



Nurse Family Partnership

What is Nurse Family Partnership?

It is a program for women who are having their first baby. We help first time parents succeed. Through our program families develop confidence and skills for parenting and economic self-sufficiency by volunteering to work with a nurse home visitor from this proven program. Specialized nurses visit families regularly during a 2 1/2 year period, beginning in pregnancy.

We help families achieve their goals by focusing on three clear objectives.

1) Fostering Healthier Pregnancies. Nurses help new mothers to be improve their diet and nutrition, utilize proper obstetrical care, and avoid the use of tobacco or other harmful substances.

2) Improving the health and development of children. First time parents learn how to provide responsible and competent care, particularly in the areas of children's physical and emotional health and safety. Nurses help parents build a strong support network of family and friends.

3) Encouraging self-sufficiency. Together, nurses and parents create a vision for the future that includes a plan for future pregnancies, steps towards continuing education, and securing adequate employment.

How much does the program cost? Nurse Family Partnership is free to all eligible women.

How often do clients see a nurse? The nurse will visits every week or two during the pregnancy and up until the baby is two years old.

What will nurses and clients work on? Together the nurse and parents work on making their home a safe place for parents and baby to live and play. They also work on getting referrals for healthcare, childcare, job training and other support services available in their community.

Can other people participate with the mother in the program? Nurse Family Partnership encourages fathers, family members and even friends to be involved in the visits and learn how they can best support the mother.

Why do first-time mothers choose the Nurse Family Partnership? While similar programs exist the Nurse Family Partnership remains a premier program because of these unique components:



- Unsurpassed evidence of effectiveness
- Focus on low income, first time parents
- Nurse home visitors receive specialized training and master clinical guidelines
- Nurses help parents realize their strengths and set attainable goals
- Program spans the prenatal period through the child's second birthday
- Culturally competent program is run by local organization (Berrien County Health Dept.)
- Built in evaluation provides data to assure quality at the local level.

More than 20 years of research studies demonstrate the Nurse Family Partnership's power in helping diverse families succeed.

David Olds, the founder of the program states, " Our nurses are enormously compassionate, yet strong. They forge powerful relationships with the mothers and the results are dramatic."

What do the nurses have to say about the program? As a nurse one of the biggest rewards is to see that client take her first steps to become self sufficient and take control of her own destiny. It's always a bonus if the father of the baby is also involved and makes strides to make a better place in this world for his family. It is truly rewarding to know that somehow we helped them build a better future for their families.

Berrien County Health

Department:
Preventing Disease,
Prolonging Life and
Protecting the
Health of the



Safe Homes, Safe Families - Focus of June Health

In June, the Health Department will be providing information for keeping your homes and families safe and healthy. Smoke free environments, the House-to-House program, preventive care and the Nurse Family Partnership program will be highlighted. For questions about any of these topics, please call the health department at **926-7121**.

A study that was done in Elmira, N.Y. marked these successes for participant families 13 years after the program ended:

- 79% fewer cases of child abuse and neglect
- 33% fewer subsequent pregnancies
- 30% fewer months on welfare
- 69% fewer arrests among mothers
- 79% fewer convictions among mothers
- 54% fewer arrests among 15 year olds
- 69% fewer convictions and probations violations among 15 year olds
- 58% fewer sexual partners among 15 year olds
- 28% fewer cigarettes smoked
- 51% fewer days consuming alcohol among 15 year olds



For more information, call the health department at

926-7121

Special thanks to Jacque Clement for her help with this article!

The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

Benton Harbor		Niles		Three Oaks
769 Pipestone	M-139 Office	School Based	1205 N. Front St.	21 N. Elm
P.O. Box 706	2106 S. M-139	870 Colfax Ave	684-2800	756-2008
926-7121	927-5623	925-4500		

Or visit us on the web at www.berriencohlthdept.org

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