

Improving the life chances of disadvantaged children and families with home visiting by nurses

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Findings from randomized trials of The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) and its replication in the United States will be presented. The NFP is a program of prenatal and infancy home visiting by nurses for socially disadvantaged mothers bearing first children.

NFP nurses have three major goals:

- (1) to improve the outcomes of pregnancy by helping women improve their prenatal health,
- (2) to improve children's health and development by helping parents provide more sensitive and competent care of the child, and
- (3) to improve parental life-course by helping parents plan future pregnancies, complete their educations, and find work.

The program is designed to help parents understand the influence of their behaviors on their own health and on the health and development of their babies, and to make changes in their lives that will enable them to more effectively protect themselves and their children.

The NFP has been tested in a series of scientifically controlled trials in the United States since 1977, with different populations, living in different contexts, and at different points in our country's history. Today it is recommended for public investment throughout the US due to its consistent impact on maternal and child health, its enduring effect on youth antisocial behavior and crime, and its economic return on investment. It has been promoted by the Obama Administration as part of its agenda to reduce poverty, strengthen families, and improve urban policy. The NFP has served as the primary evidentiary foundation for the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program funded under the Affordable Care Act.