Voluntary Home Visiting in Los Angeles County

Voluntary home visiting programs match new and expectant parents with trained professionals who provide ongoing support during pregnancy and throughout their child’s first years of life. Home visiting programs are an effective, cost-efficient way to support families as they transition into parenthood, and can have positive, lifelong impact on the health and well-being of both mothers and children.

The Need for Home Visiting

The birth of a child can be a simultaneously joyous and challenging time for families. Virtually all parents will struggle with the enormous physical and emotional demands of parenting a very young child, but for too many Los Angeles families those challenges are additionally compounded by poverty, housing instability, social isolation, intimate partner violence, health and mental health challenges during the early years of parenthood and childhood.

Such adverse circumstances can create significant strain within new families, introducing stress that disrupts children’s development, and increases the likelihood of short and long term unfavorable outcomes for both parents and children.

Making Impact

Voluntary home visiting programs strengthen the critical parent-child relationship and connect families with information and resources during the pivotal time of pregnancy and early childhood. Although home visiting programs vary in design and intensity, they share many common elements, and together can reach, identify, and serve families in need.

There are 647,469 children under the age of 5 in Los Angeles County. Nearly half of the county’s births are funded by Medi-Cal, and only 41% of families can afford basic living expenses.

Only 85% of all L.A. women receive early prenatal care, and even fewer African-American women (77%) do.

Nearly 1 in 3 L.A. women report being depressed for a prolonged period while pregnant, with higher rates among Latina & African-American moms.

Of the 6.6% of L.A. babies and 10.5% of L.A. toddlers referred to Child Protective Services in 2013, more than 1 in 7 experienced substantiated abuse or neglect.

During their pregnancy, 4.6% of L.A. women were homeless and 2.3% report being hit or struck by their partner.

7.0% of local babies are born at low birth weight, making them susceptible to health and learning difficulties throughout their childhood.

Only 55% of local babies, toddlers, and preschoolers are read to every day by an adult.
Building a Local System

Given the wide gap between available home visiting program capacity and need, Los Angeles home visiting programs must not only sustain the limited resources they have, but also ensure that they are maximizing partnerships, data, and local assets in order to effectively and efficiently serve families.

The Los Angeles County Perinatal and Early Childhood Home Visitation Consortium, officially launched in 2012, brings together a diverse network of Los Angeles County home visiting providers and stakeholders in order to collectively coordinate, measure, and advocate for home visiting. This group seeks to widely improve maternal and child outcomes, by collaborating to leverage and sustain resources, promote known best practices, realize cross-program cost-efficiencies, improve countywide referral mechanisms, and gather robust information about outcomes.

The Consortium recently completed a five-year strategic plan and is focusing its efforts on building the foundational system components necessary to utilize available resources effectively, assure that programs are of high quality, and harness data on need and outcomes across organizational boundaries.

The Home Visiting Landscape in Los Angeles County

Although California is not one of the 37 states that appropriate state funds for home visiting, a network of public and private organizations in Los Angeles together provide home visiting to families through a variety of locally and federally funded programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Visiting Program</th>
<th>Implementing Organization(s)</th>
<th>Program Capacity</th>
<th>Funding Source(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Head Start (EHS) targets low-income pregnant women and families with children from birth through age 3, most of whom are in poverty. EHS home-based services include weekly 90-minute home visits and group socialization activities.</td>
<td>24 federal-to-local grantees</td>
<td>2,930</td>
<td>Federal Administration for Children &amp; Families grants; local matching funds from various public and private sources.</td>
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<td>Healthy Families America (HFA) goals include reducing child maltreatment, increasing utilization of prenatal care, improving parent-child interactions, and promoting children’s school readiness. HFA visits begin prenatally or shortly after a child’s birth and continue until children are between 3 and 5 years old.</td>
<td>12 community-based organizations</td>
<td>1,680</td>
<td>California Home Visiting Program (MIECHV) First 5 Los Angeles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) serves first-time, low-income mothers with one-on-one home visits by a trained public health registered nurse. Visits begin early in pregnancy and conclude when the child turns 2 years old. NFP is designed to improve (1) prenatal health and outcomes, (2) child health and development, and (3) families’ economic self-sufficiency, and maternal life course development.</td>
<td>L.A. County Dept. of Public Health L.A. Unified School District</td>
<td>1,175</td>
<td>California Home Visiting Program (MIECHV) Mental Health Services Act Targeted Case Management</td>
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<td>Parents as Teachers (PAT) provides parents with child development knowledge and parenting support. PAT seeks to detect developmental delays and health issues early, and has been shown to prevent child maltreatment and increase child school readiness. PAT includes one-on-one home visits, monthly group meetings, developmental screenings, and a resource network for families.</td>
<td>9 community-based organizations</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>First 5 Los Angeles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships for Families (PFF) is a program designed to prevent child abuse by addressing gaps in the current child welfare system. Voluntary services are offered to pregnant women and families with children 5 and younger who are at high risk for child maltreatment. Each of Los Angeles County’s Service Planning Areas are served by PFF, which collaborates with other organizations to improve outcomes at the agency, family, and community levels.</td>
<td>First 5 Los Angeles in partnership with 9 community-based organizations</td>
<td>1,290</td>
<td>Los Angeles County Department of Children &amp; Family Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Baby is a free and voluntary program from First 5 LA, available to all L.A. County families who deliver or plan to deliver at one of 14 participating hospitals, regardless of income status, and will benefit families in different ways based upon where they live and their specific needs. During pregnancy and throughout baby's first nine months, it can include an in-hospital visit, a personal Parent Coach, information and support, an in-home appointment with a nurse, referrals to additional resources, and baby- and mom-friendly safety, care, and play items.</td>
<td>First 5 Los Angeles in partnership with 14 hospitals</td>
<td>11,500</td>
<td>First 5 Los Angeles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Los Angeles percentage (49.4%) includes the City of Long Beach and the City of Pasadena.

