

Why maternal, infant and early childhood home visiting?

Parenting can be challenging, but it can be especially tough for young and low-income families. A quarter of a million babies are born in New York every year. Nearly half are born into low-income families and over 100,000 are born to first-time mothers.ⁱ Home visiting is a proven strategy to strengthen parenting skills and reduce child welfare involvement, providing better outcomes for children and families.

Voluntary home visiting programs, where families partner with trained professionals to strengthen their parenting skills, connect families to community resources during pregnancy and throughout a child's first years of life.

How do these programs work?

Home visiting delivers education and support to families on their terms, in their own homes. Through stand-alone programs, or in partnership with community-based services, voluntary home visiting educates families and provides resources for health, child development and school readiness.

Smart investments in home visiting programs for new and expectant families are proven to produce positive outcomes that deliver measurable savings—in improved birth outcomes, increased school readiness, increased parental employment, as well as decreases in child abuse, future mental health and criminal justice costs, and dependence on welfare.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2016-2017

The Governor's Budget maintains flat funding for Healthy Families New York and reduces funding for Nurse Family Partnership by \$1 million—the two evidence-based programs already receiving State funding. An additional **\$11.5 million** should be added to increase funding for these programs and to begin funding two additional, complementary programs.

Healthy Families New York (HFNY): Based on the national Healthy Families America (HFA) model, HFNY is an evidence-based program that provides home visiting services to expectant parents and parents with an infant under three months of age who are considered to be at-risk for child abuse and neglect. Specially trained paraprofessionals may deliver home visitation services until the child reaches five or is enrolled in Head Start or kindergarten.

- **Add \$4.5 million** to the flat **\$23.3 million** proposed in the 2016-17 Executive Budget. (HFNY has been funded at \$23.3 million since 2008-09 when the funding was cut by 8% from the 2007-08 funding of \$25.2 million.)
 - \$1.9 million to bring the funding level up to the pre-recession level of funding (\$25.2 million).
 - \$1.6 million to allow for increased capacity at existing sites, workforce development and local service enhancement (mental health, fatherhood supports, and community coordination).
 - \$1 million would cover funding for new services to underserved populations in NYC and upstate.ⁱⁱ

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP): NFP is a national, evidence-based nurse home visiting program that serves first-time, low-income mothers and their families. Specially-trained registered nurses, who carry a caseload of about 25 families, conduct frequent home visits during pregnancy and until the child's second birthday. Visits focus on positive pregnancy outcomes, family and environmental health, nurturing child-caregiver attachment and interactions, maternal life course development, and referrals to needed health and human services.

- **Maintain \$3 million** from the 2015-16 Executive Budget.
- **Restore \$1 million** added by the Legislature in 2015-16.
- **Add \$1 million** in new funding for expansion, including:
 - \$500,000 in New York City to increase capacity by 75 slots.
 - \$500,000 Upstate to increase capacity by 100-125 slots.

Parents as Teachers (PAT): PAT is an evidenced-based maternal, infant and early childhood home visiting model designed to support parents as their child's most influential first teachers. PAT is delivered by trained parent educators and has a core value of working with mothers and fathers prenatally all the way through their children's first year of kindergarten. PAT programs have flexible eligibility criteria to accept families with multiple children and mainly serves vulnerable families displaying a variety of risk factors.

- **Add \$3 million** in new funding to expand capacity to 1,000 families across the state.

Parent-Child Home Program, Inc. (PCHP): PCHP is an evidence-informed home visiting model that prepares young children for school success by increasing language and literacy skills, enhancing social-emotional development, and strengthening the parent-child relationship. The program targets families with two- and three-year-olds who face multiple obstacles to educational and economic success, including families living in poverty or that have experienced homelessness; families having language barriers; and families headed by a single-parent, teenaged parent(s), parent(s) who are illiterate or have low educational attainment. Families receive twice-weekly home visits over a two-year period (typically on a school year calendar).

- **Add \$2 million** in new funding to expand capacity to 500 additional families across the state.

ⁱ Demographics of Young, Poor Children in New York, National Center on Children in Poverty, (2013), available at: http://nccp.org/profiles/NY_profile_9.html

ⁱⁱ Dumont, et al: Final Report: *A Randomized Trial of Healthy Families New York: Does Home Visiting Prevent Child Maltreatment*; NIJ Grant 2006-MU-MU-0002; October 2010.