

Urgent - Increase funding for Healthy Families home visiting- Urgent

Dear Legislature, Policy Makers, Local and State officials,

Did you know:

- Increased funding for Healthy Families home visiting is crucial to the needs of pregnant parents, and families raising a newborn.
- The first three years of a child's life are the most sensitive period for brain development—Zero to Three (2016).
- Babies whose mothers were depressed during pregnancy show heightened levels of the stress hormone cortisol when observed three months after birth - Zero to Three (2017). Infants are born with a heightened sense of fight or flight that derails emotional regulation and negatively influences their trust in the world for years to come. Babies are born seeking an attachment to a nurturing and responsive caregiver. Home Visitors coach families on becoming attuned to their child's needs, reading their baby's cues, and strategies that support bonding and attachment to their child.

Using a relationship based approach, home visitors build trusting partnerships with parents and caregivers. Staff are reliable and skilled as a confidential support for overwhelmed and sleep-deprived parents, a cheerleader, a source of reassurance, and an empathetic ear when families are feeling discouraged. During the pandemic and after, parents and children will need continued supports. The impact of the social determinants of health, and disparities in access to services all influence and effect the trajectory of health outcomes for children. Even in a virtual format, Healthy Families home visitor help reduce parent stress by providing necessities (diapers, safe sleep environment materials, formula, etc.) with socially distanced drop-offs. Families need us!!

Our future generation depends on you to reduce the effects of stress and trauma on the architecture of their developing brain. Healthy Families is an integral part in the early childhood system of supports. Your funding in an investment in babies who are not yet able to ask for help ask for help themselves. – Thank you for supporting babies and their families. Julie.

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