

Supporting Families Through Home Visiting Programs

Counties across America are recognizing the importance of investing in young children and their families. To this end, many counties are creating home visiting programs. These programs connect expectant parents and caregivers of young children with trained professionals (such as nurses, social workers or early childhood specialists) who provide guidance, resources and support tailored to each family's needs. These programs address the development of both parents and children and are aimed at enhancing family well-being.

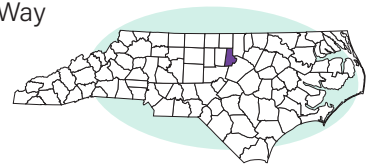
The Impact of Home Visiting Programs

Home visiting programs improve maternal and child health outcomes, reduce child maltreatment, enhance school readiness and have positive economic impacts. The National Home Visiting Resource Center estimates a return of \$1.80 to \$5.70 for every dollar invested in these programs. Home visiting programs can reduce health care costs and strengthen community connections by linking families with local resources.

County Examples

DURHAM COUNTY, N.C.

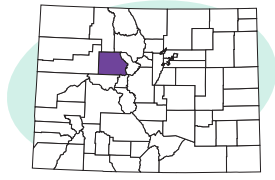
Durham County's Family Connects program is a home visiting model that supports all families with newborns regardless of income or risk factors. Developed in 2008, the program offers up to three home visits by trained nurses starting when a newborn is about three weeks old. During these visits, nurses conduct comprehensive assessments of newborn and maternal health and identify family strengths and needs. Nurses also connect families to appropriate community resources based on their specific needs. Families that participate in the program have fewer emergency room visits for infants, less maternal postpartum depression and improved parent-child bonding. The model's success has led to its expansion to 16 sites across the United States. It is funded by The Duke Endowment, Durham County Government and the United Way of the Greater Triangle, as well as other local grants and partnerships.



Family Connects Durham
Center for Child and Family Health

EAGLE COUNTY, COLO.

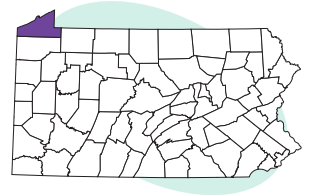
The Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) is a free, evidence-based home visiting program for first-time, low-income parents, providing support from early pregnancy through the child's second birthday. Run by Eagle County Public Health, specially trained nurses visit families regularly to promote healthy pregnancies, safe childbirth and positive parenting, aiming to improve maternal and child health outcomes as well as family economic stability. The program is part of Colorado's statewide NFP initiative. Local funding sources include state and county general revenue funds, as well as grants such as the Child Care Health Consultant Grant which is aimed at supporting local childcare programs.



*Eagle County
Healthy Families*

ERIE COUNTY, PA.

Erie County's Parents as Teachers (PAT) program is a free, voluntary parent education initiative offered through the Erie Family Center. It serves families expecting a child or with children under kindergarten age and provides regular home visits, developmental screenings, monthly group connections and access to community resources. The program's diverse team of experienced parent educators allows families to choose activities and focus areas that best meet their needs and interests. For example, PAT works with teenage parents to achieve educational and career goals and supports families in overcoming challenges like domestic violence. The Center is funded by the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning and the Erie County Office of Children and Youth.



*Erie Family Center
Parents As Teachers*

Conclusion

Home visiting programs can help counties support families during the pivotal years of a child's life. By implementing evidence-based models tailored to local needs, counties can improve child health, empower caregivers and build stronger, more resilient communities. As counties continue to innovate and expand these services, the ripple effects will be felt across generations, creating stronger communities where every child has the opportunity to thrive.



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