



**New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF)
Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships (DPCP)
Office of Early Childhood Services - Home Visitation Initiative**

Goal: The overall goal of the Home Visitation Initiative is to improve the physical and emotional health and well-being of infants, children and families in New Jersey by providing community-based education and support to parents and families in their homes. To this end, New Jersey is working to standardize home visitation practices and promote a unified set of objectives for home visitation participants throughout the state.

Objectives:

- Promote healthy pregnancies and improve birth outcomes
- Improve infant and child health outcomes.
- Eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in perinatal and child health measures.
- Strengthen and promote healthy and nurturing parent-child relationships.
- Improve the safety and security of infants, children and families.
- Prevent child maltreatment, abuse and neglect.

Integration of Home Visitation (HV) into a System of Care: Home visitation services operate most effectively when integrated into a comprehensive system of health, social services and community supports. Collaboration with community partners ensures that linkages are in place for core components and early identification of eligible women and families--prenatal/perinatal screening, risk assessment and referral through a central intake point within a target community. A diagram of the New Jersey Comprehensive Home Visiting System Model is available at: <http://www.preventchildabuse.nj.org/documents/index/HVflowchart.doc>.

DCF–DPCP is funding the following evidence-based home visiting programs:

- **Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP)** is specifically for first-time pregnant women or new mothers who enroll in services by the second trimester of pregnancy (28 weeks). Nurse home visitors (RNs) provide health education and family support to parents to improve the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of first-time mothers, fathers and their children. RNs use a standardized curriculum for parent education and ensure linkages to other available community services and supports, as needed. Home visits are weekly and become less frequent over time according to the family's needs. NFP provides services from pregnancy until the child is two years old.
- **Healthy Families Program (HF)** provides education and supportive services to new and expectant parents. Eligibility for HF services may vary by community and depends upon the specific target population for a given community. The initial assessment visit is completed by a specially trained Family Assessment Worker (FAW). Ongoing home visits are conducted by Family Support Workers (FSWs). Visits continue from enrollment to age three (to age five at some NJ sites). FSWs link new or expectant parents to existing social service and health care resources, and promote positive parenting and the healthy growth and development of infants and children.
- **Parents As Teachers (PAT)** is an early childhood parent education, family support and school readiness program serving families throughout pregnancy until their child enters kindergarten. The program is designed to enhance child health, growth and development, and school achievement as appropriate for all participating families. PAT visits are made by certified Parent Educators. Most PAT visits take place at home, but may also include small group meetings about early childhood development and parenting. Participation continues from enrollment up to age five. PAT workers use a standardized curriculum. Workers ensure that families have linkages and referrals to other needed community networks and resources.

For more information about the Home Visitation Initiative or other home visitation services in New Jersey, please contact the Home Visitation program staff in the Office of Early Childhood Services—Sunday Gustin at 609-777-4431, or Deborah Johnson-Kinnard at 609-943-4925.