUSINESS OR GROWTH MOVING FORWARD?**

A pivotal moment for this year was the venerable McKinsey & Company's LA office selecting Expect as one of three startups for hands-on pro bono consulting. This experience was transformational and resulted in a marked increase in our engagement on our app, and a proprietary study that showed moms view Expect's OB-GYN approved workouts as "best in class" for safety.

## **WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR 2024?**

We are excited for more moms to experience the benefits of prenatal fitness. For the first time in 20 years, our infant mortality rate is rising, a direct result of our maternal health crisis. We are elated that people increasingly realize that pre and postnatal fitness is one of the most effective tools we have to improve

outcomes for moms and babies.

## **HOW DO YOU SEE THE FITNESS AND WELLNESS INDUSTRY EVOLVING OVER THE NEXT YEAR?**

Over the next year, we are going to see more body type diversity in fitness. There is increasing awareness of the troubling trend of "thin-spiration,"-and how it can lead to eating disorders and lower self-esteem.

At Expect, we understand that every body is different, especially during pregnancy, and we celebrate that diversity. We feature a broad range of body types in our content to fight against the "thin-spiration" trend and to show that fitness is for everyone, regardless of shape or size. We take a medical approach to fitness, enlisting board-certified OB-GYNs, a physical therapist, and even a Harvard Medical School professor to ensure our platform provides the most trustworthy and effective workouts.



**Dara Cook**  
Founder & CEO  
Expect Fitness