Child Care Resource Center; Children’s Center of Antelope Valley; El Nido Family Centers; Friends of the Family; Human Services Association; Antelope Valley Partners for Health; California Hospital Medical Center; Centinela Hospital Medical Center; Citrus Valley Medical Center – Queen,

UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research (May 2015). Percentage of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect reports, by age of child. Reports include substantiated, inconclusive, unfounded, and assessment-only referrals, as well as those “not yet determined.” As cited on www.kidsdata.org, April 2016.


Includes the percentage of children, ages 0-5, who have books read to them every day of the week. County Data are based on California Health Interview Survey, Child and Teen Health Profiles 2011-12. (April 2014).

For more information on the Los Angeles County Perinatal & Early Childhood Home Visiting Consortium, please visit their website at http://homevisitingla.org/

15. Healthy Families America: Antelope Valley Partners for Health; Child and Family Guidance Center; Children’s Bureau of Southern California; The Children’s Clinic; Children’s Institute Inc.; Families in Good Health; Foothill Family Services; Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic; Pacific Asian Counseling Services; SHIELDS for Families, Inc.; SPIRITT Family Services; South LA Biomed

16. Parents as Teachers: Child Care Resource Center; Children’s Center of Antelope Valley; El Nido Family Centers; Friends of the Family; Human Services Association; Plaza Community Services; Richstone Family Center; SHIELDS for Families, Inc.; The Whole Child

17. Partnerships for Families: Bienvenidos Children’s Center; Children’s Bureau of Southern California; Para Los Niños; Saint John’s Child and Family Development Center; SHIELDS for Families, Inc.; South Bay Counseling Services; SPIRITT Family Services; The Help Group Child and Family Center; The Southern California Indian Center.

18. Welcome Baby: Antelope Valley Partners for Health; California Hospital Medical Center; Centinela Hospital Medical Center; Citrus Valley Medical Center – Queen of the Valley Campus; Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital; Miller Children’s and Women’s Hospital Long Beach; Northridge Hospital Medical Center; Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center San Pedro; Providence Holy Cross Medical Center; St. Francis Medical Center; St. Mary Medical Center; Torrance Memorial Medical Center; Valley Presbyterian Hospital; White Memorial Medical Center.

References
2. Includes the percentage of Medi-Cal paid deliveries (of total births). Epidemiology, Assessment & Program Development Branch, California Department of Public Health; 2013 Birth Statistical Master File. Los Angeles percentage (49.4%) includes the City of Long Beach and the City of Pasadena.
3. Includes the percentage of families with children whose income is adequate to cover the basic costs for housing, food, child care, health care, transportation and other expenses (i.e. the Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard). Using cost estimates for basic expenses, the California Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard also adjusts for applicable taxes and tax credits to define the wages needed to provide for the basic needs of a family relative to the local cost of living. Data prepared by Dr. Diane Pearce, Center for Women’s Welfare, School of Social Work, University of Washington as cited on Kidsdata.org (March 2014).
4. Includes the percentage of women whose first prenatal care visit takes place within the first trimester of pregnancy. Location is based on the mother’s place of residence, as reported on the child’s birth certificate. Race/ethnicity is based on the mother’s race/ethnicity and excludes data collected on women for whom the initiation of prenatal care was unknown. Children Now analysis of data from California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Center for Health Statistics, Automated Vital Statistics System (AVSS), 2010 and 2012 and race/ethnicity data from CDPH, Center for Health Statistics, AVSS, 2012. (May 2014).
11. Includes the percentage of children, ages 0-5, who have books read to them every day of the week. County Data are based on California Health Interview Survey, Child and Teen Health Profiles 2011-12. (April 2014).
13. For more information on the Los Angeles County Perinatal & Early Childhood Home Visiting Consortium, please visit their website at http://homevisitingla.org/
14. Early Head Start: Baldwin Park Unified School District; Child Care Resource Center; Children’s Institute Inc.; California Hospital Medical Center; Foothill Family Service; HAS – Pasitos Early Childhood Education Programs; Kedren Community Health Center Inc.; Long Beach Unified School District; Los Angeles County Office of Education; Options – A Child Care & Human Services Agency; Pacific Clinics; Pediatric Therapy Network; UCLA Early Head Start; University of Southern California; Venice County Clinic; Vista Del Mar Child Care Service; Volunteers of America Los Angeles; Westside Children’s Center, Inc.
15. Healthy Families America: Antelope Valley Partners for Health; Child and Family Guidance Center; Children’s Bureau of Southern California; The Children’s Clinic; Children’s Institute Inc.; Families in Good Health; Foothill Family Services; Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic; Pacific Asian Counseling Services; SHIELDS for Families, Inc.; SPIRITT Family Services; South LA Biomed
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